

THE MERCHANT OF MARSEILLES.

Those who have been at Marseilles will remember that vast building on the quay, close to the Hotel de Ville, and in the same style of architecture, which, though subdivided into warehouses, bears token by the unity of its design, of once having been in the possession of one owner, and originally intended for one purpose. That great building was long known as the Hotel St. Victor, and belonged to the wealthy family bearing that name.

In the year 1700, he who bore the honors of the house was in trouble. His firm, for years the largest and richest in Marseilles, was on the eve of bankruptcy; their credit, which had stood for years unimpaired, was tottering to its base. He was a man in the prime of life, that St. Victor, but the dark, fine hair was thickly strewn with silver, and the broad brow was furrowed by lines that care must have planted there. All around the room in which he sat silent and alone, might be seen the evidence of wealth once possessed by the family, and of the luxury in which they had been accustomed to live—rich furniture, velvet and gold, mirrors, carvings, soft carpets—rare luxuries in France; even at the present time—trinkets, pictures—all that money could purchase or taste could select were gathered in that splendid apartment. Each panel of the wall contained, or had contained, the rarest paintings of largest size, and mostly by the Italian masters; but it might be observed that some of them had been displaced, and such—as the marks on the wall testified—had been of greater size than those remaining, and doubtless of greater value, though those hanging on the panels were meet for the palaces of kings. Above the high mantelpiece of pure white marble, with its elaborate decorations and majestic proportions, hung an oval portrait of a young man. It was a fair, radiant face, with an open, happy expression, and surrounded by soft, falling hair. It was the portrait of St. Victor—but of St. Victor long ago. Every now and then, and mechanically as it were, the man amid his sad, silent musings, would raise his eyes to the bright picture of the boy. What a contrast did these present—the one, how beautiful—the other, how mournful and how wan!

The door opened and an old man entered.—He was old enough to be the father of St. Victor; but it was only Devereux, once the head clerk of the house of St. Victor, now a substantial merchant of Marseilles. The dress of this person was warm and rich, but his gait was feeble, and he was also furrowed, but the lines were only those of age and thought.—There was much of harshness, of pride, of determination, to be traced in his countenance, but none of that woeful anxiety which seemed withering up the manly pride of St. Victor.

The latter rose at his entrance and moved toward him with evident pleasure.

"Devereux," he exclaimed, "welcome," with a smile, and said:

"To-morrow, St. Victor, all those bills I own of yours become due."

St. Victor started.

"'Tis so, I know, but I am safe, for you hold them, and you will not press me."

"You miscalculate St. Victor," said the old man, coldly. "I want the money."

St. Victor tried to laugh.

"You know, Devereux—you know that it is impossible I could meet the demand. I could not take up one of those bills, far less the whole number."

"I want not the amount of one, nor two, nor of three, but of all, and 'tis what I come to say."

"Devereux," said the debtor, with a cheek as white as ashes, "you might throw me into prison, you might ruin my credit and my name forever; but I take Heaven to witness, I could not raise one-half of that sum, though it were to save my soul. What mean you? Is it not as a friend you become the holder of those bills?"

The creditor started to his feet.

"No."

The poor debtor groaned aloud. "It was not always thus. Why do you now turn against me?"

"I turn not now," answered Devereux, "I have longed for this hour—sought it early and late—lived but for it. You wronged me once, St. Victor; but my revenge is at hand. Yes, they shall be thine!—the disgrace of bonds, the ignominy of the prison—proud, beautiful, beloved St. Victor! I shall triumph now!"

Does the old man rave? This St. Victor, shrinking, bending before him, weary, careworn, with dark locks, sadly streaked with white—this world-broken man! How is he worth such epithets? "proud; broken and beloved!"

But the old man speaking thus looked not at his wondering auditor; his eyes were raised to the bright, smiling portrait, and to that he spoke.

