

THE COMING IRELAND.

By JUSTIN McCARTHY.

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The coming up of a new Ireland is an event the approach of which is beginning to be recognized by all intelligent and thoughtful minds at the present day. A new Ireland is about to grow up out of the wreck and welter of the past. I shall not in this article invite my readers to

long centuries to extinguish it, and it burns now more brightly than ever it did before. We have ample evidence of this fact, if only in the immense success which has followed the movement in Ireland for a revival of the Gaelic language. That movement at its opening was con-

the quest in their power to make her a contented and prosperous member of the Imperial partnership.

I am drawn away from following in this direction my visions as to the coming Ireland by certain accounts which have lately reached me from which I learn that Englishmen are threatened with an important competition in the creating and modelling of this new Ireland. This competition, I have been assured, is already coming from across the Atlantic. What do English readers think of Ireland's becoming a trust in the hands of some enterprising American capitalists? The idea is somewhat startling, no doubt, and perhaps to many Englishmen might seem chimerical and even absurd, but we have lately seen wonderful things done for England, and in England by these adventurous and highly practical American capitalists. If American capitalists are to take charge of British passenger traffic on the ocean, it does not seem quite beyond the outer range of possibility that the same potent influence might quietly take in hand the creation of the new Ireland. Let us follow out the idea for a few moments, even if we should be inclined to indulge it in a somewhat fanciful style. I have been told that American capitalists have already fixed their eyes on certain regions and industries of Ireland, the development of which into an ever-growing prosperity and activity only needs the fostering hand of a well-endowed influence.

How if an American Trust were to be formed with the object of converting Ireland into a smiling and happy pleasure ground for the reception of American visitors? How if the country's industrial interests were to be taken charge of by a syndicate of American commercial magnates in order that the face of the country should be made prosperous and beautiful, that the landscapes should be preserved from the building of overcrowded and ugly tenements, that the noble ruins now constantly threatened with modern invasion should be kept in isolated picturesqueness, and that a happy, thriving peasantry should greet the American visitor where now he sees only misery and squalor? It would, of course, be the purpose of my imaginary American Trust to maintain everything picturesque, beautiful, historic, and national in the coming Ireland, and to prevent the country from yielding to the ugliness which commonly attends industrial progress in other lands.

The idea of many an intelligent Englishman of the present day is that the true way to make Ireland prosperous and happy must be to reconstitute her as much as possible after the model of Birmingham or Blackburn. The idea of my American firm would be to maintain her for ever as unlike Birmingham or Blackburn as she could possibly be maintained. This firm would naturally wish to promote the speaking of the Gaelic language, because of the fresh and lively interest which would be given to the American visitor as he met with group after group of educated Irish men and women discoursing in the tongue of the old Irish hards. Think of the exquisite scenes of hill and valley, mountain, rock, river, and ruin, which would thus be preserved for ever in their own isolated beauty, and for their own sakes. Even the Lakes of Killarney, that marvellous panorama of water, hill and foliage not to be surpassed in equal space by anything in Wordsworth's Lake country, or in the regions of Maggiore and Como, have been again and again infringed upon by modern improvements, and have been threatened more than once lately with serious and hideous invasion. Think what a resting place of beauty and peace, of poetry and fairy-like witchery, might be made of these three lakes with their arbutus-covered hills and their musical cascades, by the care of some capitalist company who had secured the services of artistic subordinates to keep the whole region as a sanctuary from the incursions and the appliances of modern civilization! Think of the "Pillar Towers"—the Round Towers of mystic origin unseen in any other land! Then there are the ruins on the Rock of Cashel which ought to be surrounded by nothing but smiling fields, brooklets and clumps of trees, and preserved as a place of poetic meditation for those who desire a holiday, rescued from every reminder of every-day work in counting house and on Stock Exchange.

I have myself a personal interest from early boyhood's memories with that Blarney Castle which one can now approach by the help of a descending light railway. I think I should feel inclined to welcome the domination of the trust which secured the groves and the ruins from further invasion and protected even the Blarney stone from being made the butt of the cheap trippers' practical jokes. When one has got so far in his imaginings on this point it is

easy to go a little farther yet, and to get into the state of mind when one might consent to have the whole island consigned to the care of some protecting Trust which would preserve it from being turned into the mere hunting-ground of the automotor. Then I presume that this ideal Trust would greatly desire to restore to the landscape all the most picturesque pictures of Ireland's legendary life, and to show us the gallow glasses in their yellow vestments and with their spears talking in the language of their ancestors, and possibly even—why not—get up for us on special occasions by the skill of modern art some such presentations of the fairy circle and its appropriate midnight dances as some of us oldsters used to see at the Princess's Theatre in London, when Charles Kean brought out his famous performance of the Midsummer Night's Dream.

