

Peter O'Brien from the author

# IN THE YEAR ONE

(A.D. 1888)

OF

## HOME RULE DE JURE.

*A DRIVE IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.*

IS IT POSSIBLE? IS IT PROBABLE?

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HER OWN WAY.—A CO-RESPONDENT.—RUMOURED RISING IN  
THE NORTH.—TROUBLES COMING UPON ENGLAND.—HOME  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE:—

“Three great Irish questions demanding our care—(1) Social Order, (2) Settlement of the Land Question, (3) desire for Self-Government as to Local Affairs.”

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“Self-government as to local affairs” already, in 1886, existed. The unwritten law against the offences enumerated below was carried out with firmness under a code which provided adequate punishments, varying according to circumstances, from boycotting, through its various stages, “showing,” starving, &c. &c., mutilation of animals, including man, up to violent death, and the persecution of the culprit’s relatives after his death.

The following are some of the offences so punishable:—

- |                                    |                     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Rent (now instalment) grabbing. | 4. House grabbing.  |
| 2. Land grabbing.                  | 5. Cattle grabbing. |
| 3. Situation grabbing.             | 6. Crop grabbing.   |
|                                    | 7. Money grabbing.  |

Thus the self-government which existed in 1886 was fully capable of dealing with the first two questions—(1) social order and (2) settlement of the land question. The Act of (the English) Parliament for the future government of Ireland (Home Rule) was therefore unnecessary, except to extend the Self-Government already existing in very considerable portions of Ireland, to the whole of it. This is the only justification of the Act; but, considering the very short time the Act has been in force, it must be admitted it promises to be successful.

It may be interesting to describe, in as few words as possible,

what two of the offences—numbers 6 and 7—mean. “Crop grabbing” (6) means a farmer tilling or cropping his ground or stocking his farm against “the will of the people.” “Money grabbing” (7) means the recovery of, or the attempt to recover, any debt against “the will of the people.”

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MR. PARNELL said (at Wexford, October 10th, 1881):—

“He (Mr. Gladstone) would have you to believe that he is not afraid of you, because he has disarmed you, because he has attempted to disorganise you, because he knows that the Irish nation is to-day disarmed as far as physical weapons go, but he does not hold this kind of language with the Boers. What did he do at the commencement of the session? He said something of this kind with regard to the Boers. He said that he was going to put them down, and as soon as he had discovered that they were able to shoot straighter than his own soldiers he allowed those few men to put him and his Government down, and, although he has attempted to regain some of his lost position in the Transvaal by subsequent chicanery and diplomatic negotiations, yet that sturdy and small people in the distant Transvaal have seen through William Ewart Gladstone; and they have told him again, for the second time, that they will not have their liberties filched from them, and I believe that, as a result, we shall see that William Ewart Gladstone will again yield to the people of the Transvaal, and I trust that, as the result of this great movement, we shall see that just as Gladstone, by the Act of 1881, has eaten all his old words, has departed from all his formerly declared principles, now we shall see that these brave words of this English Prime Minister will be scattered as CHAFF BEFORE THE UNITED AND ADVANCING DETERMINATION OF THE IRISH PEOPLE TO REGAIN FOR THEMSELVES THEIR LOST LAND AND THEIR LOST LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE.”

(At Cork, December 18th, 1882.)

“Both the English parties know well that the next General Election in England will be turned by the votes of the Irish electors living in England. . . . They tell us that no English

Ministry and no Liberal Member must ever entertain for a moment the idea of National Self-Government for Ireland. I believe that the time is rapidly approaching when they will have to entertain that idea, or SOME OTHER IDEA THAT THEY MAY NOT LIKE SO WELL." (Applause.)

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MR. GLADSTONE said (on the 9th of November 1885, speaking at Edinburgh) :—

"Let me now suppose—for argument's sake I may suppose it possible—that the Liberal Party might be returned to the coming Parliament—that is rather a staggering supposition (laughter), but I beg you to indulge me for an instant (laughter), might be returned to the coming Parliament in a minority, but in a minority which might become a majority by the aid of the Irish vote ; and I will suppose that, owing to some cause, the present Government has disappeared, and a Liberal Party was called to deal with this great constitutional question of the government of Ireland in a position where it was a minority dependent on the Irish vote for converting it into a majority. *Now, gentlemen, I tell you seriously and solemnly that, though I believe the Liberal Party to be honourable, patriotic, and trustworthy, in such a position as that it would not be safe for it to enter on the consideration of a measure in respect to which, at the first step of its progress, it would be in the power of a party coming from Ireland to say, 'Unless you do this, and unless you do that, we will turn you out to-morrow' "* (cheers).—*Times' Report.*

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"In these prophetic words Mr. Gladstone described with marvellous accuracy the position of the Liberal Party. Was it safe, in April 1886, for that Party to do what their leader 'SERIOUSLY AND SOLEMNLY' declared, in November 1885, would not be safe ? "

The three foregoing quotations contain three remarkable prophecies ; two made by Mr. Parnell, and one by Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. Gladstone's prophecy was made but a few months before

he gave way, apparently against his will, and seemingly actuated by terror, before his adversary.

What was the nature of the power which Mr. Parnell exercised over Mr. Gladstone?

Did it not sometimes bear some resemblance to that by which a boa-constrictor fascinates its prey before it grips the victim in its folds and crushes every bone like brittle glass?

"I was shooting in the colony of Port Natal, and, observing an oreebec (a small red buck), I endeavoured to approach it. I made a circuit, keeping a small hill between myself and the buck, until I thought I might venture to look and see the whereabouts of the animal.

"What was my surprise when I found it had not moved since I first saw it, and was now standing perfectly motionless, not twenty yards from me. Supposing the animal to be sick, I approached, and, looking over a mound, saw the head of a large boa-constrictor lying just out of a hole. The buck stood with its head on one side, gazing intently on its deadly enemy, and not in the least aware of my vicinity. . . .

"Suddenly I saw the buck on the ground, the thick black coils of the boa enfolding its body and legs.

"I fired instantly, and the reptile slowly unwound himself, compelled to succumb to a power more terrible than its own. My gun has one barrel rifled, the other a smooth bore for shot. I had discharged shot only, not being far off, and the body of the snake was nearly severed; yet, in the short instant during which he had embraced his prey, he had broken every bone in the pretty creature's body."

THE GHOST OF ENGLAND, *loquitur*.—"If I had, as the African hunter did, stirred but a finger, I might have saved, not the deer, but something still more precious. It is true that the snake choked himself in trying to swallow me, and snake and deer are both politically dead. But do I still exist as once I did?"

