

Your prudent forethought has been wise.... You may now finish the work of God.

The rope-ladder having been made fast to a projecting stone on the crest of the wall, the pontiff placed the other end in the Grand-Vestal's hand.

"Come, madam," he said, trying to release his knees from her embrace. "It is getting late and day-light must not find us here.... Hasten, I pray you."

Cornelia rose to her feet, but instead of taking the rope she let it drop. Going to the further end of the vault she took the small pitcher of water she had preserved, and bringing it to the priest, she again knelt before him.

"Father," she murmured faintly and in a beseeching tone, "Metellus Celer is no more.... I heard his last cry.... All the affections of my heart are dead, and of the Vestal there remains only the virgin saved by you.... Your God is mine.... It is by water that one becomes a Christian, and I have kept the water to allay the dying thirst of the victim, in that hope; for as I was about to spill it I remembered that you might come.... Before you return me to the world of the living, make me a Christian, so that I shall be henceforth only your daughter."

Tears of happiness suffused the venerable pontiff and rolled slowly over his cheeks.

"My daughter," he said, with deep emotion, "take off that veil and bow your head.... Ordinarily the holy baptism is given only after a long period of preparation and probation.... But you have already been instructed in our holy doctrine.... and then, who could add anything to the solemn teaching of this tomb from which God alone, and not I, has delivered you?... Recollect yourself, my daughter, and pray to Him who, at my voice, will make you his child."

Then Clemens laid his hands on the head of the recoiled virgin, and marked her forehead with the sign of the cross. This preliminary ceremony made her a catechumen. Then taking the water, which he blessed, he proceeded: "Cornelia," he said, "I baptize thee in the name of God the Father...."

Here he sprinkled her with the holy water. "I baptize thee in the name of Jesus Christ His Son."

And he again poured the water on her head. "I baptize thee in the name of the Holy Ghost."

And what remained of water was again poured on the pure brow of the kneeling virgin. After a last invocation in which he united the three persons of the Holy Trinity, he blessed Cornelia, saying:

"Rise, my daughter, thou art a Christian!... a Christian in life!... a Christian in eternity!...."

A few moments later, Cornelia stepped out of the pit, supported by the holy pontiff. Gurgus followed. As soon as he came out, the dreary chasm was suddenly filled up, and Ravinius himself, if he had seen fit to visit the spot on the next day, would have never suspected that any strange had disturbed his work.

"My daughter," said the pontiff, "I must go to my brethren.... But, after God, here is the man who saved you.... I confide you to his care.... Follow him...."

Cornelia took the designator's hand in hers and pressed it affectionately. Gurgus came near fainting.

"Father," he cried, throwing himself at the pontiff's feet, "I also want to be a Christian."

"I receive you, my son, and it is not the least joy that God gives me.... But for the present we must part.... We shall meet again soon and the holy water will flow also on your head."

The holy old man taking the staff upon which he usually leaned was soon lost in the gloom.

Gurgus had the happiness of supporting Cornelia's feeble steps as far as the temple of Safety, where he found the litter and his blindfolded vespiolos. Everything passed off in accordance with the programme announced. The vespiolos reached the little isolated house, without accident and departed according to their master's previous order, fully convinced that they had left this worthy with his lady love.

When Cornelia stepped out of the litter she could not restrain a cry of joy. She was received in the arms of Aurelia and Cecilia. This great joy was due to the delicate attention of Gurgus who thought that the Grand-Vestal would feel more safe if, coming out of the tomb, she found herself surrounded by the beings dearest to her heart.

A short time after these events happened, the sentence of banishment pronounced against Flavia Domitilla was carried into effect. Domitilla ordered her to repair to the island of Pontia which would be thereafter her residence.

On the night preceding her departure, the crypt in which the Christians celebrated their mysteries was brilliantly illuminated for a double and imposing ceremony. The divine Aurelia, the betrothed of the Cæsar Vespasian, and Gurgus, the humble designator of funerals, knelt side by side to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

Afterwards the venerable pontiff consecrated to God three virgins who received from his hands the first veil worn by the brides of Christ.

These three women were: Flavia Domitilla, grand-niece of the Emperor Domitian; Euphrosine, a waiting maid of that pious matron; and Theodora. Under this last name was concealed Cornelia; the Grand-Vestal, who consecrated the remainder of her life to the service of that God who made a miracle to save her from a horrible death. She accompanied Flavia Domitilla, and shared voluntarily her exile, her long sufferings and her death.

CHAPTER XXII.—GURGUS TREATS OF THE EMPIRE.

On the eighth day before the ides of September, (8th of September, A. D. 96,) as the shadows of night commenced to invade the streets of Rome, two men could have been seen walking hurriedly in the Suburana Way. They came in different directions, one looking modestly on the ground and absorbed in thought; the other casting anxious glances on the houses as if he were seeking to recognize some particular one. As

neither of them looked before him, it naturally happened that they ran against each other.

