

... melted before the greater anger which darkened his brow as he read the proofs of his enemies' audacity. 'How is it,' he asked, after a little reflection, and showing the first proclamation of which he had a copy, 'that you have this libel in your possession? Palfurius, who handed it to me this morning, assured me that no other copy existed?'

... lations in fact, are Christians and conspire to overthrow you. 'Oh!' cried Domitian, and his accent betrayed his terror, 'add still more his profound astonishment at this sudden discovery—they are all Christians! all... even to my niece Aurelia.'

... legal redress, for it is most unlikely that Lord Digby's executors were liable under the covenants in these leases to pay any compensation whatever. In the events which occurred the tenants, no doubt, escaped this cruel and absolute spoliation; but I have reason to believe that they suffered heavily, and what would have been their fate had they fallen into the hands of harsh or even exacting men who looked only at the letter of the bond, or even of unimpaired superiors, at once tempted to do injustice and not able to treat them liberally? Is it not evident that this would have been a case in which law would have been at issue with right, and wrong would have been done in the name of justice? As a practical question it is no answer to this that the law in England and Ireland is the same in this matter, and that the proceedings which arose in the barony of Geashill might have equally arisen, for the same cause between the like parties, within ten miles of London. But who ever heard of 120 leaseholders on one English estate, after having enjoyed their lands for two generations and added enormously to their value being threatened with immediate eviction, not for any misconduct or default, but simply because there was a flaw in their titles? And if such a thing were, perchance, to occur, does any one suppose that it would not be condemned by a force of opinion no landlord could brave, that ample restitution would not be made, or that Parliament would not find means of redress? The law, therefore, although the same in the abstract in England as it is in Ireland, is not equally harsh in its actual working; in one country it is nearly a dead letter, in the other it has often done great mischief; and the whole case is a striking example of a truth ever to be borne in mind in considering the Land Question of Ireland—that, as regards the most important points, rules apparently in all respects the same may be attended with very different results in the separate divisions of the United Kingdom. In proof of this, on this very matter, we have only to turn to the evidence taken by a Parliamentary Committee in 1865 upon the subject of Irish tenures. On that occasion we find men of the most enlightened views, and particularly desirous of making the laws of England and Ireland identical, declaring that leases made in Ireland by a limited owner bona fide ought to be protected though in some respects they should clash with the rights of those in succession, yet pointedly disclaiming the application of this principle to leases in England.

... not seem progressive or thriving, the reason, in this and other instances, being probably that the local gentry have long ceased to live in provincial towns, and that the growth of trade has not supplied their absence. Yet the place and the neighbourhood about it is so much interested in an inquiry in Ireland. An armed force, with adjoining lines, and large barracks swarming with soldiers, command the streets and the course of the river, too suggestive of the truth of Wellington's saying, that the rule of force in Ireland is continually seen. Hard by is the ford where, in 1691, the troops of Ginkell made good their passage despite the efforts of St. Ruth and Sarsfield; and not many miles off is the memorable field where, after a dubious and unheroic struggle, the 'red eyes of battle closed in despair' on the hopes of Catholic Ireland at Aughrim. Lower down the river, the decaying remains of the Celtic churches of Olonmacnoe rest on a vast and melancholy plain, like the phantoms of a perished nationality. The phenomena of the country around Athlone, on a circle of several miles in extent, are exceedingly interesting. The Shannon winds its way slowly through vast spaces of bog and morass, fringed at the water's edge by fine meadow lands, enriched by the deposit of the river. Many thousands of acres thus lie waste; and man has added to the difficulties opposed by nature to the draining of this tract; for, in order to improve the navigation, the levels of the Shannon have been artificially raised, and the area it floods has been greatly extended. This is the case along the whole course of the river from Athlone to Limerick, I believe; and an attempt having been made to increase the outfall by lowering the bed of the stream at the points where it descends the rapids, the result is, that an immense surface of land is destroyed or injured by water. It seems hardly expedient to sacrifice a whole breadth of country to water carriage, especially since the development of railways; and Lord Glanricarde, on several occasions, has directed attention to this subject, which, as well as that of the drainage to the Shannon, deserves the consideration of the Government. The tracts, however, near the great river present scenes of no common interest to the observer of rural life in Ireland. At intervals in the expanses of morass patches of yellow cornland and of pasture appear; and the signs of human industry and life are visible in the dreary landscape. As along the roads causeways opened in the waste you make your way to these oases in the desert, you come upon districts—in the words of the old Greek—"inhabited in villages," and of a singular and primitive character. Here the children of the soil have been settled for ages, probably, in small communities, and aggregated in petty hamlets, having led the simple life of the Celtic peasantry. The gradual but steady progress of their toil has opened spaces of fertility in the wild, has silently created a mass of property on the ungenial and difficult domain of nature. These interesting centres of fruitful industry are the more curious because they are in strange contrast with a spectacle of activity of a very different kind than may be found at no great distance. Not, indeed, that anything in the general character of the country immediately around Athlone seemed to me to require particular notice. The uplands, on either bank of the Shannon, which ascend gradually from the flats below are parcelled out into numerous farms, for the most part of an inferior description. The face of the landscape is not attractive; the soil of the tract is not fertile; the land is not well enclosed or tilled; good farmsteads and offices are very uncommon; and the peasantry and their dwellings have a look of poverty. But beyond the low hills that, near Ballinacree, divide the valley of the Suick from the Shannon, is a district which can be only compared to a fragment of the best part of the Lothians in the heart of a region comparatively wild, and which is a perfect specimen of what modern science and skill can accomplish in agriculture. Here the wealth and energy of a single man has, within a few years, transformed the landscape; has stamined the country for miles around with the character of the most refined husbandry; has endeavoured to introduce the highest kinds of farming into a neighbourhood previously ignorant of their existence. In my next letter I shall examine the characteristics of these districts, and the social phenomena they present,—the most interesting and suggestive inquiry that it has been my fortune as yet to make.

