

The Toronto World.

MONDAY MORNING, MAY 7, 1882.

A DOUBLE NATIONAL MURDER.

By the butchery of Lord Cavendish, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Under Secretary Burke, the Irish question, prominent enough already, God knows, has been forced to a terribly sudden head.

The Gladstone government is impelled and a ministerial crisis made imminent. Ireland is in a condition of anarchy—a state of suppressed treason that may any moment blaze into open rebellion and flagrant outrage!

England is stirred to its very centre with indignation, and the cry is for vengeance!

All the world is startled by the melancholy situation thus presented!

And the Irish appear before the rest of mankind as ungenerous, unthankful and treacherous. The cry was for the amelioration of the condition of that unhappy land. This the Gladstone government undertook to bring about. But at every turn they have met with treachery. Coercion may have been a mistake; so may have been the imprisonment of the Irish leaders; but the land act was a great reform measure, and instead of treachery and assassination it was entitled to a fair trial.

What the government will do under the circumstances remains to be seen. The English nation, roused as it has not been since the Crimean war, will insist on a stern, almost avengeful, policy, and the condition of Ireland will be worse than ever.

People will be forced to ask, was Foster right and those who advocated milder measures wrong?

And much of that world-wide sympathy with Irishmen in their efforts to secure home rule will, for a time, be estranged.

MURDERS AND EVICTIONS.

It appears that during the first three months of the current year 734 families, consisting of 3892 persons, were evicted in Ireland. During all this time, too, as well as before and after, murders and outrages little short of murder were going on. A large military force has been maintained in Ireland for the purpose of preventing or punishing murder, which was indeed an essential element of what was necessary to be done. Unfortunately the other part, which was neglected, and the half which was done, has failed, largely because the other half was left undone. The coercion act should from the first have had attached to it a clause enacting that while it remained in force no eviction should be made without the express permission of the government, granted for each particular case. Extraordinary measures for putting down murder should have been reasonably supplemented with extraordinary measures for putting a stop to evictions. It appears intolerable that, while the government was restraining itself in the effort to put out fire, individual landlords should have been allowed to throw petroleum and gunpowder upon the flames. Ever since the present trouble commenced Ireland has appeared to be most unequally divided with regard to the relations between landlord and tenant. In one district landlords did not dare to ask rent, and seemed to think themselves fortunate if they were permitted to live. In another they had things so much their own way that they were able to evict poor tenants by wholesale, for not paying exorbitant rent on improvements which the tenants themselves had made. Here it was double rent; there it was no rent at all. The government, having taken upon itself the task of pacifying Ireland, should not for an instant have permitted any individual landlord to defeat its efforts by his irresponsible and dangerous tampering with evictions. The enforcement of individual rights, even if they be unimpeachable, must and should be suspended if it puts the country in peril. The safety of the people—of the state or commonwealth—is above the law. It may be said that it is all very fine to talk this way now, after the event. But the position which the use of extraordinary measures to put down murder was only half of the right policy, lacking the stoppage of evictions at the same time, was stated in The World months ago. Had the government laid its heavy hand upon both murder and eviction at the same time, there might have been a different story to tell to-day.

THE DANGER OF HALF MEASURES.

It may occur to some people that the terrible event of Saturday in Dublin is something to point the moral of Lincoln's oft quoted remark as to the danger of swapping horses while crossing a stream. Mr. Gladstone suddenly changes his policy and his Irish secretary together, and instead of peace and conciliation the result is murder, most diabolical and atrocious. The illustration is to this effect certainly, but it is something more besides. We are to see, also, the terrible danger of half measures in times of civil war or the next thing to it. When Gladstone decided to withdraw Foster and change the policy, he should have gone the full length and put Chamberlain in his place, as the most fitting man to carry the new policy into effect. If it were resolved to adopt Chamberlain's policy, then the man himself should have been charged with the execution of the decree. It may be objected that serious difficulties are frequently settled by compromise, which is true. Compromise is sometimes, effective in commercial matters, in law suits, in diplomacy, and even in war. In the latter case, however, only after the ordeal of battle has been met, will settled which way the compromise was made. But compromise attempted with an excited man, who think themselves only at the beginning of the battle instead of at the end of it, is generally disastrous. Louis the sixteenth lost his head, in no way that one, in the vain effort to compromise with the French revolution. Every

concession made to the revolutionists found their hearts to demand more; the more changes he submitted to the fiercer the clamour became for more still. In the event it became plain enough to everybody that there never was any safety for him except in one of two extreme courses—unconditional submission of meeting the revolutionists with cannon and musketry. The various half measures and changes of policy which he tried were all failures.