24th June, 1888.

## CHAPTER I.

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"BE Gorra! but it's quare times, entirely, now yer honour!" said the carman, as he was driving me to the scene of a very serious "altercation" between the Imperial R. I. Constabulary and the Home Rule County Police at Ballykillall.

During this "altercation" there had been several "unfortunate deaths," and I, being a correspondent on the staff of the *Times* newspaper, was travelling to the spot to collect reliable information, if possible, for the British public.

"Quare times!" repeated the carman thoughtfully, as we drove along through the beautifully wooded country in the summer morning's balmy air in the year 1888, the first year of Home Rule *de jure*, and things were settling down. I had already driven some distance from the town in which I had slept the previous night. The main features of the country through which I had passed, in themselves beautiful, were rendered doubly so by the still fresh morning air, the bright sunshine, and the summer vegetation; and "leafy June" was here at her sweetest. The distant peaks of the blue mountains stood as a thin film on the horizon. The nearer mountains had not yet exchanged their rich warm hue for the green tone they assume in July. A lake which I had passed reflected the shores, trees, and hills with trembling indistinctness, and water-fowl here and there, by disturbing the lake's placid surface, interrupted the reflections by thin streaks of sparkling light. It was a morning to be thankful for, and to encourage hope and longing for permanent peace, beauty, and goodness; and I confess that tears for a moment dimmed my sight when I contrasted what I saw and felt with what I knew.

A small stream which discharged its clear brown water into the lake, babbled on with its still, small, plaintive voice, which seemed to speak with sounds of hope, and yet of some subdued sorrow long past, but still telling of a time when angry passions will be no more, and everlasting rest, not idleness, will fill the human race with happiness.

I had just passed, at some distance from the road, the blackened ruins of what seemed to have lately been a country gentleman's residence; and in answer to a question I had put to the driver regarding it he had said, "Sure, that's ould Lord Kinvara's place that was burnt down last week. Yer honour must have seen it on the papers." "Oh," said I, "is that where that terrible affair took place?" "Be gorra! it is, and a bad job some of us thought it, but we darn't say so, except to the likes of yer honour, and there's not many gintlemen I drive now, and it's hard times me and the mare has, let alone herself and poor childer. Many's the time I druv the ould lord—rest his sowl!—and he always had a kind word for me, and axed regular for Biddy—that's herself, yer honour—and the childer, and he was free with his money, when he had it, and kind to his tenants and his labourers; but seven or eight years ago, as yer honour recollects, the tenants were tould not to pay rint, and most were well able to pay, and some of them did pay, but the rest set on them, and, with Mr. Parnell and the League, sure, after a time, the devil a one would pay, and then there were evictions. But, sure, yer honour knows all about that time as well as I do, for many a time, long ago, I druv yer honour, when your father lived at ———, until he rose out of it altogether, and wint to England with yer honour."

Tim, the driver, and I are old friends, and Tim, as will be gathered, is a great talker, but I remarked he always dropped conversation when any persons passed us on the road. Few people, however, did pass us. I must here notice what I had observed when driving through disturbed districts in Ireland some years ago, viz. that scarcely any men were to be seen working in the fields or walking on the roads, and that now such men as we occasionally passed were wretched, villainous-looking tramps in general, who eyed me in a ferocious, hungry

manner ; looks that made me think I should be obliged to seek temporary safety by using my concealed revolver. I say temporary safety, for the chances were, that if driven to use my revolver in self-defence, I could scarcely get safely out of the country. In fact, I felt the revolver rather an incumbrance than not, and I determined not to produce it except in the very last extremity. Children, and sometimes women, standing at wretched cabin-doors, pointed at me, I observed, threateningly with their fingers as I passed.

Lord Kinvara, whose place we had just passed, was one of those many kind-hearted Irish landlords who, up to 1880, had been upon the best terms with his tenants, though he had not been without the usual Irish difficulties in dealing with some of them, and these difficulties were generally connected with his endeavours to benefit his tenants, in what used to be known as squaring farms, helping his tenants to drain and fence the land, and trying to induce them, when he could, to cultivate habits of cleanliness in their houses ; but, upon the whole, the tenants liked their landlord until the second Land Act came into force. The tenants then became overbearing in many ways, and Lord Kinvara being only human nature, though a kind-hearted, honest specimen, somewhat resented ingratitude, and withdrew himself more than was, perhaps, absolutely necessary, from communication with his tenants, allowance even being made for the very altered position he occupied with regard to them which was effected by the change in the law.

Doubtless old Lord Kinvara was to blame. If any of us had been in his place there would have been no shadow of fault on our side. Was not Lord Kinvara told, in common with other Irish landlords, that he came out without a stain on his character, as a landlord, from the inquiry into the manner in which he and others had dealt with their tenants, and should he not have been satisfied ?

The land hunger, however, had to be appeased, and he and others should have been convinced that they, as they were told, were placed in a more satisfactory and assured position by the Land Act of 1881. Unfortunately, Lord Kinvara stupidly—though he was a Liberal—felt the sting of legal injustice and

the ingratitude of those he had helped in time of need. He, of course, suffered, as he deserved to suffer, from giving way to feelings common to the best specimens of humanity. He slightly showed that he possessed such feelings by a somewhat reserved communication with his tenants when they demanded 50 per cent. reduction of their judicial rents. He suffered in common with others who in no way manifested such feelings. He was, however, one of those who benefited by the Land Act of 1886, and received fourteen years' purchase for his Irish land. He had other resources, and, liking his home in Ireland—his only home—determined, like many of his brethren, to reside there and keep up, so far as it lay in his power, friendly relations with his former tenants and his labourers. He made, as others have done, a fresh start in life. He was no longer a magistrate, a member of the Board of Guardians, a grand juror—there are no grand jurors now—nor a member of the County Board. He felt now that nothing could bring him into antagonism with his neighbours. He could still give employment, still usefully exert, to some extent, by at least example, that influence recommended to the Peers by the Prime Minister of England in February 1886, in his speech upon Mr. Labouchere's motion regarding the House of Lords.

