

Is it not sad to see an old Catholic people like the Irish follow such communistic, such revolutionary, such—well, such “too too” doctrine as this of “No Rent?” What a fall from grace! John Bull, the abettor of Orsini, of Cavour, and that old “crank,” Garibaldi, is going to see the Pope about it. There is no limit to some people’s impudence. Archbishop Croke, who, a few days ago, was a “village tyrant,” “reasonably suspected” of carrying dynamite, Connecticut clock-works, and wooden tooth-picks in his breeches pockets, has suddenly “evolved” into the “Christian Prelate,” the “wise counsellor” and “true friend” of the peasantry. The process of “evolution” in this case is much clearer than the Darwinian theory. His Grace’s repudiation of the League Manifesto explains it all. But, as Frank Hugh O’Donnell shows in a clever letter to the *Dublin Freeman*, it ought not to be difficult to secure substantial union and agreement between the Land League Executive and his Grace of Cashel. Archbishop Croke, recently, at Thurles, gave the following clear and explicit statement of his views:—“There is no good in having fixity of tenure if one is forced to pay an all but impossible rent. The commissioners under the Land Act would do well to bear that fact in mind, and so to reduce rents all over the country, as to enable the tiller of the soil to be wholesomely fed, fairly clothed and suitably housed, besides making all other needful provision for himself and his family. What remains after that is a fair rent.” Such is his Grace’s definition of a “Fair Rent” which he continues to prefer to the “No Rent” recommended by the Land League as a means of pressure upon the Government. Mr. O’Donnell does not see what comfort this can bring to the Government and the landlords. “I sincerely trust,” he says, “that no needless dispute will arise among the supporters of the Land League upon the question. If the tenants who conscientiously object to the absolute non-payment of rent will act up to his Grace’s definition of a ‘Fair Rent,’ I feel confident that the practical effect upon the landlords and the Government will not be appreciably diminished. If the very conscientious farmers, whose honest regard for the interests of their landlords makes them hesitate about avenging the despotic arrest of Mr. Parnell by a temporary stoppage of all rent, will strictly follow his Grace’s advice, and conscientiously pay over to the landlord not a penny but what is left ‘after the tiller of the soil has been wholesomely fed, fairly clothed, and suitably housed, besides making all other needful provision for himself and his family,’ then I venture to predict with absolute confidence that the net result will be practically identical in 999 cases in the thousand with the complete stoppage of rents. Of course, in the first place, the legal consequences will be absolutely the same. The legal right of a farmer to refuse to pay all rent whatsoever is precisely the same as his legal right to pay nothing but what may remain after he has comfortably provided for himself, his family, and his agricultural labourers in conformi-

with the earnest recommendation of his Grace of Cashel. Exactly the same processes in ejection, exactly the same distrains and sheriffs’ sales will be incurred in the one case as in the other. There will, indeed, be the gain that the more delicate class of consciences will be tranquilized; and though I am unable to measure the exact advantage of this precaution, his Grace the Archbishop is entitled to speak with more authority in matters of conscience than a layman. It results that in the one case, as in the other, whether ‘No Rent’ be paid or only so much as the tenant can fairly spare, the Government and the landlord will be obliged to have recourse to precisely the same extremities, legal and military, and can only be successfully met by precisely the same degree of popular union and determination. Surely there is no need, and no excuse, for dissension over practical identical situations.”

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But the *Irish World* preaches “No Rent” under any circumstances, at any time—an absolute doctrine, an eternal law, for the destruction of landlordism, everywhere; therefore—therefore, what? Surely you do not hold the Land League responsible for the teachings of the *Irish World*. Be honest in this matter. All that the Manifesto calls upon the tenant-farmers to do, is “to pay no rents under any circumstances, until the Government relinquishes the existing system of terrorism and restores the constitutional rights of the people.” Father Sheehy, one of the delegates to America, speaking to this question in New York, said: “The Land League makes the payment of a rent contingent upon the release of the men in prison—contingent upon the right of free speech and of the rights that men are supposed to enjoy in civilized countries. What may occur after, it is for the future to determine.” And he proceeded to lay the ghost of Communism in the following plain words: “Let it be remarked that it was never the intention to rob the landlords—so far as I am aware—or to take the land from them without returning them an adequate compensation. But the ‘No Rent’ policy will force them to speak to the Government and obtain from it a new Land Act to release them from the land and permit them to leave the country as quick as they can. It is not with a view to instruct the people of my own race that I say this—I am speaking also to the American mind—I am anxious to inform Americans that we do not intend to rob the landed proprietors. We intend to do that which has been long withheld, which the landlords never did and which we are determined shall be done.”

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As we write, (Nov. 29) an Irish National Convention is in session in Chicago, for the purpose of devising means “to assist the Irish at home in the struggle against the English rule of terror and reign of despotism.” There is a certain party of “Industrial Liberators” in the United States, who would dictate an impossible policy, sweetened with texts of Scripture,