... last session of Parliament. Mr. Gladstone acknowledges the solemn obligations he is under to deal to the best of his ability with other subjects affecting the welfare of Ireland. 'With respect to the Fenians, he says it would have been more agreeable to the Government to give effect to the desire for clemency founded on most honorable motives; the subject is then considered in all its bearings, and reasons given for denying an amnesty. Sir John Gray, M.P., informed the Council that he believed Mr. Gladstone's personal desire was to release the Fenian prisoners. He knew the Premier was determined to settle the land in the same effective manner in which he had settled the Church question, and that he was resolved to abate the exterminating policy of the landlords. THE O'DONOGHUE, M.P., AND THE PRISONERS. In a letter to the Amesty Committee in this city, The O'Donoghue, M.P., expresses his opinion that the Government collectively and individually, heartily commiserate the unfortunate condition of the prisoners and are most anxious to liberate them, if they can do so consistently with what they consider their duty to the State; but he is equally convinced that they will not, as they cannot, without degrading the functions of government, or betraying the trust reposed in them, yield anything to the first semblance of unconstitutional pressure. 'How my dear countrymen,' he adds 'in their zeal must curse the vanity of the heartless spouters who would persuade the world that while p. w. r. l. e. r. s. to save the captive from being dragged within the prison walls, they can, nevertheless exert his release. It is this loathsome fustian that keeps the door locked, and not the unappeased wrath or vindictiveness of either the government or British people. Let us approach the government with the respect due to their position, and with a confidence which not only their acts but the attested worth of their individual character entitles them to. If we take this course, I have no doubt of the result.'—Dublin Irishman. UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND.—In the report of the actual committee of Convocation of the Queen's University of Ireland references is thus made to the education question.—'The committee cannot but anticipate that the question of university education will again be brought under discussion, and for this not only the convocation of the Queen's University, but all the friends of united education should be prepared. The committee have observed with pleasure the action taken since last meeting by the board of Trinity College, who have declared their willingness that every office both in the university and college, should be opened to persons of all religious denominations equally. The committee feel that in this direction is to be found the true solution of the Irish University education question.' They further express their opinion that there should be no university in the country recognized or supported by the State, where persons of all denominations should not stand upon an equal footing. To establish a denominational university would, they say, 'perpetuate those feelings of intolerance and ill-will amongst the members of the different religious persuasions from which Ireland has already suffered so much.' After this report had been read, a resolution was passed, on motion by Professor Nesbit, 'That we declare our continued adhesion to the principle of united and non-sectarian university education in Ireland, and that we hail with unalloyed pleasure the course lately taken by the board of Trinity College; that, in its opinion of Convocation any measure involving the omission from public university education in Ireland of the academical or collegiate element, would be incompatible with proper university training, and highly prejudicial to the interests of learning.' An instruction was also adopted to the Committee of Convocation to 'take the most energetic measures in opposing every infringement of the principle of united and non-sectarian university education in Ireland.' IRISH MANUFACTURERS.—An URGENT WANT.—The Church is now, thank God, disestablished and disendowed, and we naturally enough look for inalienable blessings of peace in the future to compensate us for the blood and rapine which cursed our country in the past. Doubtless if the Land Question had received equitable settlement, and if the tenant were secured against the heartlessness of his landlord, there would spring up in the country an energy, long subdued and discouraged, that would convert the bleak mountain side into a garden, and change the swampy quagmires into pleasant and smiling fields; but pending that consummation, can we, as Irishmen and patriots find no method of increasing the wealth of the land, or preventing its impoverishment by other means than those which spring from the soil alone? It must have been observed latterly how even the slender manufactures on which we depend for supplemental labor are gradually deserting our shores, scared by causes which some attribute to agrarian crime some to an indolent disposition in the Irish people, and some to that want of enterprise and capacity which, they say, is characteristic of the Celt. Without stopping to refute erroneous convictions like these, we must, however, admit that our manufacturing industry is on the decrease, and that at present there is not to be found for hands that fall and constant employment which is necessary to the comfort and happiness of home. The jealousy of the English Government, as is well known, deprived Ireland of the great commercial advantages which formerly arose to her from the wool manufacture, and her deprivation of that great branch of industry was most detrimental to her well-being. The wool manufacture has long since gone, and even now the exceptional causes which have operated in the North of Ireland to secure to us a monopoly of the flax trade threaten to give way and leave us to mourn over the decline of that branch of industry as we do over the wool trade. It is notorious that the very best hands in the flax trade are daily transferring their knowledge and skill to America. This is a grave and serious question, and one which affects the country quite as much as does that of the land.—Ulster Examiner. THE LAY CONFERENCE OF IRISH CHURCHMEN.—The conference has concluded its sitting. A discussion arose on a proposition of the Earl of Bandon to name the Duke of Abercorn as convener of the lay portion of the future General Convention. Vice-Chancellor Chatterton opposed this on principle, describing it as an unfortunate departure from the plan hitherto pursued, and 'from the very constitution of their Church,' which, he contended, placed the bishops in the position of 'heads of the Church.' Mr. Johnston, M.P., supported this view. Ultimately, after several amendments had been proposed, a committee was named to consider these several suggestions, and report. Sir Harry Bruce Erskine, proposed that the number of lay delegates should not be deemed unalterable; but this was rejected. A motion was next made by a Belfast delegate that no test should be required of a B. I. F. in any parish except a declaration that the voter is a member of the church of Ireland and twenty-one years of age.' Mr. Johnston, M.P., seconded the resolution, being of opinion that all tests, religious and pecuniary, should be done away with in the electoral franchise of the Church of Ireland. He would restrict government, however, to the male members of the Church. This was passed substantially. On the motion of Lord Bandon, it was agreed that, with a view to the formation of the Church Body with as little delay as possible, the archbishops and bishops be requested to convene as soon as practicable, by the churches or otherwise, meetings for the election of delegates, clerical and lay, such as is contemplated by the 19th section of the Church Act; and that these parochial meetings be held not later than the 1st of November, and the diocesan synods not later than the 15th of November, ten days' notice being given. Mr. R. M. Wade moved a committee of four delegates, two clerical and two lay, to be chosen by the synod of each united diocese from among its representatives, to frame a draft of a constitution for the government of the Church of Ireland. This would be a body of forty-eight. It was agreed that they should have