He—Lord Kinvara—had now settled down into a feeling of perfect charity towards his humbler neighbours; he had his house, his place, his reduced number of dependants, including his labourers, with their wives and families, living in cottages within the boundary-walls of his own demesne, which was about the size of one of the large farms in the neighbourhood, and he had, above all, an easy conscience, and a will to be kind, and he possessed his old desire to improve the moral and physical condition of those in any way dependent upon him. Peace, comfort, and happiness must certainly now be his, during the few remaining years he had to do his duty upon earth; and, to do his dependants no more than justice, they, as a body, appreciated their position. Some of them, no doubt, had their faults. Tim Cartie drank, and his wife and children suffered. Paddy Whelan grumbled, and, though he was not a drunkard, spent more time than he ought in the public-houses in the village. The village

people had always been more or less on uncomfortable terms with his Lordship. The houses, some of them hovels, were badly constituted, badly drained, and generally miserable. When the village belonged to Lord Kinvara he had done his utmost to improve the dwellings; but long leases existed, and though he succeeded, in some few cases, in getting up the leases and transplanting the occupiers, he was resisted to the utmost, and, when successful, was called an exterminator by the county national newspaper and the rabid curate. The young and ardent spirits of the village had a peculiar objection to Lord Kinvara's tendency to plant outlying portions of his demesne. "He'd plant the divil," was a common phrase with regard to this tendency. This, no doubt, arose from land hunger, which was not satiated by what was called, in Ireland, *con acre* granted by the noble landlord somewhat liberally.

Tim Cartie and Paddy Whelan, in frequenting the village public-houses, grew accustomed to language which led to thoughts destructive of their peace and contentment, and those of their employer; and this, with the idle and lazy habits of these two men, resulted in their loss of employment and the filling of their places by others.

Lord Kinvara's wife had, during her lifetime, ably seconded her husband's endeavours to improve the position of the tenants, the labourers on the estate, and also that of the poor classes generally, in the neighbouring village.

At first, her efforts for benefiting the village people seemed to promise success, but bickerings and jealousies arose amongst the women who received the benefits, and, from quarrelling amongst themselves, they soon came to bear enmity, more or less, to their benefactress and her husband, and to the well-to-do shopkeepers' wives, whose services Lady Kinvara had enlisted for the good work.

At length this feeling of enmity grew so strong, encouraged as it was by emissaries of the Land League, that what promised well was almost entirely dropped of necessity.

Lord Kinvara's daughter, Miss O'Connor, some time after her mother's death, which took place in 1885, made a second attempt to carry out her mother's projects, but this was not

until Lord Kinvara ceased to hold the position he formerly occupied.

Her efforts almost entirely failed. The village people had steadily deteriorated, as was naturally to be expected. Why should Lord Kinvara keep his demesne "when the poor want it"? "To the divil with him, and his daughter, and his English servants!" "Sure, didn't Paddy Whelan say he heard Miss O'Connor tell that ould divil of an English butler that there was more whiskey drunk in the town than would keep the people from starving, and isn't it the whiskey that prevents us from screeching wid the hunger, and puts the only bit of comfort in us we have at all?"

"Whisht, Biddy; didn't Miss O'Connor bring you soup herself with her own hands when you were lying down last week?"

"To the divil I pitch her and her soup! If I saw her this minit I'd wear this hake to the tail on her."

As the half-drunken Biddy said this, she snatched out of the wretched basket in front of her a stale-looking fish, and, swinging it into the air, brought it down violently upon the pavement. The words and action would have been ludicrous but for their fiendish bitterness.

Such scraps of conversation as the above were to be heard when the miserably poor women, in the soft summer evenings, were sitting at their cabin doors, some few—very few—knitting; most of them, however, doing nothing and saying nothing beyond occasionally shouting to their children, "Divil's cure to you! Will ye come out of that?" when a child was in danger of being run over by a passing car.

What I have been trying to describe regarding Lord Kinvara, his belongings, and the people of the village, was told me most graphically by a friend who knew the locality well; but I find it quite impossible to repeat what he said without very much marring his description.

As I have already said, Tim Cartie and Paddy Whelan were dismissed, and two other labourers, Jerry Blake and Miles Lynch, employed in their stead. About a week afterwards boycotting notices were found on the doors of their cottages charging them with "situation grabbing." They held their

ground. The next week, Lynch did not return one night to his wife and family at the usual time. Search was made for him, and the next morning he was found in a wood beaten nearly to death. Blake now gave way and came to Lord Kinvara to ask for money to pay his passage to America.

Lord Kinvara received threatening letters promising him death if he did not reinstate Cartie and Whelan. He was determined not to give way, as he had learned from former experience the baneful effects of such a course.

He and his dependants underwent the usual treatment thought proper and desirable in such a case by the National League, and some of the priests. The labourers were all warned to work no longer for their employer. They ceased to work, but refused to leave their cottages. Some of the cattle were cruelly killed. The Irish servants, terrified, left the house. The English servants, who had been long in their master's service, remained staunch; but added their entreaties to those of Lord Kinvara's daughter, who prayed her father to leave the place. The old man was obdurate. He demanded protection from the Home Rule Government, which was refused. The Imperial Government was applied to, without effect. He was told the Imperial Government had brought the matter under the notice of the Irish Government, and they could not further interfere. The story of Mr. Lewis of Ballinagar, in the county of Galway,\* was, in short, acted over again with this difference, that Mr. Lewis was afforded some protection, while Lord Kinvara received none. The house was at last attacked and set on fire, and the poor old man was shot dead in the hall. The servants managed with difficulty, and with the loss of one of their number, to carry off in safety their young mistress in a fainting state, and the remains of her poor old father; and they succeeded in reaching the house of a neighbour, a Mr. Blake, who lived at a distance of some eighteen miles away, near a town where, fortunately, there was a body of the Imperial constabulary.

It was to this place—Mr. Blake's—I was travelling; for it was there the "altercation" had occurred between the Imperial force and the local Home Rule police, but what the origin of the

\* See the newspapers of the day, February and March 1886.

riot was I was not aware until informed by the carman, Tim. I now learned from him that the priest, intimidated by the people and willing to please them, had refused to permit Lord Kinvara's body to be buried in consecrated ground, and that an attack on Mr. Blake's house had been apprehended; for some of the party who attacked Lord Kinvara's house had been shot during the attack, and vengeance for the loss of their friends was demanded by the people.

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## CHAPTER II.

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I DID not need to be told by Tim that the relations between the Imperial constabulary and the local Home Rule police are in the most unsatisfactory and deplorable condition. That the local Home Rule police envy and hate the Imperial force, and that the latter thoroughly distrust and dislike the former, is well known. The Home Rule police are, in the first place, badly paid; open to bribes, and many of them have been moonlighters in former times. The oath they take on admission into the ranks is not identical with that by which the Imperial force is bound. The Imperial force are sometimes obliged to do duty with their former antagonists. Cases have already occurred where individuals of the two forces have stood almost side by side on duty, who personally knew one another under very different circumstances.

