

"A VISIT TO BODYKE" & "PAT'S BUDGET,"

ETC.

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A VISIT TO BODYKE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY NEWS."

SIR,—Being here for salmon fishing, within ten miles of Bodyke, I drove over two days ago to visit the scene of the late Eviction Campaign, and see with my own eyes what had been the result. It may well be called a campaign, for a force of military and police were employed adequate for a reconnaissance in force in an enemy's country; and upwards of twenty small forts were besieged and taken by storm, and their defenders, the poor tenants who built them, partly led off prisoners, and partly flung out on the road with their wives, children, aged parents, and miserable furniture, to live or die as Providence might direct. The scenes at these evictions were so fully described by English gentlemen, like Mr. Pease, M.P., who were present on the spot, and have been so vividly photographed by the correspondents of leading English journals, that I do not propose to repeat them, but confine myself to describing what I saw and heard myself, four months after the evictions had taken place, and more especially to letting the English public know what have thus far been the results of the campaign. It may be enough to state generally that the *casus belli* between Colonel O'Callaghan and his tenants arose as follows: The Bodyke evictions affected fifty-seven tenants. Griffiths' valuation of their holdings was £738 15s.; the judicial rents fixed three years ago before the great fall in prices amounted to £993 5s.; and the rents actually charged before the passing of the Land Act amounted to £1,524 13s. 10d. These figures, startling as they are, convey a very inadequate idea of the exorbitancy of these rack-rents. Those only who have seen the locality and are able from personal experience of similar districts in the north of Scotland to form some opinion of what would be fair rents for such holdings are in a position to realise it. I am in such a position, having been intimately acquainted with the circumstances of such holdings in my native county, Orkney, where I have a small estate, and which I have represented in Parliament for many years. I do not hesitate to say that if any practical man from that county, such as Colonel Balfour, an excellent landlord and staunch Conservative, or Mr. Gold, Lord Zetland's factor for his large estate, had been called in to value this Bodyke estate three years ago, before the great fall in prices, they would have fixed the rents at least as low, and probably lower than Griffiths' valuation. And this, irrespective of the consideration that on such estates as those of Colonel Balfour and Lord Zetland the landlord has expended large sums in improvements, has made the roads and main drains, allowed timber and lime for buildings, and, to a great extent, let the tenants pay a part of their rent by field drainage, while in the case of the Bodyke estate, not only the buildings and improvements on the better land have been made by the tenants, but on the poor mountain and bog land, fully two-thirds of the whole area, the whole value has been made by tenants' improvements. The land was certainly not worth a shilling an acre of rent in its natural state, until the tenant gathered the boulders off it, built a hovel, piled the stones in fences, planted a potato plot, and gradually got on to keeping a cow or two and a pig.

One instance may suffice to show what landlord law, backed by British bayonets, really means in the way of confiscation of tenants' improvements. There is one man, Halloran, whose house is known far and wide as Halloran's Castle, from the stubborn defence it made against the evictors. He was a superior sort of man in his way, and having married a wife with a little money,



and having two brothers in Australia who helped him, and stout sons and daughters to work without hiring labour, in an unhappy hour, while prices were high, he went in for improvements. He built a new two-storied house himself at a cost of £120, and a substantial barn and byre, of which he and his sons did the labour, and £56 was borrowed from the Board of Works to buy the material. He also drained, limed, and reclaimed from barren waste a great part of his holding, partly with money borrowed from the Board and partly by assistance from his two brothers at Sydney. Now mark the result. The holding was $17\frac{1}{2}$ Irish acres, of which Halloran has been tenant for forty years, and his father was tenant before him. The original rent paid by the father was £13 10s., a full rent for $17\frac{1}{2}$ acres of such land. Griffiths' valuation was £16 15s. When Halloran succeeded his father in 1848 the rent was raised to £23 10s.; and then, as his improvements went on, his rent was successively raised to £28, £30, £31, and £33. In 1882 it was reduced by the Land Court to £23 10s. During the years of high prices Halloran just managed to pay these rack rents with the aid of annual remittances from his brothers. But since the price of inferior cattle, pigs, and oats—the sole saleable produce of his farm—has fallen nearly one-half, it became impossible. He fell into arrear, was evicted, his whole property confiscated without compensation, and he is at this moment a trespasser in his own house, liable to be turned out at a day's notice. How would any impartial man from England, Scotland, or any English Colony say the account ought to stand between Colonel O'Callaghan and Halloran?