Devereux continued:

"Ah! St. Victor, dost thou remember, long ago, when thou wast a young, gay gallant, and I, but a poor clerk in thy father's prosperous house? When you, the young heir, were but a boy, I was past the season of youth. When you attained your brilliant majority, I, Devereux, was a man of middle sober age. But I loved, oh! both passionately and truly, loved for the first time, and even yet, St. Victor, that love is here!" And he laid his withered hand upon his heart.

"She was very beautiful and good, that girl, and she accepted my suit; we should have been happy, but you came. I need not tell you how it was; how soon the young, the dazzling St. Victor won from the plain clerk that heart with all its wealth of love; how soon I was forgotten and discarded, and how deeply you were loved. I need not repeat all my efforts to retain her—all my pleadings—pleadings poured vainly in the ear of passion—pleadings both to you and her. But I will remind you of one day, when, scorned by her in your presence, I made a last appeal—an appeal to her faith, her honor, to your generosity, your

piety, when, stung to madness at the sight of your happiness, I ventured on bolder words than I should have used, and you answered with a blow! But you were happy and soon forgot that circumstance. Soon the maiden died."

And here his voice, that failed and faltered, his eyes that seemed dimmed with tears, his lips that quivered, gave token that he spoke the truth, when he said that his love for her still lived, and the poor debtor, while listening, forgot his troubles for the moment, thought not of the present. The past with all its sorrow and its joy, its unimpaired happiness, its unimaginable woe, was his again.

Devereux continued,

"The maiden died. Well for her she died before your love grew cold, before she learned how much she had cast away forever. She died before remorse or retribution could arrive; she died in your arms. Above her grave we met again. My love must have been strong, St. Victor, since it conquered my natural pride, brought me to that grave a mourner. You were sad, subdued; you extended me your hand, and prayed that all might be peace between us—that all might be forgotten. I shook the offered hand—it was necessary that I should dissimulate—and I said that I forgave. Time rolled on, and you overcame your grief, you married again, you inherited your noble patrimony, you became the head of the great house of St. Victor. I left you, but before I quitted your employ I had prepared the way to ruin; I had sown the seeds of all that has followed and is to come. I also married for the sake of wealth. I entered upon the business; I struggled hard; I have not toiled in vain; I am now the richest man in all Marseilles. My wife is dead, but she has left me one son, the only thing I love; for him and his vengeance I have worked and lived."

"And for his sake," exclaimed St. Victor, "you will have mercy upon me, if not on me, on my wife; if not on her, on my children."

For a moment the hard eye softened, and the face assumed an irresolute expression, but it was only for a moment. His answer was:

"No! the anguish, the shame of a blow shall not pass unavenged! To-morrow, and St. Victor shall be the wonder and scorn of Marseilles!"

"Ah! Devereux, think not, I beseech you, of that hasty act. Think rather of my long-felt, long-shown trust in you; think, how ours has been for years the first house here. What a terrible thing this would be! the head of the St. Victor arrested—arrested, and by you!"

"All this," answered the creditor, "that you urge against the act, but stirs me more deeply towards it. To-morrow, and I have my revenge!"

"Give me but a day, Devereux, and I will essay to raise the money. Give me a week.—The ship Volant, my last venture, is expected ere the week is out. Give till her return.—Her cargo is of ore and diamonds; if she comes laden as I hope, I may meet all demands and save at least my honor. Give me but time?"

But the creditor smiled as he replied:

"Not an hour."

"Oh, Devereux, have some mercy!" and St. Victor sank upon his knees, clasping his hands in agony.

(To be Continued.)

