

ACT OF THE UNION.

THE PRACTICABILITY OF AN IRISH LEGISLATURE.

Sir Jonah Barrington, Mr. G. Ponsonby, Colonel O'Donnell, Sir John Davies, Harold Frederic, and Other Eminent Authorities, Masses of Counterfeited Squires, Salisbury, the Duke of Argyle—The Fate of the Irish Under Unjust Rule—Powerful Arguments from Many Sources.

We have endeavored, in our preceding articles, to prove,—

First—That Ireland rapidly improved under her domestic legislature;

Secondly—That, since the Union, the manufactures and trade of the country have been in a state of rapid decline;

Thirdly—That the great cause of that decline is the very monopoly of the English market for agricultural produce, which the advocates for the Union say is of such vast importance to Ireland;

Fourthly—That, notwithstanding the increased quantity of agricultural produce, the consequence of that monopoly, the state of the farmers and agricultural laborers has been gradually declining, until they have been reduced to a state of wretchedness and poverty, a parallel to which is not to be found in any other country in the world;

Fifthly—That the Irish people do not exercise due control over the deliberations of the Imperial Parliament, and that it cannot, therefore, have sufficient knowledge of or sympathy with Ireland to legislate for her local wants.

In the whole course of our reasoning on these subjects, we never lost sight of the miserable, awful, frightful state of the great body of the Irish people. We were deeply impressed with the conviction, that their situation was proof sufficiently strong, that every other interest in that country must be proportionately bad. The principles of political economy that we have studied strongly inculcate the doctrine, that the prosperity of every community must be estimated by the prosperity of the individuals composing that community; and that if the great majority were in a state of suffering, no other proof was wanting to show its declining condition. Unfortunately, tons of evidence are at hand to prove this fact—and it is to us a cause of melancholy; it saddens our heart; it throws a gloom over our thoughts—over our happiest hours. If we could think that any humble efforts of ours were likely to lead to the alleviation of that misery, even at the most distant period, when we and our humble efforts will both be forgotten, it would afford us a reward far above any that governments or kings could bestow. However, there is one consolation that we cannot be deprived of—the consciousness of doing everything in our humble sphere to alleviate that misery; by bringing it prominently under the notice of all interested in the removal of human suffering. It is a duty we owe to the land of our fathers—it is a duty we owe to her people—it is even a more sacred duty—it is a duty which we shall never fail to perform to the best of our abilities.

We know it is much easier to point out evils, than to remedy them—to pull down, than to build up; we know that every mountebank is prepared with his infallible nostrums for unhappy Ireland; we know she has been a subject of experiment for every blundering political anatomist who "strutted his fretful hour upon the stage;" we know that if she has not suffered death by their hands, she has suffered tortures a thousand times worse than death. We shall not, therefore, have the presumptuous audacity to offer any specific; all that we shall ask is, that Ireland shall be placed under her natural guardians—her true physicians—of those whose interest will prompt them to watch over her wants, and whose feelings will sympathize with her in her sufferings—the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. Let them be sovereign over all her domestic affairs; let Ireland be fairly represented in the Imperial Parliament, and let it exercise sovereignty, as it does now, on all imperial questions.

The only remaining part of the duty we are now to perform is to endeavor to prove that such an adjustment is easy and practicable; that it would have the sanction of both the practice and the

spirit of the constitution; that it would cement the connection with Great Britain, promote the prosperity of Ireland, and greatly add to the power, glory, and strength of the united empire. All this we purpose doing without laying ourselves under obligation to Mr. Gladstone's present Home Rule Bill.

We have frequently stated our opinion openly, that it would be impracticable to establish an independent Parliament in Ireland, such as existed in 1782, (Grattan's Parliament,) down to the Union, and at the same time preserve the connection. We saw that it was opposed to the experience of history, to common sense, and even to the example of the Irish Parliament itself—the opinion that two independent countries, such as England and Ireland, could be bound together for any length of time by the golden link of the Crown alone; that they must come into collision; that they could not move in harmony; and that separation, or subjection, would be the inevitable consequence. At the same time, while we are fully convinced that the union of both countries, for the promotion of the common good, is indispensable to secure the power, the liberties, and the prosperity of both—we are equally impressed with the belief that the present Union is not such a Union; that it has caused universal discontent; that it has made Ireland what Mr. Foster said it would make her—"a discontented province; a vulnerable point, open to the attacks of foreign enemies, and the frightful subject of the machinations of domestic foes; a cause of England's weakness, instead of a source of her strength."

"Thus, by a suicidal act of her own corrupt parliament," says Doctor Thomas Reid, "was Ireland deprived of political existence; a painful experience, however, of more than twenty years has falsified the showy promises that induced her degradation; and vain, if not ridiculously absurd, is every hope to reclaim privileges so long misused, so criminally surrendered."