	£
Arrears of rent, about	40
Excess above Land Court rent paid during forty years, about	300
Tenant's improvements	300
	600
Deduct	40
Balance due to Halloran	560

It seems to me that the landlord has robbed the tenant of this sum just as much as if he had waylaid him with a posse of hired Emergency men, when he was returning from the bank with this sum in his pocket, and taken it forcibly from him. This is only one instance out of many. There is not a house from which the tenants were evicted which was not built by them or their fathers, and where the rack-rents have not been paid to a great extent by the savings of servant girls in America and Australia.

But to come to the practical question which I was most anxious to investigate—what has been the result of this eviction campaign to the belligerent parties? Practically *nil*, they are very much where they were. The evicted tenants all returned to their houses directly the invading force withdrew, most of them the same night, and a day or two's work with the aid of their neighbours soon rebuilt the breaches and repaired damages. The scanty live stock had all been driven off to the mountains. The police could not carry away the growing crops of oats and potatoes. So the evicted tenants simply returned, dug up their potatoes as they wanted them for daily use, and are living on just as formerly. In fact, materially they are rather better off for being evicted, for, if the compromise had been accepted by which Colonel O'Callaghan would have received £907 to stay evictions, they would have had to spend the last penny they could raise to contribute their quota, which, after a careful canvass, was found to be £457, the balance coming from a donation by Mr. Tuke of £300, and a loan of £150 from a bank on Father Murphy's personal security. They are better off, therefore, by this £457, and by a considerable amount which has been contributed from outside sources, owing to the horror excited by the evictions. For instance, each of the girls who were imprisoned for a month got £5 and a medal, and I saw several of them who had got decent new gowns

and were made the heroines of the whole country-side, as the result of Mr. Balfour's attempt to enforce "law and order" by coercion. In fact, coercion is perfectly futile, and only defeats its object, unless it goes the full length of shooting and hanging. A Genghis Khan may coerce Turkestan effectually by raising a pyramid of 80,000 human heads, but the attempt to coerce a whole people by giving a few poor girls fame, a medal, and a £5 note, in exchange for a month's imprisonment, or by shutting up their leading members of Parliament and journalists for three months with, or without, hard labour, is foredoomed to failure. Now look at the other side of the question—the result to the landlord. He is out of pocket £907, which he might have had, and at least £200 or £300 more for expenses of lawyers and Emergency men. And he is farther off than ever from receiving a penny of rent. Four months ago the tenants would have raised £457 and agreed to pay judicial rent, with an abatement of 25 or 30 per cent. to meet a fall of 40 or 50 per cent. in prices; and philanthropic friends would have subscribed £450 to avert the misery of evictions. But now he has shot his bolt and done his worst, and where is he? The tenants will certainly not be more but less able six or twelve months hence to pay rents or raise £457, than they were last June, for all industry is paralysed. They are afraid to keep stock or plant crops while they are trespassers, liable to have everything seized at a day's notice. In twelve months most of the land on the estate will be overgrown with weeds and rushes; in three years it will relapse into its original waste. It is not likely that friends who would have subscribed £450 to avert evictions will subscribe it to go into Colonel O'Callaghan's pocket after the way he has behaved. As for letting the land to other tenants or farming it himself, it is impossible. He must begin his eviction campaign again, and not only employ a little army to evict, but keep it there to occupy. Failing this, if he levelled every house to the ground, the country-side would flock in and rebuild them all, and the old tenants would be back in them in a fortnight. But suppose them all locked up in prison, or dead of famine and fever, what would he do next? If he attempted to stock and farm the land himself by Emergency men at 15s. a week, he would be ruined in twelve months. His chance of finding a single new tenant is absolutely *nil*. To say nothing of risk of life, which would be considerable, for although the people of the district are most quiet and peaceable, and the influence of their priest all powerful to prevent outrages, it is idle to suppose that in the whole county of Clare there is not a single desperate and fanatical man who is prepared, like the Nihilist in Russia, to risk his life for what he considers the cause. And even if the new tenant's life were spared it would be made a burden to him, for he would be shunned like a leper. Talk of boycotting, you might as well try to force me to speak to Mr. Langworthy or Colonel Hughes-Hallett, if we were members of the same club, as to prevent a man who took an evicted farm from being rigidly boycotted. And, apart from such considerations, no man in his senses would take a farm of such land at present depressed prices, and from such a landlord, without an allowance to put it in order, and a rent secured for a long term, certainly not higher than 30 per cent. below the judicial rent fixed in 1882, and even at such a rent no man could pay it and support a family decently without outside aid beyond the produce of the soil. There cannot be the remotest doubt that as a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, Colonel O'Callaghan would have done far better to accept the £907 for arrears, and give a reduction of 25 per cent. on the judicial rents, in which case they would have been paid quietly, as they have been and are being paid universally where landlords have given their tenants reductions to meet the bad times, even less than the average reductions given by English and Scotch landlords.