But if the relationship between the two forces may be called bad, how is the connection between the National magistracy and the Imperial constables to be described? The Imperial force are sworn to cause "Her Majesty's peace" to be preserved. What are the ideas of the National magistrates with regard to "Her Majesty's peace"?

Of what use have been the guarantees, when already petitions are being signed praying for the abolition of the Imperial force?

Have not the Imperial force been rendered powerless on many occasions by the action of the National magistracy?

What could the Imperial force do, the other day in the south of Ireland on the occasion of the attack made by the people, headed by the priest, upon a Protestant place of worship, the Church of Ireland pastor and his little flock, when the National magistrate sided with the priest and people, and against the preservation of Her Majesty's peace. Or, again, in that other case in which the Wesleyan minister lost his life?

"The protection of the minority!" Where is it to be found?

Well, this is only the first year of Home Rule *de jure*, and things are settling down. *Settling down?* Yes, settling down. But not in the direction of "Peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety," in the words of the prayer for the English Parliament, but *down, down* as they have been settling since 1880, quite the other way. The "settling down" has been of that sort where the phrase is applied to a ship. We were told, I think by the Prime Minister, or Mr. John Morley, the other day, that "Ireland would be prosperous when things 'settled down.'" The words were ominous. Contrast Ireland as it is now with the Ireland of eight or nine years ago, or even with what it was in the early part of 1886. No doubt there were, in February and March 1886, some frightful outrages, and some horrible manifestations of feeling, such as that shown with regard to the murdered Finlay of Woodford, in the county I was now travelling through, a repetition of the feeling that was shown elsewhere, notably in the well-remembered Curtin case in Kerry, in the case of the murdered Lord Mountnorris, in the case of the murdered Mr. Arthur Herbert, and in many other cases; but is the feeling any better now that the alleged causes have been removed?

But, putting all this aside, how does the comparative prosperity of, say, 1886 contrast with the financial position of the shopkeepers, merchants, professional men, labourers, farmers, and mechanics, now?

As regards the farmers, how have they been secured in their nominal fee-simple holdings? Has there not been, since 1886,

an influx of the worst, idlest, and most ferocious Irish Americans who demand farms—yes, and succeed in obtaining them, their interest in which they sold before they went to America. Is there not a terror creeping over the farmer for whose benefit, in a great measure, Home Rule was granted. As to trade, what is the state of Dublin, for instance, now, as compared with what it was in 1885 or 1886? Are not those trades disappearing whose profits depended upon the presence in the country, of what are called the higher and middle classes? How are those who were employed in various ways by this class of trader now living?

How are those labourers, servants, &c. &c. who were more directly employed by the gentry obtaining the wherewithal to support life? And how are those living who supplied certain wants of even these dependants?

If one member suffer, does not the whole body suffer?

“Do you see that house, yer honour?” said Tim the driver, interrupting my thoughts upon the tangled subject. I had almost forgotten Tim’s presence, where I was, why I was travelling—indeed whether I was travelling or not, but recalled from visions in the mind to actual objects, I looked in the direction Tim pointed and said: “Yes, what about it?” Tim replied: “There was a very decent man owned that farm last April, and who should come over from America but Denis Kirwan, a little good-for fellow, who sold his interest in the farm ten years ago for some, say, £500. Anyhow, Michael Joyce, that’s the man that has left now, got the farm and was well off, though the divil a bit of rint he would pay till he was druv to it. Well, Michael got his right to the farm, right out, whin the landlord was bought out; and over comes Denis Kirwan, as I was telling yer honour, and, says he, “That’s my farm that I was evicted out of!” and he summoned Michael for land-grabbing to the new Court, that was the ould National League Court, and, begorra! Denis had some friends on the Court, and Michael Joyce had some enemies, for he had once refused to jine the Land League long ago, but he gave in afterwards. Anyhow, whatever talk they had, the Court found Michael guilty of land-grabbing and fined him three hundred

pounds, and what's more he paid it, and only some of it went to Denis Kirwan, and he was'nt satisfied, and he swore he'd have either Michael's life or the farm, and Michael got afeared and, begorra! he settled some way with Denis, and off he sot to America; and may be he'll come back some day and put Denis, or some other man that has the farm, out of that. Sure, it's quare times entirely!"

This was certainly a case in point. I had heard of many other similar cases, but whether seeing the actual house and land impressed me, or whether it was the connection between what had been passing through my mind and Tim's illustration, or a mixture of both circumstances, I cannot tell; but Tim's story struck me very forcibly.

I was again interrupted by Tim's saying: "It's a pity but to shoot the whole of them." Who was "them" in this startling observation of Tim's? "Who do you want shot, Tim?" I asked. "Sure, the farmers, yer honour! Isn't it them that druv the gintlemin out of the country, and isn't it the likes of me that's suffering by that same, and where there's one poor man gets work now, there were twenty before."

"Sure there was a dail of talk about the labourer's cottages, and all to that, and some got them, and more didn't; but them that got them, and the bit of potato garden, are hungry enough now, and their childer; for yer honour knows the farmers can't, or mebbly won't, give them reg'lar work, let alone wages, and there they are sot down, and can't get work, and are striving to keep the life in wid the potatoes, and no money to buy meal, and if they have the money its whiskey they do be getting most times.

"And going to England for the harvest is dropped now; for I'm tould there's no work there, and I'm tould the three acres and the cow over there, that the papers was full of a while ago, was dropped when they got the votes, and went to some divilment again the Lords; and what the better will the poor be there, no more than here, when the Lords are gone? And what's Lord Kinvara's labourers to do now that himself is dead? They'll wait long before they get the likes of what he gev them, from the farmers; and it's mysilf won't be better off

for that job. He was a good man, rest his sowl ! and paid me well whin I druv him, and that's more than some of the new sort do ; divil's cure to them for upstarts ! The Lord be with ould times long ago, before they wint to the divil with it intirely."

When Tim was once started he was a good continuer, but he now left me to digest what he had provided.

Tim was right enough in some of his shrewd remarks. The former labourers are now wretched farmers whom the first breath of famine will sweep away.

For those who heretofore gave extra employment in hard times, had in the great majority of cases left the country, and others are beginning to find residence in the country unbearable and often unsafe.