"Ah," cried one of the two men.

"Oh," exclaimed the other simultaneously.

For in every language, these two little words "Ah," and "Oh," are used to express sudden admiration or astonishment.

"Blockhead," added the house-seeker, which showed that his "oh" was not intended as a mark of admiration.

"What shall I call you?" replied gently and almost laughingly the other; "neither of us paid any attention to what was in his way. That is all."

"Hallo!.... it is Gurgus," exclaimed the former speaker, casting a single glance on the designator. "Ah, this is a lucky meeting.... I intended to see you in a few days, to speak to you about some important matters, in which you may be very useful."

Gurgus was surprised to hear himself called by name by this stranger. Still, upon studying his features more closely, it seemed to him that this was not the first time he had met the man. He looked at him, trying to remember when and where they had met. Light dawned at last, which the designator expressed by another "ah."

"Ah! You recognize me, do you?" said the stranger.

"You are the man," replied Gurgus firmly, "who, two years ago, came to my house one night, and brought me a certain letter...."

"That's it," said the stranger, "was it then a bad office? And did it not result in your being able to save the Grand-Vestal?"

"Silence," muttered Gurgus.

"Very well," replied the unknown, "we shall drop this subject if you wish.... But I wish to speak to you.... Let us go in there...."

And he pointed to a tavern near by through whose door, left ajar to attract customers, streamed a ray of light.

"Let us go in," said Gurgus, who, naturally, was curious to know who this mysterious individual might be who was mingled with one of the most important circumstances of his life. "Let us go in; I am somewhat in a hurry, but I shall make greater diligence in what I have to do, and it will amount to the same thing."

The stranger, preceding the former designator of pagan ceremonies—Gurgus had resigned this important office in consequence of his conversion to the Christian faith—entered the tavern and asked for a private room. He also ordered some food and wine, which he offered to Gurgus to share with him. But the latter declined, with thanks.

"My dear Gurgus," the stranger began, "in order to give you confidence, shall I tell you where you come from and where you are going? For, although I was slightly astonished to meet you on my way, I soon recollected that you must have been in that neighborhood, at the time we met."

"Speak," said Gurgus, still retaining a ceremonious tone, although his companion treated him familiarly. "Speak; I listen to you."

"Well, my dear Gurgus, you have been washing the body of that Nicomedes who was beaten to death yesterday, near Minerva's temple, because he refused to sacrifice to the gods. And you are now going to the Capena-Gate, to tell the Christians they may come for the body of him they will call a martyr, to give him burial.... Shall I add, dear Gurgus," continued the unknown, "that you will go a little out of your way, to call at the house of the divine Aurelia, who expects you, and who will watch near the body until her brethren—there was irony and contempt in his voice as he spoke these words—will present themselves this very night to carry it to the crypt where you have your tombs.... And now, my dear Gurgus, tell me, am I well informed?"

It was at the time of the second persecution, and any Christian, however strong his faith, might well shudder on hearing such precise revelations concerning his secret acts. Gurgus was astonished, but showed no fear.

"It is true," he said, "I have been doing what the holy priest Nicomedes himself used to do—taking away the body of a martyr from the hands of his murderers.... I expect to be killed also, beaten like him with clubs or in some other manner. If you mean to say that I have been discovered and my life is threatened like so many others, you do not terrify me, but fill me with joy."

(To be Continued.)

(From the Charlottetown (P. I. E.) Examiner.)

To redeem the promise in our last, we lay before our readers the account given by the Right Reverend Dr. McIntyre, Bishop of Charlottetown, of his journey from Alexandria to Jerusalem. His Lordship's letter, addressed to the Very Reverend Dr. McDonald, V.G., is dated from Jerusalem, October 26. After referring to his previous communication from Cairo, His Lordship writes:—

"On our return from Cairo we found in Alexandria seventeen Bishops from Japan, India, Ohio &c., on their way to Rome, to assist at the Ecumenical Council. With all due deference to the classical as well as the religious renown of the City of Alexandria, we were nothing loth to leave it. Accordingly, on the 17th October, we took passage in one of the steamers belonging to the *Messagerie Imperiale*, and on the following day arrived at Port Said, a small town at the entrance of the Suez Canal. Our ship had here to unload, and load; so taking advantage of the time we stopped on shore to examine the city, and take a look at the celebrated works of the Suez Canal. The city is of recent growth; its population about 10,000 souls; but from its communication with the East, and with Syria, it is probably destined to rise into great commercial importance. Its port was well filled with shipping.

"We walked for a considerable distance along the banks of the Canal. It is somewhere about 100 miles long, and 25 feet deep giving free ingress and egress to ships drawing 24 feet of water. The country all around, as far as the eye can reach, is only a portion of the great Arabian Desert.