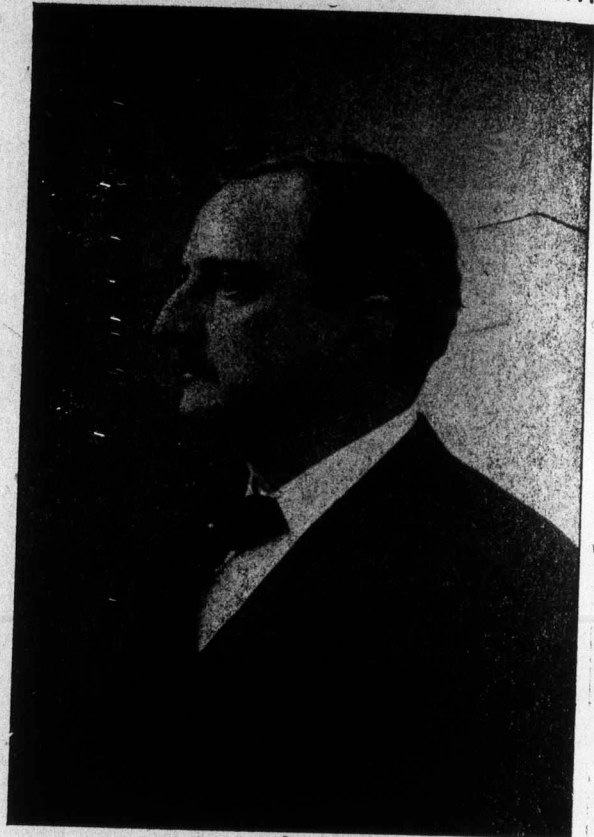
But I must pause in my imaginings, and become more serious and practical or some of my graver readers will begin to think that I am losing whatever wits I may once possessed. I hasten then to say that I do not believe any American capitalists really nourish the idea of thus converting Ireland into a purchased or hired show place for the quiet enjoyment of Transatlantic visitors. It may even be necessary to say for the satisfaction of such graver readers that I would much rather have Ireland allowed to arrange her future for herself, no matter with what difficulties, industrial, political, legislative, and social she might have to contend, than to think of her as converted by any benevolent despotism, financial or other, into a show place for the outer world's holiday-makers. But I have been assured in all seriousness that many American capitalists are already engaged in reasonable and laudable schemes for the development of Ireland's industrial and commercial life, and that if the British Government does not look to itself it will soon find American influence much stronger than that of Britain over the Irish people. As every one knows, we have now arrived at a great crisis in the life history of Ireland, and especially in the history of the relations prevailing, and to prevail, between Ireland and the Imperial system. Ireland has for many generations been sending masses of her people across the Atlantic to find new homes under the shelter of the American Republic. The emigration from Irish ports and from Liverpool has been growing and growing with every year. The population of Ireland is now only one-third of what it numbered in the days of Daniel O'Connell.

The one great impelling cause of all that continuous flight of Irishmen from their native country has been the existence of that trouble which is commonly described as the Irish Land Question. Ireland is especially an agricultural country, and whatever mining resources she may possess have never yet been adequately worked. The capacities of the country for the manufacture of cloths and stuffs and lace-work, and all other articles of the same order, was in former days deliberately and systematically discouraged, and even repressed, by the Parliamentary legislation of the conquering race. Of course, all these ignoble and criminal systems of legislation have long since passed out of existence, but their evil effects are felt, down to our own day, among the industrial classes of Ireland. Therefore the energy of what we may call the working population of Ireland has been confined to the tillage of the land. The principles and the laws introduced by the Imperial Parliament for the regulation of Irish land tenure were such as to make the Irish cottager a perpetual pauper on the land which he himself was tilling. The greatest English political economist of modern times, John Stuart Mill, declared emphatically in one of his books that the Irish cottier tenant was one of the few men in the world who could neither benefit by his industry nor suffer by his improvidence. The reason was plain. The whole soil was the property of the landlord. When the Norman conquest was effected the whole land tenure system of Ireland was changed by a sort of revolution. Under the ancient national system there were lords of the soil, but the followers, or, as we might call them, the subjects of these lords were allowed to have their patches of land as their own possession and patrimony, and to enjoy the benefit of whatever improvements each could accomplish by his own labor on his own scrap of soil. Under the landlords' system which superseded this ancient principle of tenure, the Irish tenant held his land from term to term at the absolute mercy of his landlord, and as soon as he began to make his patch of ground become productive the landlord raised his rent, and if he were unwilling or unable to pay the required amount, promptly turned him out of his holding and put a