The former labourers are now tenants of the former tenants, now landlords nominally, but really tenants of the English, Scotch, and Welsh taxpayer.

"It's a pity but to shoot the whole of them." These were words I had heard used eleven or twelve years ago, by a carman whose father held two farms ; but the word "them" then referred to the landlords. Blind self-interest, I thought, rules the world. Tim held no land nor did Tim's father.

"Land hunger. Why this land hunger?" Tim had set me dreaming again. The answer was not difficult to find. Would a needy and unscrupulous Birmingham operative screw-maker desire to shoot all the landlords, or all the farmers? No. He being needy and unscrupulous, and a screw-maker, would prefer to shoot Mr. Chamberlain, or rather Mr. Chamberlain's successor, whoever that may be—Nettlefold I think—always provided he was to reap thereby some substantial benefit.

But there is always a chance at least, and with a chance in the distant future there is hope.

"Whom do the new Irish landlords, *i.e.* the farmers, want to shoot now?" Clearly the British taxpayer, the ultimate landlord. This is not easy. But they can and will shoot whoever tries to collect what is due from them to the British taxpayer.

Let me see—

Tim and men of his  
class, and also the

labourers - - - Want to shoot  
The farmers - - - do. do.

The farmers.

The Irish Home Rule  
Government, and they  
will shoot those who  
try to collect what is  
due by them to the  
Irish Government.

The Irish Home  
Rule Government

do. do.

The English Govern-  
ment.

The English Govern-  
ment - - - -

do. do.

The British taxpayer.

It is a rickle of children's bricks, knock down one at the end  
and down they all go in their turn, or the old Irish nursery  
story of "*My bonny bunch of blackberries.*" Truly the Irish  
question is as far from settlement as ever.

Are there not *whole* baronies now, and many of them, where  
no person can be found to undertake the collection of county  
cess and poor rate. This difficulty first came to light at the  
Spring Assizes in Kerry, 1886. It was then comparatively "a  
little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand"; what is it now?

I recollect hearing in a Petty Sessions court long ago, where  
my father was sitting as a magistrate, the following evidence  
given by a farmer who had summoned a labourer in his employ-  
ment for some misconduct. In reply to a question the farmer  
said.

"Well! he was getting very weighty wages, your Worship,  
six pounds a year and the grass of a goose."

(*Query.*) Has the British taxpayer got the "grass of a  
goose" now that he is, so to speak, the one Irish landlord?

How out of harmony with this lovely summer morning are  
these thoughts!

Why are we almost devils one minute, and half angels the  
next?

Have the majority of people got "the jumps"?

What brings "the jumps" if one doesn't drink?

I don't drink, never did, but I have certainly had "the jumps." . . .

"I'm tould, Sir, the Orangemen from the North is coming down here to kill what's among us."

Tim was evidently thinking as well as myself. I gave Tim no answer. I could gather he was disappointed, and I knew I should soon have another remark from him. Tim hit the horse. I felt that the stroke was meant to wake up me, not the horse.

There was a long pause. What Tim thought of, I do not know. I thought, What will Tim say next. Tim did not speak. Tim and I were getting upon bad terms. I waited for Tim's next remark. None came.

If one could only open a fellow and get at his heart or brain, or wherever his thoughts are, and see them plainly spread out before one—Gladstone's, for instance. I was dreaming again. Dizzy was represented as a sphinx in *Punch*. But Gladstone! Have people shaking bogs in their brains? I do not allude to the Prime Minister; I am thinking of Gladstone's ardent, honest admirers. If there are shaking bogs in people's brains, must not the shaking bogs be sometimes of exactly the same consistency and character in a number of people? A shaking bog is a decaying bog with water . . . water on the brain . . . Why does not the water pour out when a fellow lies down and goes to sleep? . . .

"Hallo, Tim! what the devil are you about?" We were nearly into the ditch. The horse was now off at a gallop. I had been asleep, and Tim had a hole in his hat from a slug. We had been fired at from behind the hedge. . . .

"What's the meaning of that, Tim?" said I, as soon as Tim had moderated the horse's pace. "The divil a one of me knows, Sir," said Tim, "unless its all accidents, and they mistook yer honour for the county cess collector. They do be watching for him." Tim was as white as a sheet, and I suppose I was so, too. "I don't think Ireland is any better under Home Rule, Tim," I said at length. "Why, thin, that's what I do be thinking meself sometimes."

We drove on warily, scanning the fences at either side of the road. Tim made no further remark till we reached our destination. Arriving at Mr. Blake's gate, two of the Imperial Constabulary, with rifles in their hands, eyed us with what seemed to me to be somewhat sulky suspicion, and appeared unwilling to open the gate; but the moment I spoke, telling them who and what I was, they cheered up and called the sergeant out of the lodge, who brought the key of the gate and let us in. The sergeant I found very willing to give me information. It appeared that the Home Rule Police had given them no intelligence of what was happening at Mr. Blake's house, but Mr. Blake had sent a groom with a verbal message to their officer. The officer informed the National magistrates, who were either too timid or too corrupt to interfere, and therefore the officer acted on his own responsibility, against the advice and somewhat to the annoyance of the magistrates, and, assembling a strong force, reached Mr. Blake's house just in time to save it from the angry armed mob.

Unfortunately, the officer could not procure a sufficient number of cars in the town, having no power to impress cars; and as Mr. Blake's groom represented the urgent necessity there existed for help of some kind, the officer started with a few men on cars, leaving the rest of his party to march. The cowardly mob, seeing the officer's party was so small, plucked up courage to fire upon it, and two of the Imperial force were shot dead.

The officer, who behaved with both prudence and courage, was obliged to retire to preserve the lives of his men and gain time till the rest of his party could arrive.

The mob outnumbered the officer's small party one hundred to one, and it seemed likely at one time, the sergeant who was with the officer told me, that the Constabulary would be overpowered and massacred. It was at this critical moment that the local Home Rule Police, who had been skulking somewhere, no one appeared to know where, joined the mob against the Constabulary. Two more of the latter were now hit. The firing of the Constabulary, however, had been effective, and the buckshot still kept the rioters back. In a short time the rest of the Constabulary arrived, breathless, for, of course, they

had heard the firing and had hurried on. A volley sent the mob and the Home Rule Police flying, and the engagement, as it might almost be called, was over.

I thanked the sergeant for his information, and drove on.

