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IRELAND'S

BRIGHTER PROSPECTS.

BY

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LONDON:

EDWARD STANFORD, 55, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

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1881.

*Price Sixpence.*





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THE actual condition of Ireland at present is indeed one of troubled gloom, and the opening words of Mr. Nassau Senior's brilliant article in *Blackwood*, 1844, might be repeated to-day in 1881:—

“The last nine months have been a period of great anxiety and great evil. The improvement of Ireland has been arrested, all the bad passions and mischievous prejudices of her people have been inflamed and strengthened, and it has often appeared that any unforeseen incident, any trifle not provided for, might light up a civil war throughout the island.”

All progress has ceased, and we have again a dreary outlook of murder, incendiarism, and sedition. This is all true; but I trust that, even in the face of all this, I shall not be considered too sanguine in predicting the probability for Ireland of a day of brightness and tranquillity, after her long night of tempestuous darkness. Are hers the only clouds without silver lining? the only storms to which shall succeed no calm? In order to grasp my view, we must again turn to Mr. Senior's article, and see how things stood when it



was written. If their present aspect is less discouraging—if the air is somewhat clearer than it was then—my hypothesis is probably correct. Mr. Senior speaks of Ireland as affected by five great evils—two material, and three moral or physical. The two material are want of capital and want of small proprietors. The three moral are *Insecurity*, Indolence, and Ignorance.

Since he wrote several reforms, which he partly advocated, and two or three vast changes besides have come over the aspect of affairs in Ireland. The whole Poor Law system has been reformed, and put on a fairly good basis. The Land Laws have been much altered, and the tenant has been placed on an infinitely better footing than that of his English brother. The Established Church (so much anathematized) has been disestablished; the Roman Catholics are now on equal terms all round with their Protestant fellow-countrymen; while Intermediate Education has been aided by grants of money; and even the establishment of a peasant proprietary has been set on foot by the Bright clauses of the Land Act.

Emigration between 1847 and 1853 has in many parts of the country cleared away the surplus population, and left only thriving farmers and peaceably-disposed persons. Railways have opened up remote districts, legislation has every year busied itself with Irish affairs, and more effectual work has been done in Ireland during



the thirty-six years since Mr. Senior wrote than has been accomplished in other lands during centuries.

The five great evils still exist, but in diminished force. Let us take them in succession, and examine by how much they are decreased—*want of capital*. In the first place, slowly though surely, capital is or *was* coming into Ireland. After the great famine of 1847 all development was checked for some years. In 1853 things began to recover; the Landed Estates <sup>Committee</sup> enabled the proprietors to place their estates in the market; the capitalist and the speculator purchased, evicted, and consolidated, and though all must look sadly back to these times, they were necessary, and were in the long run beneficial. Had Ireland been in 1880 as it was in 1847, another famine, another plague would have prevailed, not merely the time of want which was the result last year of three bad seasons. To resume, between 1860 and 1875 there arrived the good years when all prices went up, credit was unlimited, and capital flowed into the country. Then came the sudden depression in trade, banks breaking, crops failing, bad seasons, foreign produce flooding the markets, and all the attendant miseries of such a time—agitation, first of all, then sedition, Fenianism, Ribbonism, and worst of all the Communism of the Irish-American. In England men accustomed to centuries of law and order bore up uncomplainingly under the strain, and



class stood by class. In Ireland the demagogue saw his opportunity, and the people half-educated, unnerved, and with no moral pluck, fell an easy prey to the political nostrum-monger or the furious Communist who promised everything. This disease—for there is no other name for it—begins in the west, and in parts where capital has not gained access, and though it has affected many parts now because unchecked at the first, I venture to say that its power is less than if it had started into being on the same basis in the time of Mr. Senior. We can therefore say conscientiously, the want of capital is less since the effects of that want are being localized.

Now comes the want of small proprietors. By this I understand Mr. Senior to mean the middle-class, the yeoman farmer owning his own land, or the large shopkeeper who has a farm as well as his store. This is still a great want in Ireland; but were the first of the moral evils, Insecurity, removed, a substantial middle-class would quickly take its proper place, especially if the transfer of land were simplified and made cheaper, which seems to be one of the reforms most needed all over the United Kingdom. It is worth remarking here, that the creation of a middle-class and the dispelling of insecurity must go hand-in-hand. The presence of security will tempt the man who has saved to invest in land, the safest deposit for his money, and will form a class whose moral



courage and interest in the welfare of the body politic will do more to produce true loyalty—that is, love of law—than all the theories of one statesman or the coercion acts of another.