new tenant in his place. The competition for land as the only means by which a peasant might obtain a chance of living was so great that it was always easy to find many competitors for every farm and every acre or quarter acre of soil. The landlords of former years were not intelligent enough to see that by discouraging healthful industry among their tenants they were merely driving the more energetic of the rural population out of the country, and thus preparing the ultimate ruin of the landlord class.

We have had during later generations many legislative efforts made to apply some remedy to this terrible national disorder, but no act of legislation seems up to the present time to have even attempted to deal with its real source. The one great change Ireland needed, so far as her agricultural conditions were concerned, was the change which could settle the peasantry on the land and

given of Ireland's capacity for the working out of beneficial legislation in the proceedings of the great Irish National Convention lately held in Dublin. This convention was made up of representatives chosen from all the different parts of Ireland, from cities, towns, villages, and countryside, all freely chosen by the popular voice of each district represented, and all engaged for two days in the discussion of questions profoundly affecting the whole future welfare of Ireland. On such questions it was utterly impossible that there should not be difference of opinion. Difference of opinion there was, and it was freely expressed during the two days of debate, but nothing could have been more orderly, peaceful and friendly than the whole discussion. The minority in many cases, seeing that they were the minority, and therefore could not claim to represent the general opinion of Ireland, did not even put the convention to



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give to each man the security that he and his family were to have the benefit of their industry, their intelligence and their toil. Even Gladstone's beneficent legislation did not go deep enough to remove the real troubles of the Irish land tenure system. Now at last we have come suddenly to a period in the national history when the possibility of a peaceful and prosperous revolution in the whole system seems on the verge of accomplishment.

The most important fact in Ireland's industrial history for many generations has been the agreement come to between the representatives of the landlord class and the representatives of the tenant class, as to the terms on which the whole land question of the country could be finally and beneficially settled. Some few years ago it would have seemed absolutely impossible to form in one's mind the idea of a conference of landlords and tenants coming together in Ireland to consider terms for an arrangement which should enable the landlord and the tenant to live together on the common soil, the landlord receiving his fair rent for the land which he owns, and the tenant having the secure ownership of the piece of land he cultivates on the condition that he pays a fair annual rent for the right of permanent possession. This, however, is exactly what has been accomplished by the conference held between the authorized representatives of both classes, and by the terms of the agreement unanimously adopted. Even if nothing else had for the present come of this conference, if the legislation founded on its agreement and introduced by the Conservative Government had been prevented by any unhappy mischance from passing into legislation, the complete settlement of the whole Irish Land Question must nevertheless be regarded as brought distinctly within our sight. We now know what terms the landlords are willing to accept, and the tenants are willing to give. We know that both landlords and tenants are agreed upon these terms; and this knowledge is in itself enough to satisfy us that the settlement is near. This is exactly what the world never knew before, and it opens for us that chapter of history which is to contain the coming of the new Ireland.

Then, again, we have the evidence

of the trouble of a division. Even those London papers which were most bitterly opposed to the whole principles and proceedings of the National Party, cordially admitted that nothing could have exceeded the good temper, the intelligence, and the spirit of fair-play which prevailed throughout the two days' discussions. Some English visitors declared publicly that they had never before seen so great a popular assembly carry on such a debate in so orderly and good-tempered a style. The same kind of declaration is made in substance by an American and a Canadian who were present, each of whom gave his frank testimony that it would have been hard indeed to rival such an illustration of national capacity for orderly debate at any great popular assembly in the Dominion of Canada or in the United States.