Mr. Blake, an ex-landlord, gave, I knew, a great deal of employment in his serge manufactory, and now it was clear he could not remain in the country. He had got over some "situation grabbing" troubles with difficulty; but there was no getting over what, indirectly, Tim Cartie and Paddy Whelan, assisted by the old National League spirit, had brought upon him. Here was more capital, energy, and intelligence leaving the country not to return.

At Mr. Blake's house I learned that none of the inmates had been injured, thanks to the arrival of the Imperial Constabulary.

"Thank God," said Mr. Blake, "Mr. Gladstone's intention to disarm and hand over the Constabulary to the Home Rule Government was frustrated. My wife and children and poor Miss O'Connor would not have been alive now had it been otherwise."

"If medicine be a remedy in illness, surely physical force is a remedy when one is threatened with death, which its use prevents."

"You will find the officer at the court-house, where the inquiry into this wretched business is being held. Stay; I will go with you, as I may be of use, though I am no longer a magistrate, as you may very well guess."

We went to the court-house, which was close to a second entrance to Mr. Blake's place, near the factory.

Outside the court-house we found the Nationalist magistrate, formerly, Mr. Blake informed me, one of his obstreperous tenants, engaged in buying a horse from the priest, a crowd standing by.

The magistrate was a tall, dissipated-looking fellow, with a coarse red face and bloodshot eyes, dressed like an Irish horse-breaker. He was standing with his hand on the withers of the horse.

"Can he jump?" he asked.

"Is it jump? Hell to the ditch 'u'd shtop him!" was the priest's reply, given in the most violent tone and manner, and yet with deliberation, with a long pause after the word "jump."

Considering the solemn nature of the inquiry that was just about to take place, I must say that I felt this prelude a disgusting and revolting one.

We all now adjourned to the court-house, priest, magistrate, Mr. Blake, and myself. A second magistrate was present. He was a perfect contrast to the man who was buying the horse, being a small, mean, timorous creature, with a shifty, frightened look about his eyes, yellowish hair, and a complexion of the same hue. He grinned and fawned as his brother magistrate and the priest took their seats beside him on the bench.

The Imperial Constabulary stood in two ranks, with ordered arms, in the court-house, facing the magistrates, and I observed the horsey magistrate and the priest scowled at them, and the second magistrate endeavoured to follow suit; but there was something very much akin to terror in his unsteady look. Mr. Blake afterwards explained the cause. This man, some years ago, had planned a murder, and had been arrested, but was discharged for want of evidence.

I will not detail what took place during the inquiry, beyond saying that the officer in command of the Imperial Constabulary was remanded upon a charge of murder, upon the evidence of one of the Home Rule Police, who had undoubtedly joined the rioters against the preservers of "Her Majesty's peace." I marked the indignation and determined aspect of the officer's men at the announcement of this decision, followed as it was by yells from the crowd in the court-house, which was taken up by those outside.

The officer, I saw, could set the magistrate's decision at defiance; and I cannot help thinking that, under all the circumstances, he would have been justified in doing so; but, to my surprise, he told the magistrates, as soon as the yells had subsided, that he gave himself up—but that his own men must remain in charge of him. At this last sentence the yells were repeated, and I thought violence would follow, but I saw some of the officer's men, of themselves, preparing to load.

The magistrates and the priest now hurriedly left the court-house, and shortly the Constabulary, Mr. Blake, and I had it to ourselves, but the yelling continued outside.

The officer, to my great relief, told me he had sent four of his men in the morning to the officer in command of the troops in the town, which was little more than a mile distant, and he was quite sure assistance would shortly arrive; which it did.

Mr. Blake and I then left the court-house to return to the house, under escort, as we came.

Mr. Blake's appearance outside was the signal for renewed yelling. The mob followed us, and a good many stones were thrown. One of them struck me on the head, and I fell, insensible.

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## CHAPTER. III.

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WHEN I recovered consciousness I found myself in bed, in the summer twilight, the window open, and a delicious scent of new-mown hay coming into the room.

I could not tell where I was at first, but, putting my hand to my giddy head, I felt the wet bandage, and this recalled my recollection.

Mr. Blake and a doctor shortly entered the room, the latter saying, after a time, "I think he'll do now, but he must be kept perfectly quiet."

I am sure everyone but myself obeyed the doctor's injunction. I endeavoured to obey, but my brain would work nearly all the night. My thoughts were busy with the old, old Irish question, no nearer, indeed, apparently much further off, solution than ever.

What are the main features of the question now?

I tried to set them in some sort of order in my troubled mind—in which endeavour I succeeded but poorly, as will be seen. How can one make order out of chaos?

(1) First. How is the tide of practical Atheism, with all its horrible accompaniments, to be turned? What machinery exists to commence the erection of a barrier to resist the body and soul destroying surge?

Some of the bishops and many of the priests have terribly inflamed, if they did not inaugurate, the practical infidelity that is sweeping over a great part of Ireland by, as a Roman Catholic expresses it,\* "running in front of the mob."

Is it too much to say that these ministers of religion, or at all events some of them, have called upon the devil for aid to assist them in doing service to, what they believe to be, the only true Church? Have they not apparently, if not really, sympathised with, even in some cases appealed to, the meanest passions, greed and malice, of their flocks? What has been done in this direction has been, admittedly, done to retain influence over the people. Granted that it has been done with the purpose of keeping their people within the pale of the only true Church, is it justifiable? Has it been successful? Let its success be proved, if it can be proved, by an attempt now to restrain the greed and malice, violence and cruelty, formerly encouraged. What will be the result of such an endeavour? Somewhat like the dropping of water upon a stone. It will take ages to undo what has been done. Such an attempt will only prove how far the practical infidelity has extended; how deeply the canker has eaten into Ireland's heart.

(2) Secondly. Of the horrible accompaniments of this practical Atheism it is not necessary to speak. The record of crime as described in the newspapers and admitted by Ministers in the English Parliament during the last few years has been terrible, and the details hideous and revolting.

Is there the very slightest sign of the beginning of the end of these things? Is not the evil rapidly increasing?

The alleged causes of a particular class of crime have been professedly removed one after another. Firstly, by the Church's disestablishment. Secondly, by the final (?) Land Act of 1870.

\* Thomas Maguire, LL.D., &c., in his pamphlet published by Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., London, and Wm. Magee in Dublin. 1886

Thirdly, by the Land Act—also final (?)—of 1881. Fourthly, by the Land Act of 1886–7, another final act! And now the good work has been crowned by an Act to let, if possible, Ireland go to the devil its own way. But Ireland cannot and will not go to the devil its own way without dragging England with it. Not merely England's two hundred millions, which is slowly being invested, but England itself, and all that that word England means.