In the words of the very highest authority in Great Britain this day: quoting Sir Jonah Barrington—"If well governed, Ireland would be the brightest jewel in the King's (Queen's) crown."

Lord Clare, the "Judas" Chamberlain of his party, called the proposed Union "A daring usurpation of the rights of a free people."

Sir Jonah Barrington says: "England must be convinced that Ireland was formed by nature for her sister; and never intended for her servant."

Mr. Gould said—"There are 40,000 troops in Ireland, and with 40,000 bayonets at my breast, the Minister shall not plant another Sicily in the bosom of the Atlantic. I want not the assistance of divine inspiration to foretell, for I am enabled by the visible and unerring demonstrations to assert that Ireland was destined to be a free and independent nation. Our patent to be a state, not a shire, comes direct from heaven. The Almighty has, in majestic characters, signed the great charter of our independence. The great Creator of the world has given our beloved country the gigantic outlines of a kingdom. The God of nature never intended that Ireland should be a province, and by G— she never shall."

Mr. G. Ponsonby avowed his opinion that "the measure was revolutionary, and would run the destructive lengths of endangering the compact between the crown and the subjects, and the connection of the two nations."

Colonel O'Donnell, son to Sir Neil O'Donnell, one of the largest and wealthiest landholders in the County Mayo, roused by Castlereagh's invectives, could not contain his indignation; and by anticipation "disclaimed all future allegiance, if a Union were effected, he held it as a vicious revolution, and avowed that he would take the field at the head of his regiment to oppose its execution, and would resist rebels in rich clothes as he had done the rebels in rags." And for his speech—his maiden speech in Parliament—he was dismissed his regiment without further notice.

To go back in Irish history; Sir John Davies says (and his words are applicable at the present day), in speaking of the English Lords and Irish confiscation: "They persuaded the King of England that it was unfit to communicate the laws of England unto them; that it was the best policy to hold them as aliens and enemies, and to prosecute them with a continual war."

No better illustration of Sir John Da-

vies' oft-quoted historical truth can be given in the article than that given by Harold Frederic, the New York Times correspondent. In his cable to that journal on the 11th inst., on the Lords and Home Rule, he has the following account on the proceedings in the House of Lords. It speaks for itself. Comment is unnecessary:

"It really has been extraordinarily funny. Something like the fifth of the whole number of the performers had never been inside the Chamber of Peers till last Tuesday. To fully one-half of the remainder it was almost as unfamiliar. These titled strangers whipped up to London from their grouse and part-ridge, and denied even the sacred solace of the St. Leger, swarmed into the corridors of the House of Lords on Tuesday in droves like rustics on a personally-conducted tour through the sights of the metropolis. Policemen had to be stationed at every turn in the passages to show them the way to the scene of their deliberations. As for identifying them—that was quite beyond the powers of the servants of the House. Apparently any elderly farmer wearing a cover coat with side-pockets could pass freely in and take his seat without a question. This bucolic effect colored the whole assemblage. In deference to the occasion, all wore black coats, but their sunburnt, heavy faces, huge red hands, and awkward postures, kept perpetually suggesting that they ought instead to be in tweeds and gaiters. Here in London we think of Peers, mostly, as carefully dressed, even dapper, habitués of Piccadilly and the Row. But in this great formal muster of the Peerage, this handful of well-tailored men of the world was fairly snowed under by serried masses of counterfeited squires. This effect of hayseed was by no means confined to appearances. No tub-thumping demagogue could have wished for a more artless, unsophisticated audience. They laughed wildly at bald, old elementary jokes which even the drivers of four-wheelers wearied of a decade ago. They stared at such speakers as strove to discuss the Home Rule Bill on the grounds of logic, law and constitutional precedent."

O ye gods! Is not this pen and ink description of English Lords legislating on Irish Home Rule fit to make angels weep? Those whipped-up spaniels of Toryism, piling up their votes against Ireland—mechanically, was a sight to make men and angels weep. Let us now hear the same writer on the polite and noble scion of the House of apoll-less (?) Salisbury:

"But when a cheaper sort, like Cranbrook, rose and simply went for Gladstone as knave, liar, traitor, and lunatic, and spat on the Irish, trampled them under foot as scoundrels, murderers, alien scum and filth, then bellowed out great volleys of 'Hear, hear!' like the roar of their own prize bulls at home!"

