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IRISH  
PARLIAMENTARY POLICY:  
A Letter

WITH REJOINDERS TO REPLIES.

BY

JOHN GEORGE MAC CARTHY,  
KNIGHT OF SAINT GREGORY ; EX-MEMBER FOR MALLOW, ETC.

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"Virtus . . . . .  
"Nec sumit aut ponit secures,  
"Arbitrio popularis auræ."

HOR. *Carm.* iii. 2, 17-20.

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DUBLIN :  
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1881.

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*With the Writer's Compliments.*

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## P R E F A C E.

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AT the request of some of the oldest and staunchest friends of the Irish people I re-publish these letters, in the hope that they will tend still further towards the discontinuance of a policy which, however well-intended, ably advocated, and largely supported, is in reality an ignominious and disastrous delusion, hindering practical measures, weakening our power for anything good, increasing our risk of everything evil, and turning the popular strength from the solid ground of peaceful progress into the quagmire of communistic theories and illegal combinations.

Fortunately the mischief has already considerably abated. Amongst the chief promoters of the Policy are men the honesty of whose intentions is as incontestable as the brilliancy of their talents. These are certain not to persevere in any course which they discover to be really injurious to the great interests confided to them; and for some weeks they have abstained from the Parliamentary proceedings which have proved fruitful only of

disaster. Their more influential local supporters, young clergymen in remote country districts, inexperienced in politics and absorbed in higher duties, who were at first fascinated by this strange policy, now seem to hesitate about it, and are incapable of recommending any course which their better judgment and more matured opinion condemn. Though the Land League meetings are held they are rarely addressed except by the "hireling orators," who lose influence as the people discover that they are only spouting to earn their weekly wages, a few boyish enthusiasts, whom the people perceive to be "boys," and one or two ladies who, whatever be their other charms, cannot be sincerely complimented on the brilliancy of their oratory. Meantime the wealthier farmers pay their rents and the poorer ones reasonably enquire who is to pay their expenses if they continue to resist the law.

The mischief being abated, the Land Bill is about to be introduced, and we may again hope for some practical good being done.

RIVER VIEW, CORK,

*March 25, 1881.*

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# LETTER

ON

## IRISH PARLIAMENTARY POLICY.

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*[This letter appeared in most of the leading Irish journals and was reproduced in several English and some French journals.]*

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Now that there is a lull in Irish political and Parliamentary strife it may be useful that one who has had some special opportunities of judging should state his opinion on the respective methods of Parliamentary and political procedure recommended by Mr. Shaw and Mr. Parnell.

Mr. Shaw's policy seems to be substantially the same as that which, under Mr. Butt, was approved by the country in 1874. The essential ideas underlying it appear to be as follows:—That Irish demands, however just and reasonable, cannot be carried by physical force; that the only real alternative to physical force is constitutional action; that under the constitution the granting or withholding Irish demands depends on English public opinion and the judgment of Parliament; that that opinion and judgment, though adverse and ill-informed in respect to Ireland, are open to considerations of justice and reason; that there are vast numbers of the governing classes in England who

would not knowingly persist in wrong-doing towards Ireland; that therefore the first business of intelligent Irish advocacy is to win over English public opinion and Parliamentary judgment to a conviction of the justice and reasonableness of Irish demands; that another great object of Irish Parliamentary policy should be to acquire the Parliamentary influence by which, as a matter of fact, nearly all the great reforms of the last half century have been achieved; that with this view Irish members should avail themselves of the opportunities, conform to the usages, and enter into the generous spirit of Parliamentary life, explaining Irish wants, removing English prejudices, and giving practical evidence of their fitness for free Parliamentary institutions; that a large section of Irish members, acting in this spirit, loyally pulling together as one party, honestly seeking the good of the country not the favour of the Minister or the cheers of the mob, known to be men of honour sense and spirit, would gradually acquire Parliamentary influence of the most legitimate kind, and might one day turn the often nicely-balanced scale of English parties, and command for Ireland whatever concessions reason and justice require.

Mr. Parnell's policy is nearly the antithesis of this. The essential ideas underlying it seem to be as follows:—That the policy of conciliation and conciliatory Parliamentary action has failed; that the opinion of the governing classes in England and the working majority in Parliament in respect to Ireland is *not* accessible to the considerations of

justice and reason; that force of some kind must be applied to it in order to compel the remedy of Irish grievances; that such force need not necessarily be physical force, or exceed the limits of legal right; that the power of minorities in Parliament to prolong debates, multiply divisions, and obstruct business is such a force; that the withholding of unjust rents is such a force; that the sympathy of English French and American democracy is such a force; and that the bold, yet prudent exercise of such forces would practically coerce England to do justice more effectually than any amount of conciliatory eloquence or of ordinary Parliamentary action.

Such are the rival policies. Both have been tried. How have they worked?