The Church Act was the first downward Socialistic step. The first Land Act necessarily followed in the same direction, and undoubtedly caused reckless expenditure on the part of the farmers. Both these Acts whetted, indeed raised, a vicious appetite. Used by Mr. Parnell for his own purposes, and this appetite was rendered but more ravenous by the Land Act of 1881.

What had been given to the farmers by the first two Land Acts, those of 1870 and 1881? The three F's: Fixity of tenure, Free sale, and Fair rents? More, far more than this, but let it pass.

Immediately after the fair (?) rents were fixed, the cry came for an immediate reduction of the judicial rents. (Mr. Parnell's "No Rent" cry is not alluded to here.)

Something more must be done. Undoubtedly. Everyone agreed in this. The difference in opinion was with regard to what that something should be.

"*Establish and maintain Law and Order,*" said Common Sense, "*that has not been thoroughly tried yet.*" The Land League was supposed to be suppressed; it changed its name and continued to live. Try suppressing any such combination under whatsoever name. There are untold numbers within the League who would gladly see it really suppressed; these have the desire to leave it, but not the power, till you help them. This has been proved over and over again.

Now, what has been done to settle this second and complex question?

Most of the complexity of the question lies in the connection between the collection of rents and outrage (violence and cruelty including, of course, boycotting)—outrage, not so much that committed upon landlords and their employés, but outrage

upon tenants by tenants, or professedly in the interests of tenants by whomsoever committed. Doubtless there were outrages not directly connected with the collection of rents, though still in some way mixed up with the movement that made the collection of rents difficult.

The collection of rents has been difficult, not impossible.

*There has been no universal nor general refusal to pay rents yet.* That is to come, and come it will; if not in this "year one of Home Rule *de jure*," in some year of Home Rule.

It can only come under the reign of Home Rule. (Rents and instalments of debt due to the British tax-payer are synonymous terms.)

Now it appears to this addled head of mine, that the main difficulty up to March 1886 was the collection of rents. On this the other difficulties hang.

There existed, at that time, a somewhat perfect machinery for the collection of rents; and had this machinery been properly supported by steady firmness, not merely by actual force, but by consistent speech in the English Parliament, outrage would have ultimately been crushed, and gradually excitement would have subsided. It is silly to say that landlords would have driven matters to extremities in 1884, 1885, or 1886. It is silly to say they would have done so after 1881. However, the Land Act of 1881 affected their feelings, no one can say that those feelings were so allowed to influence their actions as to cause harsh treatment of their tenants. In truth the Land Act of 1881 rendered them powerless to treat their tenants harshly, even supposing the will to do so existed. To return; in 1886 there existed a machinery for collecting rents. The landlords, agents, bailiffs, &c. &c. may be looked upon as the various parts of that machinery.

The Land Act of 1886-7, and the Home Rule Act, at one stroke swept the whole of this machinery away; and England, Scotland, and Wales became, under the Act, the one Irish landlord, and appointed one agent, the Irish Home Rule Government, to collect its rents in Ireland; and it did this at a cost of something over two hundred millions of money.

We have heard, *ad nauseam*, of bad and dishonest Irish agents

in former times. Can any number of these bad Irish land agents knocked into one compete in naughtiness with John Bull's bran new Irish land agent?

Has Mr. Bull's new Irish land agent either the will or the power to collect Mr. Bull's rents?

With what avowed purpose did Mr. Bull's agent apply for, and obtain, the management of Mr. Bull's Irish estate? Was it not to rob Mr. Bull of it? Is it likely Mr. Bull's agent will honestly try to collect rents for Mr. Bull? He may try to collect them for the purpose of putting them in his own pocket, doubtless; but out of that pocket they will not come, for Mr. Bull's use, if Mr. Bull's agent can avoid it.

So much for Mr. Bull's agent's will.

Now with regard to Mr. Bull's agent's power.

Mr. Bull's agent must create and put together a new set of machinery to collect rents, or instalments. It does not matter which word is used, except that the word rent facilitates description. Most of the old machinery, the work of years, is gone; and what little is left behind is, besides being the most unimportant, the least reliable.

How long will it take Mr. Bull's agent to construct new machinery to replace what is gone, and then to fit what he has newly constructed to the bits of the old machinery that have been left behind?

Will he have his new machinery completed by next November in this YEAR ONE, when the first instalment is due?

When all is done, the machinery cannot be worked properly but by, strange to say, the will of the material it has to extract anything valuable from. In other words, machinery to collect rents will not do its work smoothly without the assistance of the rent-payers.

Now, can this assistance of the rent-payers be commanded by Mr. Bull's agent by a simple direction from him or anybody else?

Mr. Bull's agent, if he uses persuasion or command, will be ignored. If he uses force, which he must obtain from his employer, for he cannot pay for it himself, he will be resisted.

What if Mr. Bull's agent says, "I cannot collect the rents," but refuses to leave the agent's house? What security did Mr.

Bull's agent give that is not waste paper? But, for argument's sake, suppose Mr. Bull's agent and tenants to be all that Mr. Bull can wish.

The Act of 1886-7 provides that the tenants *shall* purchase, not that they *may* purchase. This is but common sense, as it was fully admitted that simple permission would have been futile.

What is there, and what could there be, in the Act to provide that holders of land shall not increase their present holdings and become large proprietors, and so restore the state of matters the Act was intended to destroy?

What is there in the Act, and what could there be, to prevent sub-division and sub-letting, the harbingers of famine?

Is the second question open still, or is it not?

The English Parliament. No, the British nation has, to get rid of a noisy obstruction in the House of Commons, done an act that there might be some sense in, barring that part of the deed which carries two hundred million pounds with it, if Ireland were two thousand miles away from its shores.

Yes, there would have been some sense in crowning the Irish legislation of the last seventeen or eighteen years by cutting Ireland adrift, if the island could have been towed out to the Pacific Ocean and left there, carefully withholding from it the two hundred millions, but for one consideration, namely, the surrender of those within it that have trusted England's honour.

But, considering England's history from 1880 to 1885 with regard to her dealings with foreign Powers and her own possessions, notably Egypt, India, and the Cape, and her treatment of at least one of her heroes, we may, perhaps, say, as Lady Teazle said to Joseph Surface, "Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument?"