*Insecurity.*—Here we have the clue to all the difficulties connected with the Government of Ireland. There exists, as it were, a freemasonry of hatred to all law and order, which is permanently disastrous to the whole people. Here it is Ribbonism, there Fenianism, elsewhere Roryism or some other “ism.” In almost every locality there is a small knot of conspirators who, as soon as bad times appear, working on the timidity, the idleness, or that love of plotting belonging to the Irish nature, draw together all the bad characters within reach and produce what is called in the papers “The State of Ireland.” Wherever the Irish people exist in large numbers you find among them this peculiarity, this curious love of breaking the law. In the Australian Bush, with Dan Kelly and his gang. In American mining centres, in Pennsylvania, at Seranton and Pittsburg, where it produces the Molly Maguires. In San Francisco, with Kearney and his Land and Labour League (the parent of the present Land League in Ireland). In the New York Bowery, where a state of terrorism exists unexampled in any civilized town, and aptly described by Lever’s anecdote of “the Tappagers” in *Con Cregan*; and lastly the same element was strong in London quite lately, and might have



been seen in full swing in Jennings's Court and parts of Whitechapel. It was this system of illegal association, this evil type of trades-unionism, which was denounced by O'Connell, who himself moved for a Committee to inquire into it, and who, with reference to the outrages committed under its sanction, says, "Some of those who have not murdered with their own hands have paid three shillings a week out of their wages for the hire of assassins." It was owing to these secret societies, to quote Mr. Senior again, "that shipbuilding, once a flourishing trade in Dublin, was destroyed." Ribbonism is the agricultural; Fenianism the political type of these assassination committees. Ribbonism is the more honest and more permanent of the two. Fenianism is merely the growth of Irish-American hatred towards England, and combines with the other "isms" only when the right or opportune moment arrives. The only successful way to deal with these societies is to treat them as the authorities of the United States treated the Molly Maguire bands (the Ribbonmen of Pittsburg), viz., to fight them with their own weapons—secrecy, espionage, and, if need be, terrorism. Once the ringleaders are captured and dealt with, the societies must dissolve. Let Government attack these associations through secret and well-paid agents, let their ramifications be traced out, their projectors and active leaders be captured, and, if necessary, change the scene



of their trial outside their own districts, and the whole fabric of Ribbonism will come down. This can be accomplished if properly initiated. How was Thuggism destroyed in India? By these means alone; and, horrible though it is to use them, surely it is fairer to employ them against men who in cold blood slay their own countrymen without a shadow of excuse than against fanatics who dream they are serving their gods by the murders they commit.

In Ribbonism, now, if punishment does come it is not the leader of the lodge who suffers, it is his wretched tool, often half-witted, and always of the low, ignorant class. In Fenianism similarly the demagogue, the seditious speaker, the arch-conspirator, goes scot-free back to America or elsewhere, while fifty or a hundred wretched shop-boys and labourers become the victims of their own folly and of the inertia of a party Government. These societies exist permanently in some parts of Ireland, remaining apparently dormant until aroused into action by some individual man more daring than his fellows. They can be started almost everywhere in Ireland if two or three violent men choose to associate themselves, and succeed in establishing their influence and the terror of their violence. I have known quiet districts turned into most disturbed ones by the advent of a few violent Fenians or Ribbonmen. The whole thing is a question of terrorism and