"Towards evening our ship was ready for sea, and at 8 o'clock on the following morning, we arrived at Jaffa. The harbour is without a wharf of any kind, and so it behoved us to engage a skiff to take us on shore. The town of Jaffa is built in the form of an amphitheatre, and has, in its modern aspect, nothing about it either interesting or inviting. Tradition says it was here that Noah built the Ark; and St. Peter here raised to life Tabitha (Acts IX). We visited the house of Simon the Tanner, where St. Peter abode many days. It is at the present day a

Turkish Mosque. At 3 o'clock, P.M., of the same day, on which we arrived, we set forward on horseback for Jerusalem, distant about fifty miles. At night, we reached Bethlehem, having accomplished about one third the distance. Our route lay over the plains of Samaria, and the country through which we passed was very fertile, but poorly cultivated. Here and there we saw groves of olive and other fruit trees, said to have been planted by Goliath, the Prime Minister of Louis the Fourteenth, and around which the troops of Napoleon encamped while endeavoring to reduce *St. Jean d'Acre*. This was the country of the Philistines, whose crops were destroyed by Sampson. Bethlehem itself is said by tradition to be the birth place of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who buried our Lord. We passed the night in the Monastery of the Franciscan Fathers, and at 5 o'clock next morning started afresh on our journey. Our company consisted of about twenty-one persons of different nations. Until we came to the foot of the mountains of Judæa, the country around us seemed one vast plain, dotted over at intervals, with groves of olive, citron, lemon, fig and date. The grain crop is generally reaped in May. Here, as in Egypt, the appearance of the inhabitants is disappointing. Their houses and dresses are miserable in the extreme. On arriving at the mountains of Judæa rocks surrounded us on all sides, and not a blade of grass was visible. All this country, however, is rich in Biblical history, and in reminiscences of the Crusades. At a short distance from the road stand the ruins of an ancient town, where, it is said, the Penitent Thief was born. The Grotto of St. Jerome, and the valley where David slew Goliath also lay near our route.

"Never did I experience heat equal to what we had to endure on this day's journey. The dog-days in Charlottetown last summer were temperate compared with it. A dead calm reigned all day. Not even on the mountains was there stirring a single breath of fresh air. Our jaded horses could attempt nothing beyond a slow walking pace, and so we were all day exposed to the fierce rays of a blistering sun.

"About an hour after mid day we came to a mountain gorge called 'St. John of the Desert.' Here is a small village, said to be the birth-place of St. John the Baptist, and here was the field of his labors when preaching penance. Hither, also, it was that the Blessed Virgin Mary came 'in those days when rising up, she went into the hill country with haste into a city of Judæa, and entered into the house of Zachary and saluted Elizabeth.' This, too is the spot where first was uttered the sublime canticle of the Magnificat (Luke I.)

"About four o'clock in the afternoon, almost exhausted with fatigue, we caught the first sight of Jerusalem, and in compliance with pilgrim usage, we alighted from our horses, knelt down, and prayed. Shortly after we entered Jerusalem, and took up our abode in the *Casa Nova*, or Pilgrim's home, kept by the Franciscan Fathers.

"On the following day, our Pilgrim Band assembled, and performed through the streets of Jerusalem the 'Via Dolorosa, or Way of the Cross.' We next visited the sanctuaries of the Passion, so dear to every Christian heart. The place on Calvary where our Lord was stripped of His clothes to be crucified: the place where the cross was fixed: the rocks that were split when He expired; the Stone of Unction, on which His body was laid for embalming; and the tomb in which He was laid and from which He rose in triumph: we visited them all with feelings that cannot be described, and can only be dimly appreciated by those who have never stood by those sacred places and felt for themselves. So renowned are they over all the world—celebrated by Saints and by Sages—and for them brave Knights fought and shed their blood. Some of these places are in the hands of Schismatic Greeks, but we were always allowed access. Close to the Stone of Unction are the Pillar of Flagellation, and the place where our Lord after His Resurrection, appeared to the 'Three Marys.'

"In the afternoon we visited the site where stood the House of the Blessed Virgin: the Hall of the Last Supper: the remains of the House of Orpheus, where Peter denied his Lord, and the place whether he went forth and 'wept bitterly' the spot where Judas betrayed his Master, and the place where in despair he hanged himself; the Potter's Field, purchased with the Thirty Pieces of Silver. In one corner of this ground I observed a large pile of human bones, blanched with lime and exposure to the atmosphere. The place was used as a cemetery in the time of the Crusades. We also visited the Valley of Jehoshaphat and the Terebinth of Hadron; the scene of the martyrdom of St. Stephen; the Garden of Gethsemane; the Mount of Olives; Solomon's Temple; the Pool of Siloe; the spot where our Lord taught His Apostles the 'Our Father,' and many other places of interest, connected with Holy Writ.

