

mass with crime, too prone to listen to the false teaching of ignorance, unscrupulousness, or malignant faction. Above all, it is in the interest of the landlords of Ireland, who must be aware of the peril to their order of the present state of things; who now have a chance afforded them of regaining some portion at least of their lost influence or they will take part honourably in a work of justice; who can no more prevent the inevitable change than a broken dike can arrest the tide, but on whose attitude it may largely depend whether reform shall be a message of peace or a triumph of class and political party. I cannot doubt that if a just course be taken, if the relations between the landed classes of Ireland be set on a sound basis, the immediate consequences for good will be great, the ultimate consequences fruitful of blessings to a long distracted country. Yet—and this ought to be borne in mind, for it is the lesson of all history—let us not expect that any single measure will work a sudden transformation

of Ireland, that any reform of the Land System will at once cancel the ills of the past and put an end to all evil passions and recollections. The traces of these things will remain; to obliterate them statesmanship must rely on the influences of Time and just Government; the process must be gradual, and may be slow. Nevertheless, that is no reason why a great and good work should not be accomplished; why, in the noble phrase of our ancient law, "Right should not be done" in this matter; and we may hope that Ireland will, in our day, prove by her conduct how true was the remark of a keen but unfriendly critic at the beginning of the 17th century:—"There is no nation of people under the sun that doth love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish, or will rest better satisfied with the executing thereof, although it be against themselves, so as they may have the protection and benefit of the law when upon just cause they do desire it."