After Mr. Gladstone's brave and long continued efforts, must it be written in history that his Irish policy has so far proved a terrible failure? Certainly the thing looks that way very much at present. The imprisonment of Parnell was a serious step for a statesman like Mr. Gladstone, and in his circumstances, to take. It has decisively failed, for proof of which take the fact that it has been abandoned under compulsion of events. Taken by such a man as Cromwell, Napoleon, or Bismarck, it would have been a success. That is, in all human probability, Cromwell even when supreme suffered from annoyances aimed at him in an underhand way, but nobody dared openly to dispute his authority. When Napoleon, then called "a little Corsican officer," was selected to meet the mob of murderers in Paris, the struggle was a brief one, and the mob foremost troubled him no more. From that time forward foreign Jacobins, whose thirst for blood a thousand lives sacrificed could not quench, slunk away to their holes and remained as mum as mice. And fancy Bismarck changing the ministry of an important office of state, as a compromise with revolutionists in arms. The "man of blood and iron" does not do business in that way. Gladstone is not a man of blood and iron; but not being such a man, he committed a capital blunder when he put Parnell in prison. A minister prepared at twenty-four notice to declare all Ireland in a state of siege and under martial law might have ventured the step, and been successful; but with a man like Gladstone, disposed to argue and to conciliate, the step was fatal, as the speedy and awful results that came when he tried to retreat.

Mr. Gladstone's capacity for dealing with what we may call pacific or intellectual problems of government is gigantic; the number of statesmen, either ancient or modern, that can be named to match him in this respect is very small. But he is emphatically not the man to deal with murderers in arms. For that particular business quite another man is wanted.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Besides the actual murderers, who are to be held responsible for the Phoenix park massacre? Will the responsibility come upon Parnell and his associates in any degree, or will it fall upon a class of men who despise Parnell's arguments as much as they do Gladstone's, and who think the pistol and the dagger the only arguments worth minding. To what extent are the American people responsible for it, through their persistent petting and coddling of tenants and of such factious orators as Yankee Robinson? We may very soon have information precise enough to fix somewhere or other the ultimate responsibility in this particular case. But to talk of the deed having been done by "cranks" like Guiteau is utter nonsense; it is nobody's silly enough to believe it. It is clearly a case of murder from political motives, and as such its circumstances of atrocity are scarcely matched in the world's record of centuries.

CANADIAN INDEPENDENCE.

The lack of independent national spirit is never confined to public affairs. Its influence pervades the citizens. The populace, looking to their leaders for example, and seeing but a paltry one, follow the track. Communities could be named in Europe where, bolstered into babyhood by the guarantees of surrounding nations, though industry is safe and a money is made, yet there is that in their security which has confined the land till the woman often goes awfully while the man cooks the dinner at home, and keeps the children in such order as their limited spirit will permit. A most extraordinary instance of this inversion of ideas is given us by the Ottawa Citizen of last week in an attack on the courage of the advocates of independence, in which the editor, without apparently knowing anything of the persons of whom he is writing, takes it upon him to declare that they would suffer any humiliation before sending an affront from the States. How strangely inverted must a mind be, which declares a bold course that most likely to be advocated by timid people. Let me put it in metaphor, and try to make the relative courage plainer to the Citizen. Here is the picture—

Scene: Citizen boy hiding himself behind Britannia's petticoats.

Citizen boy—Please ma'am, if I come out the Yankee boy will beat me. I'm not here for prudential considerations. That independent boy standing out in front of ma'am, he's afraid. He's willing to suffer humiliation.