At first the policy of 1874 worked well. An influential Irish Parliamentary Party was formed. The Irish case was stated in all its branches. The leading Irish demands became important political and Parliamentary questions and were put in *via* for ultimate settlement. Important alliances were formed. Useful concessions were obtained. Long desired privileges were restored to Irish municipalities. A valuable measure of Intermediate Education was carried. A great advance was made in University Education. The carriage of a Land Bill, a Waste Land Reclamation Bill, and a Franchise Bill became merely matters of time. All looked forward to the period when, as parties became more evenly balanced, the legitimate opportunity for exercising Irish

Parliamentary influence would arrive. Meantime Mr. Butt's health sunk. His leadership gradually lost *elan*. His management failed in energy tact and versatility. The reins of discipline hung loose in his weakening hands. When the opportunity which he so sagaciously anticipated and so ardently hoped for had arrived Mr. Butt was dead. His wand of leader had passed to his young rival's hands: his policy was reversed; and his party was so divided and so led as to have become practically powerless. Now was this such a trial and such a failure of the policy of 1874 as to induce the Irish people, who declared for it enthusiastically then, to reject it with scorn now? I submit that it was not. In truth, the policy did *not* fail. It succeeded while it was tried. The failure came only when it was reversed. In politics, as in most things, perseverance is the condition of success. They don't know how to win who don't know how to wait.

Mr. Parnell's policy also promised well. It was new. It was daring. It was led by a chief in the vigour of youth, of indomitable energy, of most varied resources. It was served by brilliant lieutenants and loyal adherents. It was backed by enthusiastic popular support. What has it achieved? Two things, and two things only—the *Clôture* and the Coercion Act. These things followed as certainly from this policy as any political results can be said to follow from any political cause. If Parliament had not been obstructed there would, of course, be no *Clôture*. If agrarian

passions had not been aroused and agrarian crimes committed there would, of course, have been no Coercion Act. By the *Clôture* this policy has deprived Ireland of one of the most important and most highly-valued resources of Parliamentary warfare. By the Coercion Act this policy has rendered every Irishman and woman liable to be imprisoned at the option of the minister.

The land question was in course of settlement; the Ministry were pledged to it; public opinion was ripe for it; but this policy has retarded its introduction into Parliament by futile and fruitless discussions, has alienated the tenants' friends, has intensified the hostility of their enemies, has sown the seeds of dishonesty and disorder, has alarmed all classes by associating the tenants' demands with Communistic theories, and has deprived their advocates of the arguments based on what Leo XIII. called the "hereditary probity" of the Irish people—the only real basis for plans either of fixity of tenure or of peasant proprietary.

For the rest, this policy, though for a while successful, has already proved abortive. Obstruction is checkmated by ignominious expulsion from Parliament. Withholding rent is proving impossible. The foreign alliances are proving disgraceful. The Parliamentary party is almost powerless. Our only chance of a good Land Bill is in the generosity of the Minister whom our representatives have insulted, worried, and defied. The cause of Ireland has been rendered so loathsome to English public opinion and to Parliament that

anything put forward on our behalf by this section is sure to be received with the most determined hostility. A terrible war of classes has been promoted in Ireland. Though crime has been denounced, the passions out of which crimes come have been aroused. One is afraid to take up the morning papers lest they may be blurred with some terrible tale of blood. The deepest instincts of the Irish people have been wounded by seeking alliances amongst the Atheists of England, the conspirators of America, and the Communists of Paris—the companions of Mrs. Besant, the friends of Mrs. Woodhul, the allies of those who murdered the Archbishop and set Paris in flames. As I write our own Archbishop of Dublin is reported to have been insulted on the one hand and Victor Hugo adulated on the other. Is this success? I submit that it is not merely failure; it is disaster and dishonour.

For these reasons, I counsel return to the old paths of peaceful progress. The counsel may be unwelcome to heated mobs or hireling orators; but it is honest, and time will show it to be wise. It expresses the real opinion of nearly every thoughtful and educated man I know. It is in accord with the old policies by which Grattan won independence and O'Connell won Emancipation. It is in accord with the solemn warning addressed to us by the Father of Christendom on the 3rd of January last, when Leo XIII. wrote, on this very subject, these trenchant and sagacious words: "*Multo tutius ac facilius fieri poterit ut ea quæ vult Hiber-*

nia consequatur si modo via quam leges sinunt utatur causasque offensionis evitet." "Ireland may obtain what she wants more safely and readily, if only she adopts a course which the laws allow, and avoids giving causes of offence."

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN GEORGE MAC CARTHY.

RIVER VIEW, CORK, *March 2, 1881.*

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## A LAND LEAGUER'S REPLY.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)

CORK, *March 3rd, 1881.*

I WOULD wish to make a few remarks on a letter which appeared in this day's paper in defence of Mr. Shaw by his friend, Mr. J. G. Mac Carthy. It is difficult to blame Mr. Mac Carthy for not acquiescing in Mr. Parnell's later policy. There are very obvious reasons why, as a solicitor and a land agent, he should not. But in defence of Mr. Shaw's policy, he says that "it is identical with that by which Grattan won Independence and O'Connell won Emancipation." I always thought that Grattan's speeches were more defiant than conciliatory, and that he owed his success to the fact that he had the Volunteers at his back. As Thomas Davis wrote :

"When Grattan rose  
None *dared* oppose  
The claim he made for freedom.  
They knew our swords  
To back his words  
Were ready, did he need them."