THE LAND QUESTION OF IRELAND

(FROM TIMES SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.)

No. 10.

ATHLONE.

It has often been remarked that the soil of Ireland presents a strange series of contrast as the different races that live on the island. I was forcibly struck with the truth of this, as, fresh from the sight of the noble grasslands and fine tillage fields of Tipperary, I traversed by the Great Southern and Western line the dreary and comparatively sterile tract that leads from Portlinton to Athlone. Though beyond the immediate course of the railway this country is fertile in some spots, and is not without picturesque scenery, its general character is barren and melancholy. It is for the most part a vast uneven plain, of cold, poor, and unkindly land, in places divided by huge turf-mosses, and ridged by lines of those low, steep hillocks known in parts of England by the name of 'hog's backs.' The few towns that appear are little more than villages; and, except that along the edges of the bogs you meet occasionally clusters of huts, still, notwithstanding losses by emigration, swarming with a population which by its constant toil has gradually diminished the expanses of waste, the whole district seems thinly inhabited. As you pass Geashill you run over the estate of Lord Digby—a conspicuous instance of what, on the one hand, may be the risks incurred by the occupiers of the soil in Ireland in respect of insecurity of tenure and of what, on the other, may be the effects of careful and enlightened improvement. The facts are narrated with perfect fairness by the able and honorable agent of the property, Mr. W. Stewart Trench, in his well-known book, *Realities of Irish Life*; but I can add something perhaps to the tale, and would point what I think, is its true moral. The barony of Geashill, as it is called, is a tract of some 30,000 acres, which, having formed at one time a part of the vast chieftaincy of the O'Donnors of Offaly, passed from them to the House of Kildare, and thence, by marriage, to the family of Digby, the immediate predecessor of the present peer, was an absentee who seldom visited his Irish estate; and towards the close of the last century he being then merely a tenant for life, made at different times a great many leases for terms considerably in excess of his powers. As Lord Digby was a gentleman in every sense of the word, this unfortunate mistake can be ascribed only to the negligence of a non-resident owner; but the tenants relied with implicit confidence on the supposed security of their interests; and, as Lord Digby lived down to 1856, and during all this period they were undisturbed, many of them made very great improvements, and, in point of fact, created on the land a considerable amount of additional property. Lord Digby's successor, who, it should be observed, was not a near relation, and was not under any obligations to the deceased nobleman, thought himself justified, on coming into the estate, in availing himself of his strict rights, and destroying titles which, not being consistent with the provisions of the entail, were, technically speaking, wholly invalid. Ejectment proceedings were commenced, or threatened, against the whole body of the lessees—120 families, I believe—and the question of compensating those who were thus about being extruded from the homes they had innocently enriched for the benefit of a stranger was referred to the executors of the late Earl, who, it should be remarked, were, in point of law, probably not bound to disburse one farthing. The whole country was in a state of uproar, when Mr. Trench, by his judicious conduct, in some degree calmed down the agitated waters. He succeeded in persuading the executors to allot a sum of 30,000l. in relief of the imperilled tenants, and many of them, I understand, were allowed to retain their lands, at rents, however, considerably increased. Yet, from all that I have heard, the sum given in compensation was not nearly an equivalent to the losses of the