Cranbrook must have been reading up the history of his ancestry lately. Every vile epithet he applied to Gladstone and the Irish people, could be applied with manifold force and truth to not remote generations of his family. It is very evident from all this that the bellowing bulls that cried "Hear, hear!" to Cranbrook's tirade of lying abuse, were as unfitted to vote on any constitutional question as are the pigmies that inhabit Central Africa. How they opened their mouths and audibly grunted as "They listened with obvious amazement to warnings such as Spencer gently hinted and Rosebery bluntly thrust at them, that their order itself was on trial and stood in jeopardy. It seemed to them absurd." And here we have an insight into the boorishness and stupidity of those asses following blindly their leader. "They show, of course, that there are some low fellows in big towns who talk like that, but so there are unruly poachers at home. They cannot see there is more in it than that, and so they stolidly, cheerfully trooped out last night behind Salisbury—400 of them—into the lobby against Home Rule. That was nearly a hundred more than the House of Lords' voting list has ever recorded before. It took them fully half an hour to pass in single file before the throne. On the way out they made mild rural jokes as they edged along, taking it all as a tremendous lark. As it has been said," continues the correspondent, "the public themselves, for the moment seeing only the ridiculous side of the thing in the spectacle of these hundreds of muddle-headed, beefy rustics dragged up to town from their pre-occupation over

game preserves and the price of fodder, and the best remedies for swine fever, to sit yawning through four evenings of speech-making, and then lightly throw out a measure which the House of Commons has been sweating blood over for eighty-four days and which the country has been discussing for six years—this is, frankly, too preposterous for serious comment."

We will not stop to discuss the other attribute of the case. Condone punishment is sure to follow swiftly Salisbury's leash-hounds in their eagerness to vote down a measure of which they knew nothing. We will give an extract or two from George W. Smalley, the Tribune's London correspondent, that vindictive American-Englishman, hater of Gladstone, Ireland and Home Rule. In speaking of some of the speakers and speeches made, he has this to say about the Duke of Argyle, father-in-law to the Princess Louise, daughter to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. Every one will admit that, if Lorne is as polite and dignified in his language as is Argyle, his father, he must be an acquisition to the Royal Family:

"The Duke of Argyle's will compare with anything ever expressed by Lord Salisbury, Mr. Balfour, or Mr. Chamberlain as a contribution of the highest value on this subject."

We have its value expressed in a few words. Hear the correspondent:—

"It was a terrific onslaught upon Mr. Gladstone personally. Although he gave the latter credit for sincerity, yet it was the sincerity of a fanatic. Mr. Gladstone was a Mahdi, a Grand Panjandrum, a conjurer, a medicine man, whose party followed him with servility."

This was the best and only effective part of Lorne's father's speech; and the question remains does it add to the dignity of royalty? We shall content ourselves by giving an extract or two from Salisbury's speech, taken from the same source. It will prove that the murderous blood of the Cecils and Burleighs is as strong and cold in their representative of to-day, as it was in their own veins in the days of the virgin(?) Queen Bess!

"Upon one point he gave emphatic answer to Lord Rosebery's inquiry; he revived his old declaration that the true remedy for Ireland was twenty years of resolute government."

That is twenty years coercion for Catholic Ireland, and full fling to the Orange fraternity to trample on the rights and liberties of his fellow-countrymen. Bloody Salisbury! would rejoice to bring about the Penal Code again, with all its horrors, were it not for nineteenth century civilization.

"He repudiated the oft-told fiction that he and his colleagues ever contemplated creating a parliament in Dublin, and denounced the cowardice of surrender to men branded with crime."

Men of character and unimpeached integrity have told Salisbury and his charming nephew, Balfour, of the "oft-told fiction," in public. Those men's words are as good as either uncle or nephew's oath. Salisbury had also an envenomed fling at Archbishop Walsh. The renowned prelate is as far removed from the venomous darts of Salisbury and his Orange cohorts as is heaven from hell. We will now return to our subject proper. If we have digressed a little, it was to give our readers a peep at the present English House of Lords, Salisbury's spaniels, who threw out the Irish Home Rule Bill.

Deeply and strongly impressed with these opinions, we have ventured to recommend that the contract which now binds England and Ireland together in unholy wedlock should be reopened; that a Federal Government should be formed, armed with every power necessary to wield the vast energies of the mighty Empire; "that not a single feather should be plucked from the royal bird; that it should only be disencumbered of those obstructions which prevent it from taking its airy flight into the free regions of constitutional liberty, and extending its protecting wings over the whole Empire."

The Imperial Government should have the power of declaring war and making peace; of regulating commerce and manufactures; the direction of the army and navy, and other forces of the country; the power of levying general taxes for general purposes; in short, all the general powers now exercised by the Imperial Parliament, without the slightest alteration, except what it may itself choose to make on constitutional lines