As to Catholic Emancipation, every one in this country (except Mr. Mac Carthy) seems to know that it was not by conciliation, but by a formidable organization that measure was extorted. "It is necessary," said the Duke of Wellington, "to avert civil war;" "it is necessary," said Sir Robert Peel, "to avoid greater dangers." Does Mr. Mac Carthy know how the abolition of the tithes was carried? Let him read Mitchel's History of Ireland, and there he will see that the anti-tithe agitation was very similar to the present. The enforcement of that odious tax was made impossible by the existence of an organization which differed from the Land League only in not being so compact or so widespread. There is a passage in a leading article I read to-day which I recommend Mr. Mac Carthy to study, it will give him some food for reflection. It is as follows:—"It is a miserable truth, miserable for us and for England, though in different ways, that no great measure has ever been carried for Ireland as when, Mr. Bright said, 'Ireland was not menacing.' And what was true in the past is true at the present." Mr. Mac Carthy cannot see that Mr. Parnell's policy has had any other effect than to bring on coercion and the *clôture*. Well, in the first place, land-grabbing is at an end, and land-grabbing was the fruitful source of evictions and rack-renting. It would take an endless succession of Shaws and Butts to bring about such a change in public opinion. Then, again, Mr. Parnell has made the English pay dearly for their aggressions on Irish liberty. He

has forced them to abandon the pretence of governing Ireland constitutionally. He has damaged their prestige by exhibiting before Europe English rule in its most repulsive aspect; and thus it will be difficult, if not impossible, for them to play the part they have hitherto played in European politics as champions of oppressed nationalities. The Speaker of the House of Commons has been converted into a Dictator, and instead of the ordinary method of legislation we shall now have a series of *coups d'etat*. When Englishmen recover from their exasperation they will see that the attempt to bolster up Irish landlordism has led to the ruin and disgrace of their ancient Parliament. They will see that for the future they will have to choose between the maintenance of Parliamentary government or the maintenance of class privileges in Ireland; and when this view of the case is brought home to the English mind by the Obstructive policy, misrule in Ireland is doomed.

Yours very truly,

A MEMBER OF THE CORK LAND LEAGUE.

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## REJOINDER TO A LAND LEAGUER'S REPLY.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)

PERMIT me to make a brief rejoinder to the reply to my letter on Irish Parliamentary Policy which appears in your columns to-day. In the first place, I beg to acknowledge the fair courtesy, the ready

learning, and the graceful style of your correspondent. It would be fortunate if political controversies in Ireland were always conducted in a spirit so fair and by a writer so cultivated. In the next place, allow me to assure him that my letter was not intended as a defence of Mr. Shaw. Mr. Shaw needs no defence. He stands on the old lines and abides loyally by the programme on which the country pronounced in 1874. He has helped to pass most valuable measures. He carries with him the opinions of nine out of ten of the thoughtful educated and experienced men of all classes and creeds in Ireland. It is they need defence who have left the old lines, who have brought on us the *clôture* and the Coercion Act, who have rendered it possible for the minister to imprison any man or woman in Ireland by his mere mandate, who have postponed the Land Act and thrown away the power which might have moulded it for the people's good, who have disorganised agriculture, and impoverished trade, who have declared war not only against landlords but against manufacturers and shopkeepers, who have made our cause hateful to the tribunal which has to try it, and who have dishonoured us before the world by seeking alliances with the Atheists of England and the Communists of Paris. Turning now to the subject-matter of my critic's letter, allow me to remark that by his silence he concedes all that is important in my case. His reply passes over nearly the whole letter. His statement that England yields only to menace is unsupported by evidence. I think mere menace

is just the thing Englishmen do *not* yield to. He declares that "land-grabbing is at an end." I wish he gave evidence to support this declaration. He thinks the tithes were abolished by illegal combinations. But O'Connell denounced these combinations as the chief impediment to their abolition, and O'Connell must have known better than the "Land Leaguer." His only really trenchant arguments deal with the two lines in the last paragraph of my letter in which, by way of illustration, I claim as exemplars of the peaceful policy the great names of Grattan and O'Connell, and their two great achievements—Parliamentary Independence and Catholic Emancipation. I adhere to these two illustrations, and I hope to show to every intelligent reader that in contesting them my critic has made an extraordinary oversight.