Space does not permit me to relate the touching and pathetic incidents which I met at every step—the little girl of nine, the best reader of her class at the Female National School, who, as the schoolmistress whispered to me, was one of a young family of five whose mother had been rendered insane by the horrors

of the eviction, and was now in the County Lunatic Asylum ; the poor tottering old woman, Mary Wall, aged seventy-one, whose eye was blackened by a blow from a policeman, a fact denied by Colonel King-Harman in the House of Commons, but as to which I can testify that she had permanently lost the sight of that eye, for she could not see a shilling when held up on that side of her head ; the widow Hogan, whose husband held two small farms, together fourteen acres, at the exorbitant rent of £20, and when he died his widow pleaded to be allowed to give up one and remain at the corresponding rent in the other, but was answered by eviction, and has lived ever since in a hut by the roadside, built by her neighbours, with her six young children, on charity, and an allowance of 2s. 6d. a week from the Poor Law Board, now stopped for want of funds, and whom I saw, though weakly and out of health, toiling up from the bog with her eldest boy of fourteen, carrying huge baskets of turf on their backs to try to sell and earn a trifle. I could go on for pages enumerating such instances, but I must conclude by drawing this moral. I wish I could make it a qualification of every member of Parliament to spend a month in the west of Ireland. I don't care who it is, Conservative, Unionist, or Liberal. I feel certain that every fair-minded and intelligent man, such for instance as Mr. W. H. Smith or the late Lord Iddesleigh, would come back with the conviction that the present system of land tenure in Ireland is monstrous, and what in extreme cases I can only call devilish. In going round Bodyke the exclamation burst from me, " Oh that John Bright and Mr. Chamberlain were by my side ! " The theory of the former is that the misery of the Irish people is owing to their incorrigible laziness ; that of the latter that the bulk of the tenantry are able and anxious to pay their rents, and only prevented from doing so by the terrorism of a handful of agitators. If Mr. Bright could see the network of huge walls enclosing little patches of fields, every stone of which represents hard navvy labour in clearing the barren wilderness ; and see the plots which have been reclaimed by the toil and moil of the poor occupiers in delving, draining, and liming ; and this in the face of the utmost possible discouragement by having their rents raised on them as fast as they improved ; or if he would inquire where, if those poor fellows were willing to work, they could get a day's work at a shilling a day, I think he would soon modify his theory of Irish laziness.

And as for Mr. Chamberlain's theory, it is more wildly absurd than any of the delusions of Spiritualism. If instead of making a political tour to address select audiences of landlords and Orangemen in the north of Ireland, he would go to Bodyke or any similar estate of small holdings in the west of Ireland, and, Blue-book in hand, go patiently through the figures, and cross-examine all parties, land-agents, shopkeepers, substantial farmers, priests, and peasants, as to the actual facts, he would find them to be as I have stated ; and that so far from being " able and anxious " to pay even the judicial rents, in nine cases out of ten, it is a physical impossibility to pay them, even by living on half-rations of potatoes and Indian flour, from any possible produce of the land at present prices, and without extraneous aid drawn mostly from the savings of working men and servant girls in America and Australia.—Yours faithfully,

Killaloe, October 8th.

S. LAING.

PAT'S BUDGET.