Perhaps a portion of the library scene of Sheridan's play will yet be acted on a wider stage than ever it has appeared upon before, and Sir Peter's part performed by the British public. May we not hope that Sir Peter will soon knock down the screen and discover how far his confidence has been misplaced?

Sir Peter touched his wife's heart and won her back to love and duty by resolving that she should "have her own way and

be her own mistress for the future," and by a settlement upon her of "eight hundred a year."

Let not the new Sir Peter, the British public, think he has a wife like Lady Teazle to deal with. My Lady will not be recalled to love and duty by being permitted to follow her own devices, nor yet by a settlement upon her, even though that settlement amounts to two hundred millions of money.

Sir Peter looked forward to his own death and to the survival of his wife as, necessarily, a widow; and possibly Lady Teazle remained a widow till her death.

The New Sir Peter, the British Nation, is doubtless old, and, judging by some of his late acts, perhaps a little silly. He may be contemplating the probability of his decease. But he must be more silly than any of his old friends give him credit for if he can look forward with satisfaction to My Lady's enjoyment of his two hundred millions during her widowhood. Nay, Sir Peter's head must be entirely gone if he cannot realise the possibility of My Lady, by her own act, putting it out of her power ever to become Sir Peter's widow, by calling in a co-respondent to enjoy with her St. Peter's settlement of two hundred millions, and then, perhaps, gratifying her old spite, and that of the co-respondent, whoever he may be, by hurrying her former husband out of the world.

The word honour has led my scattered thoughts into a labyrinth of comparisons from which they cannot yet escape.

Is there any analogy between the married state and the connection between Great Britain and Ireland?

A husband and wife are bound together for better for worse, till death do them part.

Has not the geographical position of Great Britain and Ireland made a similar contract a necessity on the part of the two islands?

Has not Great Britain many qualities that should exist in the man, the husband? Power, strength, steadfastness?—all, alas! greatly weakened now.

Has Ireland any characteristics of the woman, the wife? Weakness, impulsiveness, quickness of apprehension, and some others which are not felt by the man to be so attractive?

Great Britain, the husband, has with Ireland, the wife, signed a deed of separate maintenance which cannot be carried out while Great Britain, the husband, and Ireland, the wife, lie side by side. Why has the deed been signed? Because Great Britain, the husband, has latterly allowed himself to be henpecked by Ireland, the wife, and has accustomed himself to surrender his legitimate authority over her.

The new contract has been signed by the wife, but the will with which she signed it has been the will of only the worst part of her nature.

The better part of her nature will yet rebel against the vicious and unnatural contract.

Had Great Britain, in the earliest ages, any misgivings during the honeymoon, which induced him to place himself between his European neighbours and Ireland, his wife?

He certainly did not know, at that time, that there was a neighbour on the far side of his wife; a long way off, no doubt. But, to all intents and purposes, that far-off Western neighbour did not, at that time, exist—at least, as a danger. In truth, the distant Western neighbour is the husband's very near relative, who has but lately, comparatively, gone to reside in the West; and he would be no danger to the husband now, but that the wife has given him a large part of her heart.

Great Britain, the husband, was wise, perhaps, in those early ages to “shove his wife *Wesht*” (as one of her sons would express it), for, notwithstanding his anxious forethought, Ireland, the wife, has flirted with one at least of her husband's European neighbours before Jonathan attracted her.

I awoke; I had been dozing; my head was throbbing. Mr. Blake was standing beside my bed. He told me that there were rumours of a very serious uprising in the North of Ireland. He had expected this, he said. I had not; but I knew the North but slightly. Mr. Blake and I had then a good deal of conversation. Amongst other things he said, “We, the ex-landlords—or some of us, at least—perhaps made a mistake in our readiness to acquiesce in the project that resulted in buying us out; some of us were, no doubt, unpatriotic. But who can

blame us? Certainly none who did not actually experience the misery and the constant anxiety we had to bear, especially such of us who are married.

"Besides being unpatriotic, I fear we have been foolish. Being purchased out, as you know, has been a dead loss to us. This we expected, of course. But people are ready to pay a large price for peace. We, the ex-landlords, have not suffered yet so severely, perhaps, as others who sunk their money, and infinitely more than money, in Ireland, but not in the soil.

"But the outlook is black for all. England, by a course of socialistic legislation, particularly with regard to Ireland, has terribly shaken her financial position in the world. Our own colonies, to say nothing of foreign nations, are beginning now to mistrust security we offer.

"This news from the North of Ireland shows we are probably on the eve of the civil war that was predicted years ago by those who knew the religious feeling in the North, and prophesied that all its bitterness would be roused by the intolerance of the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, backed by a Home Rule Government in Dublin.

"How will the English Government act now?

"Has England shaken itself free of Irish troubles?

"My own personal troubles—I must leave this place for ever as soon as I can—and poor Miss O'Connor's sink into nothing when I permit myself to think of what is coming.

"The best that can be hoped for now—and it is frightful to contemplate its necessity—is, that England may reconquer Ireland.

"But the question is, will England last long enough to do this? Without foreign complications she may, and that is the utmost that, in my poor opinion, can be said. I take a black view, but is there not a cause?"

\* \* \* \* \*

MY DEAR —

I am slowly recovering now. I send you the enclosed. Some of what I send would have appeared in the *Times* had that man, whoever he was, not thrown that stone which gave me concussion of the brain.

How many strange events have happened since that stone was thrown, and yet it is but three weeks ago to-morrow!

Yours ever,

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P.S.—I shall not easily forget my drive in the west of Ireland.

It has leaked out that a Bill is being prepared, for introduction into the Home Rule Parliament, which provides that the Irish banks shall produce to Commissioners, to be appointed under this proposed Act, their books showing the lodgements by depositors, in order that such Commissioners may determine what proportion of any deposit shall be transferred to the Irish Treasury, to enable the Irish Government, in case of exceptional difficulty, to provide itself with funds to carry on the government of the nation. The Bill further provides that banks shall receive a writing of indemnity in each case of such transfer.

The professed object of the Bill is to avoid excitement and disturbance consequent upon the collection of certain taxes. It is intended that the Bill is to be considered by one of the new Secret Committees, whose power to pass an Act is equivalent to that of the whole House.

A short preparatory Act has, as everyone knows, been already passed forbidding the withdrawal of deposits from banks, whether notice of withdrawal has been served or not.

This is pretty well for the first year of Home Rule!

They'll get at the farmers this time.

"I say, young Copperfield, you're going it!"

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