As to Grattan, having written the standard popular biography of him, I ought to know something; and I can assure my critic that if there was one thing more than another characteristic of Grattan it was his firm adherence from first to last to legal and constitutional means—his lofty repudiation of all courses in the least degree tainted with illegality or disorder. In fact, Grattan was a great Parliamentary statesman—never anything more; never anything less. For long years before he entered Parliament, Flood Molyneux and Lucas had prepared the way for him by steadfast and splendid Parliamentary work. For long years after he laboured at such work with all the energy of his indomitable will, all the charms of his wonderful

personal fascination, and all the resources of his matchless eloquence. The Volunteers facilitated the victory which reasoning and eloquence had already won. But it was a help from which Grattan, with what I consider an unreasonable fastidiousness, shrunk; and the first use he made of the Parliamentary liberty of 1782 was to repress in the most decisive manner the pretensions and diminish the influence even of that loyal peaceful and illustrious body of Irish noblemen and gentlemen. His subsequent career was in strict accord with this policy. He exercised all his influence to discourage the rebellion of '98. He repudiated the United Irishmen. He voted (as I think erroneously) for coercion. With almost his dying breath he warned his countrymen against the revolutionary spirit. He described the policy of his life as being "the restoration of domestic peace by the only means by which it seemed attainable—conciliation." Grattan may have been right or wrong in this policy; but to claim him as an ally of the contrary policy is manifestly an error.

As to O'Connell, my critic can scarcely be serious in claiming him as an ally of the policy of violence. Surely, any who has read the history of the time cannot suppose that Emancipation was gained by any special demonstration of physical force or any spurt of illegal violence in 1829. There was, in fact, no such demonstration and no such spurt. The victory was the well-won result of long years of patient Parliamentary literary and constitutional labour. Then, indeed, we won

all that was worthy of English and of European opinion to our side by the justice of our cause, the tact and eloquence of our advocate, and the skill of our great leader in keeping within the lines of constitutional action. These labours ultimately produced such a *consensus* of public opinion as rendered further delay impossible. Wellington viewing the matter from a soldier's standpoint, saw that civil war would follow if it were defied. But what created this *consensus*? The years of peaceful labour which I have indicated. For the rest it is surely needless to do more than remind you that O'Connell was the life-long advocate of constitutional, as opposed to unconstitutional, means of effecting political ameliorations. Indeed, the specific lesson of his life was that such means if wisely firmly and unselfishly used, are sufficient for their end; and it is this lesson we are now asked to *unlearn*.

In fine, if there be two great political changes which owe their success to long-continued constitutional action, they are the obtaining of Parliamentary Independence in 1782 and the obtaining of Catholic Emancipation in 1829; and if there be two leaders whose special attributes were the dislike of illegal and unconstitutional means, these leaders were Henry Grattan and Daniel O'Connell.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN GEORGE MAC CARTHY.

RIVER VIEW, CORK, *March 4, 1881.*

## REV. MICHAEL KELLEHER'S REPLY.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)THE PRESBYTERY, WATERVILLE, CAHIRCIVEEN,  
*March 6th, 1881.*

KINDLY allow me space to say a few words regarding the able but illogical letter that has lately appeared in your columns from the pen of Mr. John George Mac Carthy. It is not my intention to deal with the general tone of the production. My views concerning Irish politics are quite different from those of the ex-member for Mallow. "What time German and Italian, Turk and Greek, shall be contented with each other, when the lion and the sheep shall abide together, and the calf and the bear shall feed," then it may be possible for me to agree with Mr. Mac Carthy in political matters.

I shall simply deal with one point contained in his letter. He says that Grattan won independence by peaceful progress. In that he is completely wrong. If Grattan had not been backed by the Irish volunteers his eloquence and efforts could not succeed in obtaining the redress of even *one grievance*. The volunteers, and not Grattan, obtained the independence of Ireland's Parliament. The merest tyro in Irish history knows this. Davis says—

"In vain were words, till flashed the swords  
Of the Irish volunteers."

I believe Mr. Mac Carthy to be a man of literary ability and considerable culture. He is fond of lecturing on the French Revolution, but I would suggest to him to study the history of his own country first. He seems to me to be grossly ignorant of it. I have no fault to find with his convictions; but surely a man of his stamp should not be allowed to read history wrong.

I am yours, &c.,

MICHAEL KELLEHER.

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## REJOINDER TO THE REV. MICHAEL KELLEHER'S REPLY.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)

My respect for the Rev. Michael Kelleher, C.C., Cahirciveen prevents my leaving his letter unacknowledged. But it was answered in substance by the letter of mine on the same subject which appeared in the same column. I hope he will perceive that Grattan's own view of the facts is a more reliable source of historical information than a popular ballad written sixty years afterwards. For the rest, I cannot plead guilty to my rev. friend's charge of having neglected the study of Irish history. A historical work of mine is the authority on the very subject on which he addressed you. Another of my Irish historical works has gone through eight editions. Another was translated into French

and Italian, and honoured with the approval of Dr. Petrie Dr. O'Donovan Eugene Curry and Montalambert.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN GEORGE MAC CARTHY.