I am not inclined to enter here into any consideration of the purely political questions opened up by this universally admitted acknowledgment of the capacity for peaceful discussion exhibited by the Irish Convention. I dwell upon it only as another evidence of the coming of the new Ireland which it is the object of this article to anticipate. We used to be told, and most of us were compelled sadly to believe, that the Irish landlords and the Irish tenants could never be brought to live together on harmonious terms suitable to the promotion of the common weal, and that the Irish landlords must be deprived of their property or the Irish tenants must be driven, man by man, to seek new homes in America or Australia. Now we find that the chosen representatives of Irish landlordism, including some of the most distinguished noblemen in Ireland, and the representatives of the Irish tenantry, including some of the most advanced and unyielding Nationalist politicians, have been able to meet together in a long conference and come to an absolute and friendly agreement.

Thus, then, as it seems to me, can we see the advance of the coming Ireland. That Ireland is to be in the future the home of the Irish people. There is no other future for the Irish people which any true Irishman could contemplate with satisfaction. It is not enough to be told that the industrious and hard-working man can find a home and a

means of comfortable country not his own, can be an Irishman of any can win a position and some far-off land. It concile Nationalists to tion of their country to that Irishmen can win fame in England and vice with distinction in ies and navies; to be a Irishman may be a mu in the city of New Yo hold high office in an ministration. We want island tenanted by its its waste spaces broug ture, its towns and citi ing in pleasant and cul and the whole resource developed to their fuller The Irish people are esped to enjoy life on the if they only are allowe and to bring out in ful intellectual as well as the sources of the coming Ir is a deep undercurrent and the artistic in the which the stranger can cover for himself, even Irish peasantry, if he en into conversation with t encourages them to tal memories and legends sti their lakes and streams. ple could indeed create selves a new Ireland, and extravagance in the hope new Ireland would becom very long, a model land comfort, of mental grow tranquil and brotherly in indeed, we should have th of strangers from all pa world, and the American might find a new and qui interest in studying with eyes the growth of that civilization.

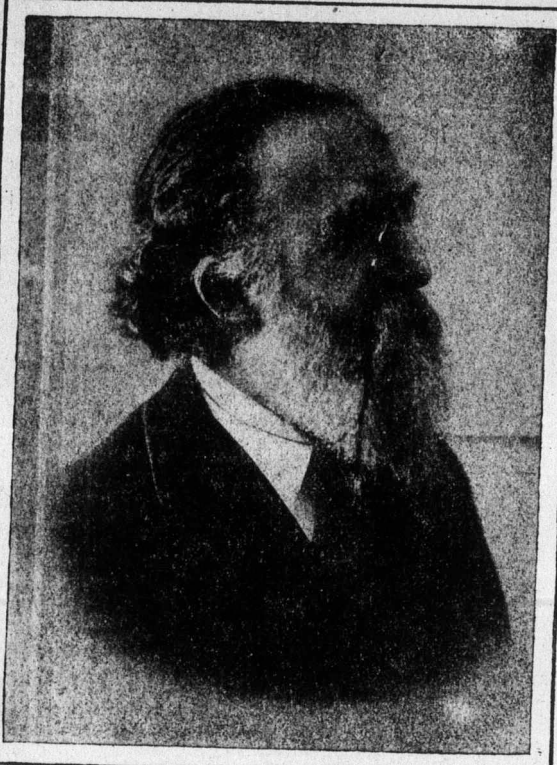
For many generations w hear incessantly of the he cord prevailing between I the other provinces of Ire the Conference on the tion there was to be four the representatives of the an Ulster member of Parli inveterate Tory, in politi ions, Mr. T. W. Russell, a close companionship with John Dillon and Wiljian and maintaining just the s as they did with regard to settlement of the question. poet, in the days just 'forty-eight, wrote some ver declared, "Why Ulster e'er Munster fear, can only wonder." Now we have come to a time when Ulster Munster, Leinster and Cen are in full and happy agree the one great social and i question most closely conce welfare of the nation. The cords which were the curse many generations are dying just, and we can already see new Ireland will be able to s internal differences, whateve may be, in a spirit of en mutual concession. This year is especially marked on Irish Nationalist may hope, momentous and auspicious e the progress towards such summation.