I have made Budgets in my time in which revenue and expenditure were balanced by a figure of £50,000,000 on each side of the account. I will now produce the humble budget of a small Irish farmer, in which single pounds must be read instead of millions. I do so because it seems to me vitally important that the English public should have facts and not theories in making up their minds on the Irish question. The case I have selected is fairly typical of the average of the better class of small Irish tenants, and far above that of the wretched cottiers of Donegal or Connemara. I have proposed not to

overstate the case, and to take an instance near where I am residing, as to state nothing which I could not verify by personal examination. I abstain from giving names, lest it should get the poor man into difficulties with a remorseless landlord, and therefore give him the generic name of Pat; but I can vouch personally for the accuracy of every figure and statement. The holding is $10\frac{1}{4}$ Irish acres. The tenant and his father built the house and cattle shed; they cleared the land of stones, built the fences and drains, and reclaimed the land from a mountain side of scrubby furze and heather not worth sixpence an acre. It is now rough pasture land of poor quality, bleak and exposed, and a good deal of it wet and swampy. The original rent was £5 12s. 2d. a year; the Government Poor Law valuation being £5 5s.; it was raised on a change of ownership to £10 3s., and reduced by the Land Commissioners to a judicial rent of £7 10s. Since the judicial rent was fixed the price of pigs has fallen 50 per cent., and of calves and inferior cattle fully 40 per cent. Here is Pat's actual budget for the present year. I may observe that he has a wife and five children at home, or seven mouths to feed, and that I have included the produce of the farm consumed by the family as part of the gross revenue, and its money value as part of the expenditure:—

PAT'S BUDGET FOR 1887.

REVENUE.				EXPENDITURE.			
		£	s. d.			£	s. d.
Potatoes—				Rent ...		7	10 0
1,100 stone at $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.	...	11	8 6	Rates and taxes ...		1	0 0
Cattle—				Royalty on turf, cut by himself		1	5 0
2 calves	}	5 0 0	(This was originally 2s. 6d.)			
1 small 2-year old	...			Food for family & stock—	£ s. d.		
Pigs—				Potatoes ...	11 8 6		
3—net profit after deducting				Bread ...	6 16 10		
cost and bran, &c., purchased	4 0 0			Meat and dripping ...	1 0 0		
Sheep—				Tea and sugar ...	6 15 0		
2 lambs ...	2 12 0			(Or $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per day per			
Milk ...	6 0 0			head) ...	26 0 4		
		£29	0 6	Clothing ...	7 0 0		
				Tobacco ...	1 1 6		
				Soap, candles, oil, and sundries	2 12 0		
				School fees ...	0 8 0		
				Priests ...	0 10 0		
						47	6 10
						29	0 6
				Deficit ...		£18	6 4

I do not see what item of this account can be challenged. The food of the family consisted of three meals a day: bread or flour scones and tea for breakfast, potatoes for dinner and supper, and a little bit of meat or fat drippings to season the potatoes on rare occasions. There is not much room for retrenchment in this dietary, though thousands of poor cottiers in the west of Ireland dispense with the flour, tea, sugar, and meat, and live altogether on potatoes and Indian meal. It is to be observed also that this is an exceptionally good year for potatoes, and that in average years the farm does not produce enough to support them, and they have to buy. But the hay crop this year has been very short, and they have had to buy £3 worth of hay to keep their stock (consisting of three cows, two calves, one bullock, two pigs, and a donkey) alive. This I have not included, as in an average year hay enough is grown to keep the stock, though none to sell. The few oats grown are given to the cattle; the land is too poor and too exposed to grow anything like decent crops of grain. The clothing is paid for in great part by the milk, taken by the shopkeeper, and the proximity to a small town thus gives this farm an exceptional advantage.

It appears, then, that the total cash coming to Pat from his farm for the year was under £12, while he had to pay away in cash about £20, exclusive of rent, rates, and taxes, amounting to £8 10s., and for which, until quite recently,

he had been paying £10 13s. The reader will ask by what miracle was this accomplished, and how did he manage to struggle on for twenty-five years with a deficit of £15 to £20 a year running on against him. The answer is, while prices kept up he realised twice as much for his cattle, pigs, and sheep, so that the deficit was less, perhaps not more than £10 a year, and that the rent never was paid from the farm. Pat had a brother who emigrated to New York and is now a prosperous publican; the brother took out Pat's eldest son, who is getting 7s. a day in a brewery; the son took out his two eldest sisters, who are now cook and housemaid in the same house at Brooklyn. These among them paid every penny of the rent, and sent money besides to enable Pat, his wife, and young children to live a little better than the average of pauper tenants. They have the tidiest cottage I have seen in Ireland, and look altogether decent and respectable.