fear. Is the small Irish farmer, living away from towns and civilization, more likely to pay an annual subsidy of a few shillings to the nearest Ribbon lodge, and thereby save himself, his household, his cattle from danger or death, or to put his trust in a police force which may arrive an hour or two after his house is burnt, or perhaps scour the country when he has been shot? The police force of Ireland, though magnificent and soldier-like, is as inefficient as a detective force as a battalion of Foot Guards. The people will, undoubtedly, give little or no assistance to the law; but then we must remember that, owing to centuries of oppression and misery and servility, the whole moral nature of the Irish is low in tone and false. All Englishmen must recollect that for many centuries Ireland has been atrociously badly governed, and that they are reaping the hatred which was sown by their ancestors. It is an unreasoning hatred, but a traditional one, and therefore kept alive more easily as being handed down from father to son. This hatred is also encouraged by the American-Irish press, and all the seditious nonsense that is written in Glasgow and Dublin. No one who does not know the Irish people intimately can have any conception of the intensity of this hatred or of its unreasonableness. It does not, of course, exist so much among the middle or upper classes, but among the lower to an immeasurable extent. If



England desires to retain Ireland, she must still keep a very firm hand on the lower classes, and help into existence and security the middle and law-abiding portion of the population. I write as a Celt, therefore cannot be accused of partiality to the Saxon, and though opposed to all temporary Coercion Acts, I am still well aware that the Peace Preservation Act must be kept in force for many years to come if Ireland is ever to become prosperous again. The lower classes are utterly without public opinion and certainly unable to rule themselves, and ought to be treated as naughty children. The salvation of Ireland can only be managed by the destruction of the Ribbon lodges by fair or foul means, by preventing arms from being sold indiscriminately (no hardship to any honest man), and by the prohibition of all public meetings calculated to inflame the people against Government, or to set class against class. This system exists in ultra-Republican France, and I cannot see why it should not be used in Constitutional England and Ireland.

The very laws, now so weak, have for hundreds of years oppressed the people, and now they cannot protect them from violence. How can they, I ask, respect it? There exists also a traditional dislike to the informer, a dislike handed down from penal days and religious wars. In fact, you cannot heal the ills of 400 years in forty. All these circumstances combined render the Irishman of the present



day a ready tool in the hands of agitator, Fenian demagogue, or Ribbonman. There exists but one class who could have saved our countrymen. I allude to the priesthood. They might have done so years ago, but now they must go with the tide; they are paid by the people, to the will of the people they must succumb. It is more than sad to have to say it, but in many instances where Fenianism is rampant the priest must be a bit of a Fenian, where Ribbonism is concentrated he must not thwart the lodge's orders. All this is done quietly and *sub rosa*, but the fact is known all the same, and many a half-hearted man ends under pressure by joining one society or the other because he knows after all "the priest is not agin us." Had the bold idea of paying priest and parson been carried out, how different could all have been. O'Connell foresaw this when he said, "Our wish would be that Government should have proper influence over them, which a certain pecuniary connection would give; our wish would be that the Government should be strong enough, by the combination of the subjects; our anxiety is to become subjects out-and-out as the Protestants are." Thus did the far-seeing patriot advocate the payment of his own clergy. The day for that has, I am afraid, gone by, and both Churches must now stand or fall independently of State aid. This very fact of non-payment by the State is already militating against the influence of the priesthood, the people



are grudging them their dues, and the curates are descending lower and lower in the social scale. The priesthood, instead of leading, have to go on the top of the tide, and the probability of a solution of this problem, through priestly influence, is getting less and less. It rests now with Government alone to carry out some means to insure life and property (I do not allude here to the present Coercion Act) and to produce that feeling of confidence which is the very life of a nation.

I am dealing thus at length with the question of Insecurity, because on it hinges the whole Irish question. The nation must be enabled to begin to feel at rest before the reforms which have been and those which will be effected can produce adequate and proper results. Capital and all the attendant blessings has been driven away this year again by a lawless agitation, and the very peace and quiet which is most needed has once again been broken in upon by agitators and Communists. Government must, once for all, distinguish between the loyal and the seditious.

*Indolence.*—This, the next moral evil, is so warped in and out with Insecurity and Ignorance, that it is difficult in speaking of it to separate it from the other two. The indolence of Irishmen is due in a great measure to climatic effects, to the humidity, the want of a bracing quality in the atmosphere. These effects are shown conspicuously in the deterioration that occurs in English and



Scotch farmers living in Ireland. The very minds as well of the people are distracted by the incessant harangues of vicious and unprincipled demagogues, and deluded by the ever-varying and never-fulfilled promises of the different Governments which succeed each other, as one or another Party comes into power. They are bewildered and unmanned, and are unable and unwilling to shake off the listless laziness to which they are naturally prone. Even here, however, there is an improvement. Contract work is taking the place of the old unproductive day labour, and, where it is much used, is highly appreciated, which shows how well the Irishman can understand the value of time and money if brought home to him. Contract works even are interfered with by this same trades-unionist spirit; and I have known instances where large employment was stopped because some agitator thought fit to condemn the promoters of the work or perhaps the work itself. On the whole, however, the indolence of the Irish is not greater than it was, and in many things it is less.