RIVER VIEW, CORK, *March 8, 1881.*

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## REV. MICHAEL KELLEHER'S SECOND REPLY.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)

THE PRESBYTERY, WATERVILLE, *March 11, 1881.*

IN my letter regarding Mr. J. G. Mac Carthy's opinions of Grattan which you kindly inserted, and to which he replied in your columns, I merely made statements with proof of which I did not care to trouble you. With your permission I shall now proceed to do so as briefly as possible. First of all, let me say a word concerning what appears to be a claim to infallibility on his part, because of his having written a life of Grattan. Everyone will readily admit that a man who writes a work of any kind is supposed to have devoted much study and research to the subject; but surely it is possible that he may err on certain points. Macaulay was a great historian; so is Froude: and is Mr. Mac Carthy prepared to accept all their facts and inferences? It is said of Voltaire, that when asked by a friend how he got facts for a certain historical work, he replied, "I find it more convenient to do

without them." Does it tell against one's knowledge of a subject not to have published a book on it?

Mr. Mac Carthy's argument is that Grattan, and not the Volunteers, gained the victory of '82. This is the question at issue. Now, I beg to give a respectful, but most emphatic denial to his assertion, a denial in which I am supported by Mr. M'Nevin and John Mitchel, two historical authorities as trustworthy and eminent as the ex-member for Mallow. I shall not, however, rest on the authority of anyone, but depend solely on facts narrated by every writer who has written on the Volunteers.

Grattan, it is true, in conjunction with the other leading patriots of the day, fought bravely for a long time to obtain reform and redress; but he failed until the Volunteers were thoroughly organised and repeatedly marched into Dublin, carrying guns from which hung cards bearing the well-known threats, "Free trade, or else —," "An independent Parliament, or speedy revolution!" &c. Will Mr. Mac Carthy deny that when Grattan failed by words to right the wrongs of his country, he threatened the Government with the Volunteers? While he was fighting the government on the floor of the Irish House of Commons, he took care to have the Volunteers drawn up in the streets of Dublin. There they were in their thousands, with arms in their hands, marshalled in magnificently stern array. It was not, sir, until this singular sight of an armed and disciplined Irish people, united as one man upon the question of Ireland's rights and

claims—a sight not seen for centuries—that the Government reluctantly and through fear, conceded Ireland's demands in their fulness. England had the choice of civil war or concession. She chose the latter, knowing at the time she was unable to cope in the field with an armed and determined nation.

Now, considering all this, in the face of these facts, who can maintain that the Volunteers only *aided* Grattan, as Mr. MacCarthy would have us believe? Rather was it not the Volunteers (“aided,” guided, and advised by Grattan) who won Irish liberty?

Again, after they were disbanded and scattered, did Grattan obtain, in the whole course of his after career, any redress? What good, I ask, did he effect? What evil prevent? Answer me, Mr. MacCarthy? You are a historian of continental fame and favour! Would the Union have passed into law if the Volunteers had continued in existence? Would England have dared to propose it? Answer me again!

It is well known that the Volunteers meant fight if England withheld their demands. I shall not occupy your space with further proof of my proposition. Far be it from me to disparage the patriotism and efforts of the great Grattan, who worked unceasingly for his countrymen, without distinction of class or creed, and whose last dying words were words of love for his country. Nor is it my intention to advocate physical force. I simply wish to show, from historical facts, that were it not for the

Irish Volunteers Grattan could not have succeeded in bringing England to her knees ; and I leave it to your readers to say whether I have done so.

I have great respect for Mr. MacCarthy, but I should be displaying want of courage in not protesting against, and trying to prove the inaccuracy, of interpretations of Irish history injurious to the cause of the country.

It is men like him—men of cleverness and position, but men of misleading and mistaken moderation—who are unknowingly blocking the way to concession and calm.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

MICHAEL KELLEHER, C.C.

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## REJOINDER TO REV. MICHAEL KELLEHER'S SECOND LETTER.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)

My rev. friend from Waterville, Co. Kerry, must excuse me from continuing a controversy on historical points about which there can be no real question, and which, so far as I know, were never even controverted before.

As to Grattan's policy, it is idle to contend against Grattan's own exposition of it. My rev. friend cannot know it better than Grattan knew it himself.

As to the success of the policy it is a matter of incontrovertible history that it achieved Legislative

Independence Commercial freedom and the first great measure of Catholic Emancipation. The last achievement was long subsequent to the decline of the Volunteers. Grattan expressly and eloquently objected to the presence of the Volunteers on the occasion referred to by my rev. friend on the ground that it "savoured of an attempt to overawe the Legislature."

As to the Volunteers, their services are uncontested and incontestable; but their existence was rendered possible by the long, patient, and splendid constitutional labours of Swift, Lucas, Molyneux, Flood and Grattan. In the political order secure progress is made from within outwards. Once convince the judgments of educated sincere and independent men, and external action becomes easy.

As to the Union, it was largely brought about by the reversal of Grattan's policy and the adoption of a contrary policy which, notwithstanding heroic efforts, was easily stamped out in the blood of its victims. Indeed recent historical memoirs afford sad evidence that the unscrupulous English ministry of the day had some of the insurrectionary leaders in their pay, and actually stimulated the insurrectionary movement, knowing that it could be easily crushed, that its existence marred Grattan's policy of peaceful constitutional progress, and that the reaction would facilitate the Union.