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

NATIONAL EQUALITY.—Such is the demand of Ireland. Is she justified in the demand? May we not rather put it—Is England justified in refusing? The best of Ireland's sons—the purest of her patriots—lead on the great body of the people to demand the recognition of her rights. They were met only by insult, and were told to use their shackles to the end of time. By what right can England trample on the just demands of a whole people, who with one voice ask permission to make their own laws, and to be allowed to live in the land that bore them. Why should Ireland hold down her head and bow to national injustice? Why should Ireland submit to the hand of national inferiority? Is she her inferior in nation or endowments? Are her inhabitants mentally or physically inferior? Are Englishmen god that Irishmen must worship them? Ireland has not lost her rights as a distinct nation because of the conquest. Compelled to submit to the yoke of England, she has refused for seven centuries to give her consent to that Government. She repulses it as in its first days. She protests against it as the former population of Ireland protested in the combats in which it was defeated. It is in vain that English power has exhausted itself in efforts to overcome that memory, to cause forgetfulness of the conquest, and cause them to consider the results of armed missions as the exercise of legal authority. Nothing has been able to destroy Irish obstinacy. Notwithstanding seductions, menaces, and tortures, fathers have bequeathed it to their sons. Prescription time does not constitute prescription. Time alone adds nothing; peaceable duration alone founds the right. Few will admit that England has held peaceable possession of Ireland. Does she not trust for her connection, not to the attachment of the Irish people, but to the bayonets which menace their bosoms, and to the cannon which she has planted in all her strongholds. The two peoples have ever been at war—one fighting for existence, the other to maintain intact ill-gotten goods. To-day the wishes of the people of Ireland are as decidedly hostile to England as they were at any period of the occupation, and would no more sanction by universal suffrage this alien Government than Al. sace and Lorraine would that of Prussia. Nor can they be accused of mere obstinacy in this. They have had good reason and considerable provocation for this persistent protest against foreign legislation. Irishmen know that the Union ought not to exist but for the good of

both countries. Manifestly it has been for the advantage of England, but at an immense disadvantage to Ireland. She has to witness the decline of her trade, the ruin of her commerce, and the expatriation of her people for the good of England. She has had to witness the sacred name of justice profaned by packed juries, perjured sheriffs, and partisan judges, to forward the ends of a foreign legislature. She has had to witness coercion bills of unexampled cruelty, hastily hurried through a willing Parliament—always willing to coerce Ireland for the "good" of England, but for the ruin, degradation, and enslavement of Ireland. She has had to witness the enactment of laws unknown to the exquisite ingenuity of Prussian tyranny, reprobated by Republican America, and rebuked by the Turkish Divan. All this has been done for the "protection" of Ireland and the "good" of England. It is such "protection" as vultures give to lambs, covering and devouring them. Strange protection and strange protectors, detested alike by the protected. But is it to the "good" of England that Ireland is her slave. Reason, experience, history attest that no nation, however great, is absolutely safe while holding in repression a "well defined and compact nationality." Belgium under Dutch, Poland under Russian, Hungary under Austrian, and Ireland under British rule are incontrovertible evidences of this. Let one shot be fired at England from a renovated France, from young but growing Prussia, from fierce and insatiable Russia, from her "own cousins" of the Far West, and Ireland will demand her full rights—National Equality. Should England refuse—why "there's the rub." The consequence is obvious. Then the obdurate injustice of ages, the inflexible hatred and iron will of Ireland may then cost England much of her present sway, and lower her Imperial Crown to that of a second-rate Power. Then the fires that have smoldered for years in the hearts of the Irish people will not be extinguished by slight concession. The perjuries, the deception, the violation of treaties, the wrongs of ages will then fire the heart and nerve the arm of an enraged people. "England may then have to grant to fear what she should now grant to justice." Sir R. Peel realized this when he said, in bringing forward the Catholic Emancipation Bill: "We may find ourselves, in case of war, compelled to grant what she calls justice." Another statesman, of at least equal fame has stated that "they will govern Ireland according to Irish ideas." Ireland's idea of government is Home Rule; of justice, National Equality. Ireland will never rest satisfied with anything short of this. Ireland will never yield till every mark of national inequality be erased from the Statute Book.—(Liverpool Catholic Times.)