*Ignorance.*—In many ways this really great evil has been also mitigated since 1844, and there is every prospect that the generation now springing up may be of a superior type. But in looking for improvement in the people one must not only examine the decrease of actual ignorance. Education in Ireland has undoubtedly done much, while the three “R’s” and a smattering of geography



gloss over in Ireland many deficiencies. But the national schools must *humanize*, must *civilize* more than they do, before they can boast of doing real good. The children of an agricultural population such as exists in most parts of Ireland, isolated, as many districts are, from all contact with the outer world, require a softening process to be inaugurated at school, or they will grow up learning nothing but evil through the very education they have received. For instance, no sooner do the children learn to read than they are made to expound to their elders, who cannot do so, the poisonous trash which is printed in Dublin, Glasgow, and America. Their first notions of right or wrong are framed on the lines laid down by a "skirmishing fund" note in the *Irish World*, or by a leading article in the *Weekly News*. How sad this is cannot be explained. The very natures that we must hope to find in the rising generation, clear, honest, and better educated, are polluted and sullied by the education they imbibe. What remedy there is for this I cannot see, unless that of a stringent foreign press law as in France, and a large increase to the salaries of the National School teachers; in order that a higher and better class of men be provided to meet the difficulties of the case.

So far for the dark side of the question. Now for the brighter and happier. The people as a whole are better educated than they were, that is



there are infinitely greater facilities and advantages for education than was the case in Mr. Senior's day. The attendance at the National Schools is more uniform and larger, the Intermediate Education Act has bridged over the time between elementary and collegiate education, and the various Universities now existing present such means of being trained in the higher branches of learning as did not exist at all in 1844.

To exemplify this progress I will place here an accurate return of figures relating to schools under the National School Board :—

Year.	No. of Schools.	No. of Pupils.	Parliamentary Grants.
1841	2,337	281,849	£50,000
1871	6,914	972,906	£408,388

Roughly speaking, a threefold increase in both schools and pupils in thirty years.

The rising generation of Irishmen has all before it, and all is possible to it, but many of the present one are, I am afraid, hopeless in their ignorance and prejudices—not only educationally, but in the most trivial every-day affairs, and especially in the two things they talk most about, agriculture and politics. In agriculture they are wedded to tradition. As an instance of this, a small farmer told me that he had not changed the seed of his



potatoes for twenty-six years, and was rather astonished at the crop turning out badly. As a rule, they have no true knowledge of the proper rotation of crops—have no desire for change of any sort—and if things go wrong blame the landlord and the seasons, never their own indolence or ignorance. In politics they have but one creed: everything English must be wrong—must be bad—must be intended as a menace or a wrong to Ireland; never for one instant grasping the fact that Ireland is more than fully represented in Parliament. Any disaster to British arms is heard of with pleasure, the hearers forgetting that their own fellow-countrymen—possibly their own relatives—may have been involved in the calamity. I am here speaking only of the smaller farmers and some of the labouring classes. The large farmer is generally in doubt what to do or what to think, especially just now. He is terrified for himself and his stake in the country, and he has not sufficient backbone to stand alone, so he follows a very common Irish custom—“runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds.” Still, in spite of what looks like a hopeless case, there are the elements here and there of advancement and prosperity. Agriculture is far in advance of what it was forty years ago, except in the west and some parts of the south-west. Yeomen farmers are coming to the front, and, in many instances, *will* make a stand; and if those changes come to pass which I now