Turning once more to present affairs, let me assure my rev. friend that I differ from his political views with regret. But I have had personal op-

opportunities of judging of the Parliamentary effect of political action ; and in proportion to my earnest desire to see the true interests of the Irish tenants promoted is my objection to a policy which I know to be a hindrance to these interests. As a matter of fact, I see that the people are labouring under a delusion ; and I have the pluck to say so. My rev. friend will find that Grattan, O'Connell, and Butt were not such fools after all, and that there are more injudicious advisers of the Irish people than the Father of Christendom.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN GEORGE MACCARTHY.

RIVER VIEW, CORK, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1881.

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## REPLY OF MR. T. D. SULLIVAN, M.P.

(From the *Freeman's Journal*.)

MR. SULLIVAN said that a letter had been published by Mr. John George Mac Carthy, of Cork. He had a great personal regard and respect for Mr. John George Mac Carthy, but, politically, he must say that his (Mr. Mac Carthy's) opinions and those of his humble self did not coincide, and he considered this letter recently published a very bad and mischievous letter. It echoed all the charges made by the landlord party against the Land League in the House of Commons and outside it : it echoed the very worst of those charges, because

it attributed not so plainly as some Ministerial spokesmen had done, not quite so plainly as some members of Parliament had done; it conveyed, however, more skilfully, but with sufficient clearness, the very same charges against the Irish Land League as being the cause of crime and outrage and turbulence in this country, the very same charges that these men had put in coarser and stronger and plainer words in the House of Commons and out of it. Talking of Mr. Parnell's policy he said—"What has it achieved? Two things, and two only—the *clôture* and the Coercion Act. Those things followed as certainly from this policy as any political result can be said to follow from any political cause." Well, now a gentleman so well informed on Irish historical and political matters as Mr. John George MacCarthy ought to know that there were Coercion Acts in this country before ever the Land League was heard of. He ought to know that they had had a series of Coercion Acts in Ireland since the date of the Union; that in point of fact they were the ordinary law of this land. People talked of the ordinary law of the land, but coercion was the ordinary law of Ireland. It had prevailed for by far and away the greater portion of the time since the Act of Union to the present day. Well, Mr. Mac Carthy goes on to say that if agrarian passions had not been aroused, and agrarian crimes committed, there would, of course, be no Coercion Act. That was Mr. Forster over again; that was Mr. Gladstone's contention, and it was the contention of every enemy of the

Irish people and of every tyrannical landlord and land agent in the country. He thought it was a great shame for Mr. John George MacCarthy to have put his hand to any such statement as that, which he ought to know very well was not founded on fact. "By the *clôture*," he said, "this policy had deprived Ireland of one of the most important and highly valued resources of Parliamentary warfare." What was the use of a resource that was never called into play, and never made any use of at all? "Obstruction is checkmated by ignominious expulsion from Parliament." He denied there was any ignominy in the expulsion of the Irish members. The Irish members were proud of what they did on that occasion, and they repudiated this idea of Mr. John George MacCarthy. "Withholding rent," he said, "is proving impossible." He denied that altogether. The withholding of rack-rents was not proving impossible in Ireland, and the landlords knew it was not. Then he went on to get up and keep up the cry about foreign alliance, and he said—"A terrible war of classes has been promoted in Ireland." That was to say, promoted by the Land League. Was that fair, or just, or decent for any sensible man in Ireland to say? Had not the classes of landlord and tenant been at war in this country for a hundred years? Had not the land laws made by a Parliament of landlords created a class war in Ireland? The object of the Land League was to put an end to this war of classes; the object of the Land League was to settle the Irish land question, so

that there should not be antagonistic interests in connection with it, and that the harassing troubles arising out of the present condition of the agrarian laws in this country, might be in the future of Ireland utterly unknown. "Though crime has been denounced, the passions out of which crimes have come have been aroused." That was the same story over again; it was trying to fasten on this association a charge that did not lie, because they had not roused passions in Ireland—the passions had been created and roused by the villanous land code of this country, and that was what aroused the passions of the people, and not what was said here, there, or elsewhere. What aroused the passions of an Irishman was to find his home levelled; what aroused the passions of an Irishman was to have the roof burned over his head, as had been done recently; what aroused his passions was to see his little children, his sons, and daughters, cast upon the world with no means of livelihood before him, and the horrors of the workhouse, starvation, and misery awaiting him. "One is afraid to take up the morning papers lest they may be blurred with a terrible tale of blood." This sort of thing would come very well from Mr. Forster or Mr. Childers, but it was quite unworthy of an Irishman claiming and hoping to be regarded by his people and race as an Irish patriot. But he said that Mr. Parnell's policy had failed. The Irish members were not at all ashamed of having produced the cloture in the House of Commons, and he (Mr. MacCarthy) was very much mistaken in supposing they had got to

