

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

if you, Mrs. O'Shea, would accept the thankless office of go-between, as you suggest. A safe and secret intermediary might well prove to be of the greatest assistance to us both in our efforts for the welfare of the country." I have wondered since which country the G.O.M. had in his mind as he spoke.

On June 17th and 18th, 1882, Gladstone wrote to me. The letter of the 17th was little more than a formal acknowledgment, but in his note of the following day he referred me to something which had passed at our last interview. He had on that occasion directed my attention to the proposal to amend certain severe clauses of the Crimes Act.

Meanwhile the Irish were fighting the Crimes Bill inch by inch. It had been read a second time on May 25th after three nights' debate. The most drastic clause, from the legal point of view, was the suspension of the right of trial by jury in all grave cases of agrarian crime, which (and the Government would decide when) would be tried by a Court of three judges, in such district as the Attorney-General might decide. Public meetings could be proclaimed and newspapers suppressed. The police were vested with power to search private houses and arrest night wanderers. Finally, and against this the Irish Party especially protested—magistrates were empowered to convict summarily on charges of incitement, boycotting, and membership of a secret society.

This was the iron heel with a vengeance; it took from the Irish the last vestige of citizen right. Parnell opposed, yet not violently; the remembrance of the Phoenix Park murders held him back. But the