intend speaking of, there may be prosperity and progress in prospect for us yet. I think I may now fairly claim to have shown that, of the five great evils of which Mr. Senior spoke, *four* are certainly less than they were—viz., want of capital, want of small proprietors, Indolence and Ignorance. Insecurity alone remains the great blot on Ireland's escutcheon, blazoned there not so much by *her* own fault as by the incapacity and folly of her rulers. I had hoped to be able to say that this evil too had diminished, and if we turn to the Devon Commission we find some consolation there. Agrarianism and its attendant crimes existed then more widely than it does now; but still, even now, twenty-eight years after that Commission, the whole of Ireland is described as "disturbed;" life in many places is not worth an hour's purchase, property has no sacredness, the reign of law and order has disappeared, and anarchy takes its place. *Ireland has gone back fifty years since last spring.* But bad as the outlook is, stormy as is the horizon, I still think there is hope; and I believe, that though insecurity is very great, yet it has diminished since 1844. Let anyone cursorily examine the Devon Commission Returns, and they will find that crime and outrage (agrarian) existed EVERYWHERE to an enormous extent; now, though it has smouldered in numberless places, it has not blazed forth, except here and there. In the west, the land furthest removed from civiliza-



tion and capital. In Cork and Limerick, always a hotbed of Irish-American Fenianism. In Kerry, inoculated by the same poison; and in those districts where Ribbonism is always alive. Those are the districts only where agrarian crime has been rampant. It is therefore clear that *agrarianism* is less prevalent than it was; and though every thinking man must have foreseen, last November, that bad times were in store for the country generally, still, so far, we have had no rising—no actual insurrection. This is at any rate a certain gain. By the astuteness of the Land League organizers, Fenianism and the land agitation were dovetailed, while advantage was taken of the exigencies of the time, and the unguarded utterances of responsible ministers, and the great influx of Irish-Americans, to produce a movement or agitation, composed in reality of the most diverse compounds. The country is still suffering from the plague of insecurity; but the spots are disappearing slowly but surely. The further eradication of these local sores is possible, and can be effected if our rulers will bear in mind the minor difficulties of the situation, and not treat the question as a party one. The present movement is, I trust, the last gasp of Fenianism and sedition allied to the discontent caused by three bad years, and a hopeless greed for land. It exists only in a violent form in the west and other poverty-stricken and thickly-inhabited districts. The true and large reforms



needed have all been carried out. It only requires an honest Government, just and impartial, to perfect the bright side of the picture, and to give reality to the dreams of those Irishmen who really love their country, and hope ere long to see her with a united people, striving for her place, and honoured as she ought to be, among the nations of the earth. On the other hand, let this Government give ear to the Land League theories, and concede to expediency what they deny to justice, then all hope for my wretched country must cease, and she must become once more a prey to faction and party strife. This will, I trust, not now be the case. The Government is engaged in attempting to put down anarchy by means of a Coercion Bill of the most stringent type, while definite promises of an amended and supposedly finite Land Bill are held out in the immediate future. Possibly, ere these lines are in print, the Bill itself will have appeared, and the two great parties be occupied in discussing its merits or faults. But I do not choose here to enter into suppositions as to what it is likely to be or to do; I wish more to show what must absolutely be done to bring contentment to the country—that is, a feeling of security for all classes. Before, however, I treat conclusively of what I consider to be Ireland's need, I should like to run over as rapidly as possible the different nostrums that have been propounded for her other so-called grievances.



First, peasant proprietary, extension of the Ulster custom to the whole of Ireland, and reclamation of waste lands. The question of creating a peasant proprietary divides itself into two portions—the large size farm or the small size. Mr. Bright, by his clauses in the Church Act, seems to wish to let the matter find its own level, and not to specify any particular size, and perhaps he is right; but of one thing, any man who has lived in Ireland (which Mr. Bright has not done) must be aware, viz., that the small cottier of Ireland is always on the verge of famine. Surely it would not be wise to create a large pauper class. By all means facilitate the purchase of holdings; and free the transfer of land as much as possible from the heavy dues placed on it; but if Government is going to stand godfather to any scheme of establishing peasants in their holdings, it will have to make stringent enactments against subdivision; or in a few years the Government will become process-server, rent-collector, tax gatherer, all in one; and the hatred of all English law will be intensified by the fact of England being the landlord. There is a most interesting article by Mr. Tuke on this question in the *Nineteenth Century* of October; but as he seems to consider peasant-proprietorship the solution of all Irish difficulties, we must examine what he says with great care. He thinks the plan feasible; so do I to a limited extent. He extols it as a likely means of turning men into loyal subjects.