But now the landlord, or rather the landlords and the Court, for there are several interests, have refused to make any reasonable reduction on the rents of the estate corresponding to the fall in prices, and such as all good landlords have given in England, Scotland, and Ireland. So the tenants have fallen into arrear, and been served with writs of eviction, and it is a question whether, in the course of a few days, Pat and fifty or sixty other tenants will not be turned out from the houses they built, and the farms they reclaimed, and cast on the roadside to perish. To show what bad Irish landlords are capable of, I may just mention a fact which came to my notice as I walked up the hill to Pat's cottage. There is a strip of green by the roadside between the boundary walls, just like the roadside strips you canter along in Leicestershire. It is, perhaps, half an acre in all, and half of that is bare rock, with patches of grass between barely sufficient to support a goose. The landlord actually had the incredible meanness to have this surveyed, and charged at the rate of £1 an acre to the adjoining tenants, one of whom was a widow seventy years of age, with seven orphan grandchildren to support. And it is more than likely that next week, or the week after, one hundred soldiers and one hundred policemen will be marched, at the expense of the British taxpayer, into this district, to support this landlord in carrying out these heartless evictions. I am almost ashamed to mention the expense, for money is nothing compared to the deep disgrace of enforcing such a system on a poor, helpless, half-starved peasantry, who have nothing to oppose to landlord law and British bayonets but their naked breasts and pathetic looks of mute misery.

The budget I have given is only too favourable a specimen of the actual state of things among the tenants of small holdings under ten acres in the poorer parts of Ireland, comprising half its population, or two and a-half millions of human souls, who with decent treatment would be as fine, bright, intelligent, moral, peaceful, and good-natured a people as are to be found in the world. It is only one instance of what may be taken as the almost universal fact, with a few bright exceptions—that the small tenants of Ireland are rack-rented on their own improvements, and that the rents never have been, and never can be, paid from the produce of the land, but are mainly paid from the savings of working men and servant girls in America.

I began with a reference to an Indian budget; I will conclude with another reference to Indian experience. Suppose Ireland were a newly annexed province of the Indian Empire in which such a state of things was found existing between zemindars and ryots, what would the Indian Government do? They would send down a Chief Commissioner versed in land questions, say such a man as the late Lord Lawrence, or Mount-Stuart Elphinstone, and arm him with full powers to make an equitable permanent settlement. What would such a Commissioner do? I think something not very different from what I should do myself if I had full power to-morrow to deal with the Irish land question.

I would take the Government Poor Law valuation as the basis for fair rents, and ten years as the period of limitation. On estates where this rent had not been exceeded, and there had been no confiscation of improvements, I would not interfere further than by making this rent judicial, and leave the landlord

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and tenant to settle other matters between them. But where the tenant had been rack-rented on his own improvements I would take an account for ten years back, setting the extra or rack-rent paid and the value of tenants' improvements made during that period on one side, and the arrears of rent due and 5 per cent. on the fair cost of any improvements made by the landlord on the other, and strike a balance. On whichever side it came out I would make it payable by instalments over ten years, either by an increase or diminution of the judicial rent. And I would make this settlement permanent, subject to the condition that the tenant should not subdivide without the permission of the Land Court. If the settlement left no sufficient margin over for the landlord, the Commissioner should have a power of making an equitable re-arrangement of all charges, such as Lord Cairns had in the case of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company.

I write from no party motive. My political career is about closed, and I never was much of a party man. If a Conservative Government can get the House of Commons and House of Lords to adopt this or some such plan, well and good. But if they will not, or cannot, then I am a Home Ruler, for the thing has got to be done somehow or other, and if the English Parliament will not we must let an Irish Parliament do it. Anything is better than allowing the guilt to rest on our conscience of using our superior strength to perpetuate by coercion a state of things which is a source of weakness to the British Empire and a scandal to humanity.

P.S.—The only criticism I have seen on this is that a rent of £7 10s. does not seem excessive for a holding which gives a gross produce of £29 0s. 6d. Possibly, if the landlord contributed the holding which produces this value. But, in point of fact, the landlord contributed nothing but the ten acres of miserably poor land, certainly not worth 2s. 6d. an acre of annual rent; and Pat contributed everything else—the dwelling-house, outbuildings, fences, drains, and labour of reclaiming from the waste. He showed me a small field of about two acres next the mountain, on which a plot of turnips and potatoes was growing. He had reclaimed every inch of this with his own hands from a waste of stones, boulders, stunted furze, and heather, certainly not worth 6d. an acre, and directly he had done so it was measured and £1 an acre added to his rent.