THE IRISH ULTIMATUM.—"Federation or Separation" that we declared, long since, to be the Irish Ultimatum. That is the Ultimatum which the country is now beginning to pronounce, and whose sound has alarmed the wary but over-confident Times. That the whole nation has not as yet declared it as a question of circumstance not of conviction; in good time, Ireland, with unshaken voice, will speak the solemn words in a solemn and imposing fashion. If the obstinacy or imbecility of the enemy let the time of conciliation and integration pass, so much the worse for him.—For every day that come bring ripeness, earnest workers, and able friends from all sections to the movement in which the good of all is aimed at. The people are ready in their enthusiastic multitudes to help on the good cause—Limerick proves this in the reception of Mr. Butt—the clergy and middle classes are ready, the clerical memorial and corporate addresses attest it—the gentry are commencing to rank in, and the sooner they do so the wiser they will show themselves.—When the hour comes, the men will not be wanting.—Dublin Irishman.

THE LONDON TIMES ON "HOME RULE."—When Mr. Butt appeared in the theatre at Limerick, ostensibly to expound the benefits of a Federal Union as opposed to a Legislative Union, but really to inaugurate "a struggle to regain that self-government of which seventy-one years ago Irishmen were unjustly deprived," the building rang with cheers for O'Donovan Rossa, the audience plating believing that if "self-government" were the object to be aimed at, the Fenian conspirator had set about attaining it in a more direct and consistent way than the eloquent Queen's counsel. It almost makes one despair of bringing about conciliation between England and Ireland by any operation of reason when we hear a man of ability and influence endeavouring to persuade a too credulous mob that an assembly of Irish legislators at College-green could have prevented the potato rot and its consequences, or checked without ruin to the State the efflux of surplus population which naturally and healthily followed the great calamity of 1846. Some persons may be inclined to regard with more concern than is inspired by the Limerick demonstration and the oratory of Mr. Butt the declarations in favour of "Home Rule" recently adopted by various Corporations and public boards in Ireland. These bodies are composed mainly of shrewd men of business, with little urgent temptation to pander to the passions of the ignorant masses, and usually they are more reasonable and temperate than Parliamentary candidates and professional politicians. It is true that the majority of their members are Catholics, bred perhaps in a vague belief in the destined greatness of Ireland as an independent nation. There is something more, however, in their adhesion to the movement for "Home Rule" than a mere sentiment. The merchants and traders of Irish cities are generally active and ambitious, peculiarly alive to social considerations. The mass of them, being Catholics, feel themselves only just emancipated from a ban of inequality, and in the flush of their freedom they are eager to seek such a place in the public eye as would give them distinction. But such men are too shrewd not to see that a political

career in the Imperial Parliament is too arduous and absorbing, and that its prizes lie far out of the reach of their powers. In Dublin they might hope for a less crowded arena and more favorable spectators. With such ambitions as these are mingled discontent at the unfortunate stagnation of trade in Ireland and the lamentable failure in almost every part of the country, except the eastern half of Ulster, of manufacturing enterprise. When, too, to these motives of personal interest are added the sympathies honestly awakened by the sight of the crowds of emigrants every day pouring along the railways to their rendezvous at Queenstown, it is easy for men to persuade themselves and others that wages could be raised and the depletion of population stayed by a free-handed Parliament of Irishmen sitting in the Irish metropolis and disposing of the Irish taxes. It is plain that such demands cannot be granted, but there is reason to fear that, for the causes we have assigned, they may yet be pressed on Parliament, and may disturb the peace and goodwill which have been slowly ripening in Ireland.

The Globe in a sketch of the debate on the O'Conor Don's amendment on the Life and Property Protection (Ireland) Bill, speaks as follows of Mr. Martin's second speech:—There is a quaintness and simplicity in his mode of speaking that engaged a large amount of sympathy in his favour, and probably few men before him ever had so much patience and attention shown them in making their maiden effort. There had been a great desire among Irish members to get him upon his legs earlier in the discussion, but when it came to the point he grew nervous, and lacked the courage to attempt the difficult task of catching the Speaker's eye. At last, however, he was induced to muster up resolution, and though there were a great many things to which he gave utterance that the bulk of people will not agree with, it is only just to say that his language was eminently temperate, even when trenching on ground where a man holding his extreme opinions might not unparadoxically have made a false step. The select coterie of gentlemen from the Emerald Isle who sit below the gangway—one of whom, by the way, has declared that he no longer has any confidence in Mr. Gladstone and his administration—of course made it their business to cheer Mr. Martin's sentiments from time to time. It certainly was a strange thing to see the ancient repealer holding forth from the Opposition benches, where he always sits, as if disliking the society of his compatriots, and desirous to keep them at a distance. He was obviously much relieved when, having brought his remarks to a close, he resumed his seat, probably exceedingly thankful to have got through a very difficult task without failure.