Britannia—Indeed, should have thought it was you. Where are the Yankees? I can't say ma'am. But I'm not afraid. Perhaps you'll allow me to put you just here for prudential considerations. That independent boy standing out in front of ma'am, he's afraid. He's willing to suffer humiliation.

Citizen boy—(looks doubtfully round)—I can't say ma'am. But I'm not afraid. Perhaps you'll allow me to put you just here for prudential considerations. That independent boy standing out in front of ma'am, he's afraid. He's willing to suffer humiliation.

Perhaps he now sees whether independence or dependence looks most spirited or most respectable. We are asked, here in Canada, descendants of a courageous people, to put up, for mere fear, with a condition which if pressed on them for the same reasons would have been rejected with scorn, I will not only say by a Grecian, or Roman, or a modern European independent province, but even by the smallest and most insignificant negro tribe. There is a case in one of the African tragedies of the last century which reflects this opinion—

Scene: Sambou, the king of Buzang, means to take your country. His is a big country, he is very strong. He wants you to give him your land and he will let you keep the hills.

Sambou the king of Buzang berry big, and maybe he beat Sambou. But he not so big by de time he beat Sambou. While Sambou, he mean he be strong. He do king of Buzang kill him, Sambou no care de ruler, he king or not. But while he kill, all his land.

This sentiment well delivered, next to bring down the house. It is the instinct of humanity, and the advocates of dependence will find it so. As long as they bring commercial, social or political reasons—and they have as yet to bring their first—their justness of dependence, they will be listened to. But if they keep crying, "You must stay with Britain, beat the Yankees catch you alone and thrash you?" they will meet scornfully across the center cry, "Well, it would be more reputable to take the risk."

Then, on the face, the declared necessity of a large country absorbing a small one is non-sensical in the extreme. In fact it advances do not attempt to support it by a single fact. They cannot. Try them. All you will discover is their profound fright, and of course in that state they cannot argue. Say, "The States do not seize the smaller lands." "Oh, but they would." "But there are reasons why they should not seize ours; most of them would dislike the addition, though they might rather like it than let Britain keep it." "Oh, I don't know why, but they would. We should be gob—gob—gob!" What can one say. It is not natural; it has never been so; if it were, there would be but one big country in the world by now. There are and will be to the end of time, many, many small countries, which their larger neighbors, for one reason or another, have not appropriated, and never will.

Let me try, as far as possible, to give a common sense view of this terrible American situation, immediately to happen on the proclamation of our independence. In the first place, it would not happen simultaneously at all. In the next, if difficulties did arise, and we chose to settle them by compromise, we would but do what Britain has always done in our name. Her Canadian diplomacy has been but a history of concessions, and if Britain can only reserve peace by continually placating the States with pieces of Canadian property, we might as well do that ourselves, and probably could do it to more advantage. Maine was largely Canadian. Britain gave it to the States. The Oregon line was Canadian. Britain gave it to the States. The Fenians in 1866 and afterwards ravaged our territory and killed many of our citizens. When was such an outrage, without compensation, submitted to here? Did Britain get us any compensation? No. Did she demand it? No. Now, could we not maintain our independence by concession as well or better ourselves? The plain fact is, judging by the history of all civilized nations, America would hesitate a very long time before putting herself in the ridiculous—and what would assuredly be called throughout the world—the cowardly position of going to war with a weak people like the Canadians. And if it should by some unforeseen contingency arise, it would not be such a war as she would wage against British Canada. In the latter case, half a million men would march on Montreal, while armies of probably not more than a hundred thousand would move against the Northwest, the Niagara frontier and Quebec. Such a war would cost as would compel Britain to conscript men by the half million as the European countries do, and would turn Canada from Halifax to Vancouver into a desolate waste of ruined farms, blackened rafter and long corpse-pits (such as you may now see in the States where the rebellion had been) would be scattered in all directions, and hundreds of acres in extent, where shall repose forever the most active, most energetic young men our land now can show. Think of the million of young fellows—you and I can remember many of them—now under that border of U.S. soil, a few years ago in the pride of strength and health, the victims of a war which was as avoidable as this to which we are probably going (for the States where the rebellion had been) would be scattered in all directions, and hundreds of acres in extent, where shall repose forever the most active, most energetic young men our land now can show. 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