the end of this game. He dated his letter the 2nd of March, and there he drew the line, but he (Mr. Sullivan) could tell him, and did tell him, that the seed sown by the League, the lines laid down by the League, the work done by the League, were destined to bear fruit in a not far distant future. If Mr. John George MacCarthy lived much longer, as he (Mr. Sullivan) hoped he would, he would find the fruit and the flower of the good seed that had been sown in Ireland by the Land League. He would find that the Irish people had been raised in courage and in self-respect and in moral strength by the teaching of the Irish National Land League, not only with regard to the land of Ireland, but with regard to the larger question of Irish Nationality. He (Mr. Sullivan) believed that they would have a glorious result from their labours in this cause, and that they were in no way deterred or intimidated by those measures that seemed to have so greatly alarmed Mr. John George MacCarthy. As for the present, if some trouble or suffering should come to the promoters of this movement, they were well content to meet it and go through it. They would not cry over it, and Mr. John George MacCarthy need not cry on their account. They should tell these gentlemen that they were resolved to go on on the same lines in future, taking whatever might befall them, thoroughly satisfied that they were doing their duty to their country, and thoroughly satisfied that the country approved of their action.

REJOINDER TO MR. T. D. SULLIVAN'S  
REPLY.(From the *Freeman's Journal*.)

PERMIT me a brief rejoinder to my hon. friend, Mr. T. D. Sullivan's reply to my recent letter. I thank him for his expressions of regard and respect for myself. I heartily reciprocate those sentiments. This is not a case for disruption of personal friendship or abatement of personal respect. Both the policies now under the consideration of the country are honestly intended for its benefit. The only question is: Which of those policies is really the more conducive to this end? As a cool and impartial on-looker I consider the old policy of constitutional action to be preferable, and I have ventured to say so, giving the reasons for my opinion. This is clearly within my right—the more especially as I know that my opinions are held by nine out of ten of thoughtful and educated Irishmen, including most of the oldest staunchest and truest friends of the tenant cause.

1. Turning now to Mr. Sullivan's defence, he objects to my statement that the present policy has brought on us the Coercion Act, and his reason is "that there were Coercion Acts in the country before the Land League was heard of." Quite true; but I fail to see the force of the reply. I was not writing about other times; I was writing about

*this* time, and it cannot be denied that as a matter of fact *this time* the Coercion Act was brought about by the policy and operation of the Land League, and the social disturbances which resulted from them. The Government were so averse to coercion that they declined to renew even the modified Coercion Act of the previous session. If the League organization and the resultant disorders had not occurred in the meantime, it is highly unlikely that they would have brought in, and it is quite certain that they could not have passed, the present Coercion Act. This was admitted at all sides in Parliament, and cannot seriously be disputed by anyone. The Land League may or may not have done good in other respects, but beyond all question it has done injury in rendering every man and woman in Ireland liable to imprisonment at the mere option of the Minister, and in freighting our trains with men dragged from their families to be flung into a weary and, perhaps, protracted imprisonment.

2. Again, my hon. friend objects to my statement that the present policy by bringing on the *clôture* deprived Ireland of one of the most important and highly-valued resources of Parliamentary warfare, and he asks, "What is the use of a resource that was never called into play and never made use of?" I submit that instead of throwing away the resource it would have been wiser to have used it. The very knowledge that our Parliamentary party possessed such a resource was in itself an advantage. It was a reserve force which helped to carry

many a good point. One of Mr. Butt's last warnings was that we should not, by the misuse of this fair and legitimate instrument of Parliamentary warfare, allow a weapon so potent to be wrenched from our hands. The wise old man's warning was disregarded, and the weapon is lost for ever.

3. Again, my hon. friend objects to my statement that "the withholding of rents is proving impossible." He denies this, and of course his denial is entitled to great consideration. But in this special matter at least my sources of information are likely to be more reliable than those of my friend ; and I can assure him that to my certain knowledge the people are perceiving the inutility of defying the law, and are sensibly submitting to it. They see that the wealthier Land Leaguers are paying their rents, and that when the poorer men hold out they are mulcted not only in heavy costs but considerable police and other special expenses. Of course they are largely influenced by what Leo XIII. calls the "hereditary probity" of the Irish people, and by his advice that their real rights and claims can be more securely achieved by legal than by illegal means.

4. My hon. friend objects to my statement that though crime was denounced, the passions out of which crimes come have been aroused. But surely this also, as a matter of fact, is certain. I believe the result was absolutely unintentional. I suppose it may have been inevitable. But the fact, as a fact, is unhappily past all controversy. Since my letter was written there have been terrible con-

firmations of my apprehension to take up the morning papers lest they be blurred with some sad tale of blood.

5. Lastly, my friend differs with me in considering it ignominious that our representatives, instead of like Grattan, O'Connell, or Butt, winning converts by their advocacy, audience by their eloquence, and great concessions by their Parliamentary skill, are simply hooted, and, when needs be, turned out. Upon this point I shall not dispute with him. It is a question of taste. "*De gustibus non est disputandum.*" To me, at least, this state of things is regrettable, as few have had such opportunities as I have had of appreciating the great ability, the brilliant gifts, and the sterling honesty of many of our present most advanced representatives. I can assure my hon. friend that our people share this feeling. They don't like a policy which leads to the wrong side of the door.