MR. MARTIN'S PLEA FOR IRELAND.—The interest excited in the House of Commons by the speech of Mr. Martin, on the Westmeath Bill, was justified by the high character of the speaker as well as by the calm force of his statement. However mistaken Mr. Martin may be, no one can doubt the purity of his motives. He is a most sincere patriot, and stands almost alone among Presbyterian Protestants as a champion of Irish Nationalism. His refusal to vote on the bill expresses his attitude towards the House of Commons. He is sent there not to vote, but to protest, not to argue about Westmeath bills, but about the right of England to govern Ireland. He stated his case with the clearness and force arising from long meditation on the subject, and profound convictions. The question thus clearly presented to the House of Commons is of no ordinary difficulty. How far has England the right to govern Ireland? Is there no limit to the severity that may be employed? On one side it is said that as this country is the lawful governor of Ireland, it has a right to resort to any means that may be necessary to preserve its authority. In other words, we have the divine right of Parliament, no longer of Kings. If the Habeas Corpus Act stands in the way, it must be removed. If that fails, every district must be fined heavily for the crimes of any one supposed to belong to it; if the guilty cannot be punished, the innocent must suffer, in order to turn them, if possible, into amateur detectives. If that fails, no one shall be permitted to go out of doors after dark, no one shall be allowed to keep arms, everybody shall be liable to arrest without trial or appeal. If, after all, offences should be committed, the accused shall be tried by juries who are selected because of their presumed hostility to the prisoner. A system is carried out in which every man begins the day's work with the encouraging conviction that nothing stands between him and imprisonment before night but the tender mercies of the police.—The Government journals admit that the remedies applied to Irish grievances are deplorable, but affirm that there is no alternative. How terrible soever the machinery for the repression of Ireland, it must be unflinchingly worked. But must we govern Ireland?—There is a school at politicians, small in number but strong in talent, that holds it an elementary axiom of social justice, that if a Government cannot be conducted without destroying individual liberty, if it cannot rule except as a despot, it ought to withdraw. The supreme rule of our conduct should be justice, not our self-interest as a nation. As for necessity—that has ever been the tyrant's plea. Even allowing, although it is open to doubt, that our national independence would be seriously threatened by the loss of Ireland, we should, they say, have no right to secure our freedom by making others slaves. One man has no right to enslave another in order to help him to resist the unjust aggression of a third party. But our independence is not in the least danger. It would, perhaps, pay another country to rob us, but certainly not to keep us as a subjugated province. What we really want Ireland for is not merely self-defence, but supremacy—what is called being a first-rate power. It is not our need, but our