lessees; and the memory of the whole transaction is not forgotten in the barony of Geashill. This case illustrates, I think, forcibly the mischievous insecurity of tenure which exists, not merely as a matter of theory, but practically, under the law of Ireland. Lord Digby's tenants, when they accepted these leases, had not the means of discovering their defects, for it is a well-settled principle of the common law that, unless, perhaps, when a fine is paid, an ordinary lessee has no right to examine beforehand his lessor's title. After a possession of more than half a century, and the expenditure of a vast sum of money on the faith of the validity of their rights, the representatives of these men were suddenly threatened with eviction en masse and with seeing the accumulations of their industry for years appropriated by the lord of the soil, and that probably without any

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

THE PRIMACY.—At a meeting of the clergy of the archdiocese held in Armagh on Tuesday, to elect a successor to the late lamented Primate, the following names were returned to his Holiness:— Dignus—Most Rev. Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Derry, six votes. Dignior—Very Rev. Canon Tierney, nine votes. Dignissimus—Most Rev. Dr. McGeigan, Bishop of Raphoe, twenty-seven votes.—Evening Post. An explosion took place at Billinacolly powder mill, near Cork, on yesterday morning. There was no loss of life, owing to the early hour of the occurrence. Three sheds were blown up. Each shed contained two pairs of stones and fifty pounds of powder in an unfinished state. It is surmised that a spark of fire was communicated from the stones. The sheds were levelled to the ground. Some men were working convenient to the explosion.—Evening Mail. THE PRISONERS BARRETT.—Extraordinary precautions have been taken by the authorities with respect to the prisoner Barrett since the recent sitting of the adjourned Special Commission. To guard against the slightest demonstration on the part of the public, a large force of police were in attendance during the sitting of the court, and the authorities have thought it expedient to retain them in town since. A company of twenty-four men were day and night guarding the prison. The prisoner left town to-day at four o'clock. He was guarded to the train by a force of constabulary, and a strong force left with him in the same carriage. He has been removed we understand to Dublin.—Galway Vindicator. DUBLIN, NOV. 11.—A meeting was held at Limerick last night to discuss the fixity of the land question. During the evening the proceedings were violently interrupted by persons who shouted for an amnesty to the Fenians, and making a rush for the platform, took possession of it. They then proceeded to smash the furniture, and ended by entirely destroying the platform. Attempts were made to restore order, but without success, and the meeting was broken up amid great excitement and confusion. A public meeting at Javan yesterday adopted resolves condemning any Parliamentary bill for Ireland which may not provide for the fixity of Land Tenure. Oct. 28.—The Dublin Amesty Association at a business meeting held in that city last evening, unanimously adopted a resolution expressing regret at Mr. Gladstone's refusal to release the Fenian prisoners, and declaring their determination to agitate the question, and to form local associations throughout the country. THE GOVERNMENT BILL. The Irish Times of yesterday makes the following announcement:—'We are enabled to state that the main feature of the ministerial measure will be to legalize for the whole of Ireland the tenant right system which prevails in Ulster, and has proved the cause of such contentment and prosperity there. From what we have learned,' adds our contemporary, 'respecting the nature and spirit of the measure to be brought in by ministers, we believe that it will prove to be just and satisfactory to the two great classes mainly interested, as well as to the general community.'