I do not think there is anything else in my hon. friend's able speech to reply to. He uses some hard words, but I would be sorry to bandy hard words with a man of whose friendship I am proud; whose honour I would defend as my own; whose historical poems I have taught my boys to recite; and of whose poetic genius Ireland will be proud long after the controversies of the present shall have passed away.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN GEORGE MAC CARTHY.

RIVER VIEW, CORK, *March 10.*

## REV. JAMES GREEN'S REPLY.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)

REV. FATHER GREEN seconded the resolution, and said that they were passing through a great crisis. Coercion and arrests were the order of the day, ejection processes are flitting around, the sound of the crowbar is beginning to be heard, Parliamentary liberty has been "waked" in the House of Commons, and freedom of the subject has been reduced to a myth. It ought to be enough for them to contend against the landlords, but they should also contend against the slanders of the unfriendly Whigs. Mr. John George Mac Carthy told us that the policy of Mr. Parnell had failed—that it had done much harm and no good; but he must be in the habit of using Whig spectacles and seeing things through his purse, for otherwise he would admit that the policy of Mr. Parnell has been a splendid success, that it has fed the hungry and clothed the naked, kept thousands in their homes, educated the people into a knowledge of their rights, got the sympathy of the world, and united the north and the south in one grand confederation with the noble object of the regeneration of their native land. But Mr. John George Mac Carthy insisted that they were losing the sympathy of England. He would remind him that they never had the sympathy of the monied classes in that country, and they were daily gaining the

sympathy of the labourers and farmers, in fact of masses of the English people, and this owing to the action of the party led by Mr. Parnell. Mr. Mac Carthy made too much splutter about O'Connell and Grattan, as great changes have occurred since their time, and circumstances alter cases. This perversion of Irish history in his recent letters is too well known to need a refutation. Most of the outrages throughout the country were the work of spies, bailiffs, and understrappers, and the people would do well to keep an eye upon them. Let them not be guilty of crime or cowardice, but be prudent, yet firm, and stand by the principles of the League. Let no man take a farm from which another had been unjustly evicted, and as sure as night follows day, so surely would their efforts be crowned with success, and the present iniquitous land system go down amidst the execrations of the Irish people.

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## REJOINDER TO REV. JAMES GREEN'S REPLY.

(From the *Cork Examiner*.)

PERMIT me a brief reply to the attack of the Rev. Mr. Green, C.C., appearing in your issue of this day.

My rev. friend says nothing in defence of the present policy for having brought on us the Cloture the Coercion Act and the Arms Act, indefinitely postponed the Land Act, and rendered

the Irish representation powerless for any good Parliamentary purpose whatever ; but he considers that the present policy has " kept thousands in their homes." To stay evictions is, of course, a good thing ; but in politics, we must consider not only the end in view, but the means by which those ends are attained. Evil must not be done that good may come. No one could object to healthy manly and peaceful agitation for land-law reform. It is the *means* employed in the present struggle which are objected to by the oldest and staunchest friends of the tenant cause, They are objected to because, however temporarily successful in keeping rents in tenants' pockets, it is quite certain that they must ultimately fail even in this ; and the tenants are too shrewd and honest not to know that rent payments, however temporarily deferred, must in the long run be made. But the means in question are objected to on far higher grounds than these. The Pope warns us against them as opposed to the " hereditary probity " of the Irish people. The Bishop of Ardagh reproves them as being " little, if at all, short of the principles of Continental Communism." The Archbishop of Dublin describes them as " unsound untheological and unworthy of the dignity of a Christian community." " If," continues His Grace, " one of two contracting parties can, by his own private authority, and without reference to any competent tribunal, modify or rescind the terms of his engagement, there is an end to public confidence, and the very foundations of society are assailed."

My rev. friend considers that the present policy promotes social union. But he can scarcely be serious in this contention. Surely, in our long series of fatal and foolish divisions, there never was a time when we were so divided as now. Union between classes is not likely to be promoted by a policy which sends its agents, as the Archbishop says, "to fawn on notorious infidels and revolutionists," and declares war, in the words of the Paris manifesto, against "landlords, manufacturers, and shopkeepers."

My rev. friend considers that I am wrong on some historical point; but he omitted to say what was the point or why he considers me wrong.

My rev. friend sneers at me for "making a splutter about Grattan and O'Connell." But, surely, it cannot be contended that these great men were fools, and that the policy by which their splendid victories were achieved can safely be discarded for a policy which, hitherto at least, has been absolutely sterile of good, and fruitful only of disaster—a mere hindrance to useful legislation which cannot proceed until this mischief is abated.

On the whole, while I have great respect for the ability of my rev. friend, he must excuse me for declining to consider him a better statesman than Grattan, a shrewder politician than O'Connell, or a sounder theologian than the Pope.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN GEORGE MAC CARTHY.

RIVER VIEW, CORK, *March 15, 1881.*