greediness, that tempt us to tyrannise over the Irish. Such principles, it is urged, are so clear that, as between individuals, no one affecting to regard morality could dispute them. But the laws of morality are as binding between nations as between individuals. Corporations may, indeed, escape on the plea that they have neither a body to be killed nor a soul to be damned. But nations do not die, and the wrong-doing of one generation is visited in the vices and punishment of its successors. The national conscience is less sensitive than an individual conscience, because it is not subject to the same checks. Without the constant support and the remonstrances of persons affected by our conduct, we should rapidly degenerate into a mob of selfish little tyrants, obeying no law but our own interest, our passions, or caprice. In the case of a nation, it is not only deprived of those wholesome stimulants to righteousness, but, under the seductive name of patriotism there often is concealed an odious vanity which glories in despising the opinions and protests of our neighbors. The spirit of anarchy, the worship of self-will, the lust of domination, although condemned as vices in individuals, are, under various pretty names, applauded as heroic in nations. Thus it happens that conduct such as no Englishman would follow in his dealings with his neighbour is adopted without a single qualm of conscience by the nation. When hand joins in hand, the wicked may not go unpunished, but they will certainly go without an abiding sense that they deserve punishment. Such is one aspect of the question of nationality. It is a statement of abstract morality, but is it decisive in favour of Mr. Martin's claims? The rule may be good, but does the case of Ireland come under it? A statesman will not ask merely what Ireland might do at the bar of justice demanded as her own, but will inquire why such a demand is made, and how it can be satisfied consistently with the highest welfare of the United Kingdom. Scotland possesses fewer members than Ireland; its abstract right to independence is superior, for it rests upon treaty. Why does it not seek independence? The answer is well known, but it should be deeply pondered. If Ireland had been treated as Scotland has been, there would have been no cry for a Parliament in College-green. If Scotland had been governed by the alien aristocracy, supported on the proceeds of confiscation to insult the national religion, there would have been a Scotch difficulty quite as hard to deal with as the Irish. Irish nationalists challenge the right of England to govern them, but if there had not been the most wretched misgovernment the challenge would never have gone forth. An Irish Parliament is the demand of men who utterly despair of receiving justice from a Parliament of Englishmen sitting in London.—"How not to do it" should be the motto of the Protection of Life and Property in Certain Parts of Ireland Bill. Its tendency and effect will be to keep the sore raw, for it indicates a chronic warfare between the Government and the people. In no part of the United Kingdom is life or property in general safer than in Westmeath. Land agents and landlords are not safe in the exercise of the "rights of property." But the Irish Land Act was specially designed to extinguish that "right of property" which has done nearly the whole of the mischief—the right of arbitrary eviction and heartless robbery of the fruits of the tenant's toil. Since the fundamental right of property—of a man to the produce of his own labour—was not vindicated by the Government, the people were driven to take the law into their own hands. The Land Act was an admission of the rights of the people, or, at least, will be so regarded by them, and is, therefore, calculated to have a healing influence. But the revival of arbitrary arrest will convince them that the long standing alliance between the landlords and English bayonets was at an end, and that the ancient distrust of the people is still the key-note of the Government policy. This is peculiarly unfortunate. The police will do more to alienate the people than the Land Act will win their loyalty. The Irish feel that they are not treated as Englishmen are, and they object to be governed by Englishmen. This unhappy disposition is strengthened by Coercion Bills. Such measures, whatever their temporary effect, aggravate the evil. They create the spirit of disloyalty that they are intended to extinguish. If England is to retain the government of Ireland, must not the Irish be governed as citizens, instead of as vanquished enemies? The so-called Life Protection Bill is a declaration of war, at the very moment when the nation has girt itself up for the great effort of holding out the olive branch of peace.—London Examiner.

We do not like how Ireland is progressing. Her intelligence and her spirit should have impelled her far beyond the position she occupies. We begin to suspect that she is retrograding. Her trade is not improving; her manufactures are sickly and depressed; her agriculture is declining, and her people are departing as they can obtain vessels to bear them away from what they look upon as a doomed country. We feed them, clothe them, and give them the best education in our power; and when they are ready to labour and bring wealth to their native land, we send them to enrich distant nations; and for every one that departs, a horned beast or a sheep is put in his place; animals which can neither defend the land nor improve its trade or manufacture. This is the true condition of Ireland, no matter what advocates of English misgovernment may say to the contrary. Ulster feels its effects as well as Munster, and Leinster as well as Connaught. There is not a single oasis in the desert of Irish misery. And men look on and do nothing to change the fortunes of a ruined people. There is no great man amongst us to direct the millions in that course which would enable them to stem the tide of poverty, by increasing employment, improving commerce, or stopping the tide of emigration. There is no great Association capable of inspiring the masses with that spirit which gives new life to a people in need of encouragement and fostering, kindly counsel.—Dundalk Democrat.

The Land Act has now been sufficiently long in force to enable the classes whom it concerns to form a tolerably accurate judgment of its general character, and it is satisfactory to observe a growing appreciation of its liberal provisions. There are