The year 1903 is the center the birth of James Clarence the Irish national poet, wh preted the feelings and the g his country as truly and as th ly as Irish poet has ever don Irish was still a powerful i over Irish sentiment in the 'forty-eight, which only just his early death. He was a lously skilful translator from man and other foreign poets very cadence of whose verse able to reproduce in the melo his own lines. But his one e gift was in the rendering of o Irish national songs, and i blending of their emotions int subjects which hroused the fr and the enthusiasm of the Ireland around him. One of gan's most famous songs is "Rosaleen," which professes to be the main translation into E of a passionate, hopeful, pra song composed in the reign of Elizabeth. Mangan's "Dark ean" is inspired by the most raous love for his country, and in her coming destiny. I need ly say that "Dark Rosaleen" m impersonation of the poet's n land. He tells us that

"The judgment hour must first night,
E'er you can fade, e'er you can
My dark Rosaleen

And he exclaims—
"The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love."

"Yet will I rear your chrone
Again in golden sheen,
And you shall reign, shall reign
Irene,
My dark Rosaleen



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enter upon any subjects which involve the discussion of party politics, and I shall treat of Ireland and her prospects merely from the point of view which any one, Irish, English, American, or other, might take when considering the prospects and the possibilities of the country which is the subject of my essay.

But I may begin by assuming as a principle that the coming prosperity of Ireland is to be associated with the maintenance and the acknowledgment of Irish nationality. The most enlightened statesmanship of all countries has at last, I believe, fully and frankly given up the idea that any possible good is to be attained by legislative or other effort at the suppression or the extinction of a nationality.

I do not suppose that many readers even in Germany are in the habit of studying at present the writings of Jean Paul Richter, and I believe that very few English or American readers pay attention to them just now. But Richter was a great thinker as well as a romancist and a prose-poet, and he has said many things which might have carried with them a lesson even for practical statesmanship. One saying of his returns to my mind as appropriate to that part of my subject which I am now considering. "Every tongue," says Richter, "is eloquent only in its own language, and every heart in its own emotions." There, perhaps, we may find the motto for the principle of nationalities. Only within our own times has the conquering power come to recognize the idea that the greatest mistake conquest can make is when it endeavors to stamp out of the conquered race the sentiments and the sympathies of nationality. Centuries of incessant strife have been caused in many an imperial system by the ill-omened and futile attempt to convert all the populations into a mere monotonous reproduction of the ways and the sentiments which belong to the most powerful partner in the system.

English statesmanship is at last beginning to see and admit that the Irish people must be allowed and encouraged to maintain their own nationality if the island is ever to be prosperous and if the Empire is ever to have peace within its own domains. The principle of nationality has survived in Ireland through all the persevering efforts made during

monly regarded as the well-meaning and romantic attempt of a few enthusiasts to revive the dead, to bring back the past, to accomplish the impossible.

Not only in England, but even in Ireland, most people thus for a time regarded it, only that in Ireland it was met with a feeling of something like sympathy, or, at all events, of kindly tolerance and a vague wish that it were possible to hope for some success. But the movement has been growing stronger and wider in its influence every day, and it may by this time be said to have touched the heart of the whole country. The literature of Ireland's past, one might almost say pre-historic, days, has come up again alive and fresh, and young men and women in every Irish family are setting themselves to make familiar acquaintance with the ancient language of their country. Now, if I were a British Imperial statesman I should regard this as a movement to be encouraged in every way, and should feel convinced that its tendency would be not to keep England and Ireland more apart, but on the contrary to unite them closer and closer in a willing and therefore an enduring partnership.

The coming Ireland is, I take it for granted, to be more thoroughly national than ever. We have all read that there were certain classes of English settlers in Ireland during the olden days, who after a while became more Hibernian than the Hibernians themselves. These Englishmen and their descendants were, down to quite modern times, the leaders of every attempt made by the Irish people to resist the unjust and cruel laws passed for Ireland's oppression by the conquering race. These Englishmen and Irishmen fraternised because each understood the feelings of the other, and the Geraldines, as these English settlers were called, and the native Irish would have made Ireland a prosperous country, and a contented member of the Empire, if only they had been allowed to work out the task for themselves. I believe we have now arrived at a time when the great majority of intelligent Englishmen will be quite willing to adopt the principles and policy of the Geraldines, and to believe that by encouraging Ireland to maintain her national sentiments and her national ways, they are doing