This would be an advantage decidedly. But here comes the difficulty; how long have the men of whom he speaks been proprietors? Are they Protestants or Presbyterians? I fancy, from their names and district, the latter. Has Mr. Tuke ever seen the commons of Ardfert, and has he examined into the state of existing peasant-proprietorship in the south of Ireland? If not, let him remember that what may do for one part will not answer in another. One thing he states with which all must agree, that to become a peasant-proprietor with safety and to continue with prosperity a man must have capital. Many of those he visited said they had spent from £200 to £300 in buying their bit of land upon which, as nearly all confessed, it was *hard* to live in bad times. Would it not have been kinder to have encouraged these small capitalists to emigrate to where land is excellent and cheap, instead of embarking their little all in what is worn out and dear? £200 would give anyone easily two hundred acres of excellent land in many parts of civilized America, while in the far west five hundred acres of the very best can be obtained for £20. Now they are tied down to certain hardship and poverty, and to possible ruin, simply to carry out the Utopian theories of our rulers. Nature is wiser than man. She produces bad seasons every now and then, and cries out to the small cottier, "Go, leave your mountain-side to what it is fitted for, sheep or deer, and become



a man in the New World, where men are wanted to ransack the treasures I have there in store for them." Scotland cleared off her mountain peasantry by sending them to Canada and the wars more than a century ago, and the same inevitable fate must attend the people living on the mountainsides of Ireland. I shall now touch on the reclamation of waste lands. This I believe to be the most hopeless of all the schemes advocated for Ireland. There are three distinct kinds of waste land in Ireland: the bog or peat moss, on low land, the mountain, and the bit of half-mountain half-lowland which lies along the edge of most Irish ranges. If you reclaim the peat moss or bog you destroy the possibility of obtaining fuel, a most serious matter in a country so damp as Ireland, and where little or no coal and timber exist. Mountain land is, as a rule, of little or no value, the rock coming generally too close to the surface, but would be valuable as sheep land or preserved ground. The margin which, as I said, runs along the foot of the ranges, is even now much used by the lowland tenants, and is grazed in commonage in most instances. It certainly might be converted into arable by very high farming; but, as all farming seems just now at a discount, it would be better to wait before embarking in an expenditure that may give no return. As Utopian ideas seem in vogue just now, I suggest the following as a more feasible and less dangerous experiment than placing a pauper



population on a mountain-side. I would advise Government to buy up some of the large mountain ranges, migrate the poor people to the low grounds, enclose large areas, and let them in sheep walks or even deer forests. Parts of Mayo, Sligo, Galway, and Donegal are admirably suited to this. The value of sheep ground and deer forests is very great, and would pay well, while the building of lodges, the employment of herdsmen, keepers, and watchers would help the neighbouring population. It is thus that the wilderness of Scotland has been reclaimed, not by planting a wretched people where they can hardly find means of subsistence. I know that there is an outcry always against game and game preservation, and that my idea will be hailed with anger and derision, but to use a simple proverb, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." The north of Scotland is very like many parts of Ireland, and there the peasant-proprietor does not exist, while the sheep farm, the deer forest, and the grouse moor does, bringing plenty of grist to the canny Scots' mill.

"Ulster custom extended to the whole of Ireland." That is the next grand panacea. What is Ulster custom? it is undefined, is different in many places, is the outcome of centuries of customs, and is practised in a land full of hard-headed Presbyterians and Protestants, and in the only province of Ireland where manufacture exists. Its advocates say, that as it has succeeded there, and as Ulster is quiet, it must succeed elsewhere and



tranquillize the rest of Ireland also. Perhaps it might if the same conditions existed in the rest of Ireland as do in Ulster, but unluckily this is not the case, and people must take things as they are, not as they would have them to be. Besides, if applied suddenly to the rest of Ireland, it would inflict great injury both on landlord and tenant, and curiously enough not only on the tenant now, but even more so on his successor.