S. LAING.

AN IMPERIALIST HOME RULER.

I have been all my life a staunch Imperialist. That is, I have always looked upon it as the primary condition both of our domestic and foreign policy, to hand down to our sons this great British Empire, no less great and glorious than we received it from our fathers. If, therefore, I am a Home Ruler, it is from the conviction that Home Rule will not weaken but strengthen the British Empire.

I have arrived at this conviction for the following reasons:—I always endeavour to test "phrases by figures." Now, how do the figures stand as regards this question? It is an undeniable fact that as long as we maintain the present system of coercion in Ireland, we must keep there at least the present force of, say, 15,000 military police and 35,000 regular soldiers, who are practically locked up, and as useless in case of war, or menace of war, with France, Russia, or the United States, as if they were non-existent. Why do we keep them there? Practically to support the right of landlords to rack-rent tenants on their own improvements, to enforce evictions for non-payment of impossible rents, and to suppress manifestations of the political discontent which this state of things inevitably engenders. Remove these causes of discontent and we could remove this military force to-morrow, and add 50,000 men to the fighting strength of the British Empire. A local civilian police of 5,000 men for all Ireland would be ample to repress all ordinary crime, of which there is less than in any English county.

What does the strength of an Empire depend on? In the last analysis on the number of strong arms and willing hearts ready to fight for it, less than who, if they had a chance, would fight against it. It is as clear as the sun at noonday that the system of coercion in Ireland subtracts at least 40,000 or 50,000 men from the credit side of this account, and equally clear that it adds a still greater number to the debit side. There are at least 100,000 stout young fellows at this moment in Ireland who, if they could get rifles, and saw the ghost of a chance, would rise against us—as long as we maintain the system of coercion. Every cottage in whole counties would be converted into a sort of “Halloran’s Fort,” from which something more deadly than hot water and boiling meal would be poured on the assailants’ heads by determined defenders. But these young fellows have no hostility whatever towards England and Englishmen, apart from landlordism and political coercion. On the contrary, they are as civil and courteous as possible with individual Englishmen, and as ready to cheer for Gladstone and Blunt as for Parnell and O’Brien. Give them just land laws and a Parliament at Dublin for Irish affairs, and they would be as ready to fight for you as Englishmen or Scotchmen. The Militia service and the army with short service and a small pay as Reserve men would exactly suit them, and if you wanted 50,000 more soldiers you could get them without difficulty from the very men who are now opposing their bare breasts to your rifles and bayonets at Bodyke and Woodford. The sum, therefore, works out:—

Coercion: 50,000 men less to fight for you in a foreign war, and 100,000 men more to fight against you.

Conciliation: 50,000 more for you, and none against you, with every chance of the 100,000 now against you being for you.

If there is any faith in Cocker, and the rules of addition and subtraction are not relegated to another planet, this means that if we had a war with France or Russia to-morrow, the Empire would be stronger by 100,000 first-rate soldiers if Mr. Gladstone’s Irish policy prevails, than it would be if we continue that of Lord Salisbury.

Again, we must consider that Greater Ireland on the other side of the Atlantic. Statesmanship consists in seeing facts, not as we wish them to be, but as they really are. Like it or not, it is a fact that there are some six or seven millions, who will soon be ten or twelve millions, of the Irish race in America, a large proportion of whom have been driven out by evictions, and are connected by family ties with tenants in Ireland who have been rack-rented for years on their own improvements. How would you or I feel, reader, if we were sons of Halloran of Bodyke, or grandsons of poor old Mary Wall with her blinded eye, or if Mr. Gladstone had been thrown into a felon’s gaol like Mr. O’Brien, for saying almost identically the same things on a political platform? Human nature is human nature all over the world, and while these things are done in the name of English law by English Governments, you must lay your account with having this “Greater Ireland” bitterly hostile. And this is a considerable danger to the British Empire, for not only does it ensure a constant stream of support being sent from America to support agitation, but it is evident that the only possible risk of a difficulty with the United States arises from the fact that the Irish element there is an important factor in the balance of political parties. We may rail against this as we like, but it does not alter the fact. It is so, and will remain so, until the hostility of the Irish at home is converted into loyalty by the substitution of a policy of Conciliation for that of Coercion.

These are plain facts which no one can deny, and which ought to be seriously considered by every sober and sensible British citizen who prefers his country to party.

S. LAING.