Let us take a case in which Ulster tenant-right is suddenly extended to a particular farm, on which we will say the landlord has done some improvements, the tenant others. Landlords do a vast amount of improvement in Ireland, generally against the tenants' wishes—*vide* Mr. Senior's account of the landlord who is not tolerated—viz., "the improving one." Should the tenant of this farm become ruined or wish to leave it, he can of course sell his tenant-right, he does so; selling the value of the improvements he has made and those which his landlord has made as well: he receives, in fact, money which he has never earned, while the incoming tenant has to pay heavily, and embarrass himself, to obtain what he would formerly have got for nothing—viz., entry into a particular farm. How unfair this all is, can be seen at a glance. Landlord suffering by loss of money expended in improvement and not repaid, incoming tenant by loss of capital at starting, outgoing tenant only gaining anything, and that by dishonesty.



“Do not permit justice to be sacrificed to expediency,” ought to be printed in large letters over the Irish Office doors. Further, the landlord who has been liberal and generous all through trying times will be giving up double what the rack-renting speculator will, should any attempt be made to extend Ulster custom indiscriminately. The rent of one will be low, and the tenant-right, in consequence, very dear; while on the rack-rented estates it will be at a minimum. Again, those men who have exacted fines will be able to turn round now and say, “After all, our hard-fisted policy has turned out the best in the long run.”

“Save us from our doctors,” as Mr. Molinari, in his letters to the French Press, says, ought to be the cry of every Irishman. Such are the quack medicines; what is the true cure? Roughly, I would suggest as follows:—An increase of proprietors by means of a simplified transfer of land, some arrangement by which no undue advantage could be taken of the greed for land either by landlord or tenant; destruction, root and branch, of the Ribbon lodges by one well-timed effort; re-enactment of the Party Processions Act, which did no harm to the more peaceful classes. I would at the same time give State aid, on the same lines as laid down by Board of Works for Land Improvement, to fisheries, railway schemes, and even commercial undertakings if they are started on a solvent basis; encourage agricultural education,



improve the semi-military police force into an efficient detective body, place the poor-laws on a more desirable footing, insuring comfort to the aged labourer and his family, and separating the deserving citizen in straitened circumstances from the thriftless tramp or professional beggar. Reforms of these types will go far to wipe out still farther the four great evils spoken of by Mr. Senior. Still there will remain insecurity. Again, this year, for the third time since 1844, Government has had to bring in coercive measures. Again comes the heart-burnings, the degradation and the misery attendant on the hopeless system of government pursued by both parties in Ireland. I say hopeless, because it seems as if neither side could ever forego the pleasure of a party victory, fought out on Irish soil, or learn even after that victory is gained that no concessions will conciliate the anti-British section of Irishmen, and that nothing but the continued and continual supremacy of a stern and just law will protect the law-abiding classes from the danger they incur at the hands of that rebellious party. All the different needed reforms are used by that clique as so many pegs on which to hang the red cap of licence and Communism, their demands being rendered purposely vague in their conception so as to be impossible in their fruition. Where insecurity and instability exist capital will not go. Englishmen will invest their surplus money anywhere rather than in Ireland,



because neither the country nor the Government give security. The country and its inhabitants by continual *émeutes* to use no stronger word, and the Government by concessions to those *émeutes*, have completely divested the whole Irish nature of that sense of confidence which is so necessary to the welfare of a nation. Yet in spite of this Ireland has progressed by huge strides towards civilization; her bank savings were in 1844 £7,601,000, in 1880 they were £29,350,000, thus being quadrupled; the tonnage in her ports has been doubled, and the price of her exports in many instances trebled. Still insecurity remains. It must be driven away by handing over all agrarian and seditious crime to the just mercy of a Commission of Judges, not to the partizan discretion of an unenlightened jury. This would inflict no evil on the peaceful classes, and would effectually put an end to Ribbonism and the other "isms" now unsettling this country. Were some such measures as this agreed to and kept in force for thirty years, one whole generation would have time to spring up accustomed to law and order, and the highest dreams of every true patriot would be realized in seeing his country peaceful, contented, and prosperous, while the possibility of brighter prospects for Ireland would become a certainty, as indolence, ignorance and lawlessness gave place to energy, knowledge and security.

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