"From Jerusalem we directed our steps to Bethlehem, distant about fifteen miles. There we saw the Grotto of the Shepherds, to whom was first announced the birth of the Messiah, and where was first heard from Angel lips the 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo.' We likewise visited the Orib of Bethlehem where our Lord was born. Here, on Mount Calvary, and over our Lord's tomb, I had the happiness of saying Mass for the Priests and Laity of my Diocese, and particularly for the good people of Charlottetown, who showed me at my departure so much sympathy and kindness.

"On our return to Jerusalem we went, accompanied by our Guide to the outer wall of the ancient Temple of David. There we found hundreds of Jews, men and women, all lamenting and crying with their faces to the wall, bemoaning their fallen country, and imploring the Great God of their Fathers to take pity on them.

"My travelling companion and myself enjoy excellent health and spirits. We intend leaving Jerusalem to-morrow, Oct. 27, for Italy.

"His Lordship's route on returning from Jaffa, led him through Beyrout, Tripoli, Lodiace, and the Grecian Archipelago, to Constantinople. Some interesting jottings from this journey we will give in our next.

THE LAND QUESTION OF IRELAND.

(FROM THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.)

No. 26

CLIFDEN, CONNEMARA, Oct. 30.

As I have yet a great deal of Ireland to examine, and my time will not allow, delay, I have hurried from Killarney to this place, a refuge among the wilds of Connemara. The scenery I have passed through in this long journey, though seldom beautiful or picturesque, is nevertheless, not without interest to a student of the Irish Land Question. The train from Killarney runs along a district of light, half-enclosed uplands, beside the base of a high range of hills, until, leaving Mill-street, it approaches the fertile valley of the Blackwater, which it skirts until it reaches Mallow. From that little town it shoots into the region of magnificent pastures, enclosed within the triangle formed by Charleville, Limerick, and Tipperary, and which, left as it is to nature, and needing everywhere drainage and fencing is, notwithstanding, some parts of Meath, the finest grass-land, perhaps, in Great Britain. Leaving Limerick, I went through a bleak, treeless country, where occasionally bright oases of green, and here and there the abode of a gentleman, broke the dreariness of flats often strewn with stone, the landscape marking clearly the rare spots where industry had been applied to the soil. I halted only a few hours at Ennis, but drove through a considerable part of Clare, which combines curiously fine tracts of pasture and lowlands usually injured by moisture, with vast expanses, half-grass, half-rock, the whole capable of much improvement, yet, generally, lying in its native state, save where in places you see the little farms and homes of the peasantry. The scenery from Ennis to Athlone is of this character, but still

more barren, and a long succession of poor uplands, now and then opening into wildernesses of stone, leads the traveller to the ancient town of Galway. The quaint old houses and narrow streets of the City of the Tribes have been often described; but the municipal pomp of Galway has passed away; hardly a sail is seen in the noble bay, which stretches to the near Atlantic; and the place has not a look of prosperity. From Galway the road to Oughterard goes through a rude country where irregular fields are edged by interminable walls of stone; and, having caught some glimpses of Lough Corrib, you find yourself in the melancholy wilds of mountain, tarn, and far-spreading moor, which form the territory of Connemara. Fresh from Killarney, I could not admire a landscape which, from the want of vegetation, has a singularly barren and dreary aspect; and of which the solitude seems now more sad, because the traces of ruined hamlets show that at one time it was more peopled than it is; and I was not sorry when the lights of Clifden began to glimmer across the waste.

The scenery I have just passed through, and, indeed, much of that I have seen, and briefly described in previous letters, suggest reflections of some interest to an inquirer into the social state of this country. It is a fact which does not admit of dispute that the parts of Ireland I have visited have, since the events of 1846, very much improved on the whole; that their husbandry is not what it once was, and that their wealth has largely increased; nor can it be doubted that all the classes connected with the soil are much better off than they were. But there are evidences of a counter-current in this advancing tide of prosperity: for instance, nearly all the country towns I have seen are more or less flagging, and the agricultural area of Ireland is decreasing, great as has been the addition to its live stock. There is moreover, some reason to think that this progress might have been more decided; and a good deal of proof has been adduced to show that from 1790 to 1830 the growth of opulence in Ireland was greater than from 1830 to the present time, the former being a period, too, of an increasing population and leasehold tenures, the latter a period of tenancies-at-will and an extraordinary decline in the population. Without deciding these intricate questions, it may be affirmed with certainty that if the improvement of Ireland has been great during the last 30 years the margin for improvement is still enormous, considering the country as agricultural only, and without regard to any other industry. Take, for example, the very diversified tracts traversed on my way from Killarney to Clifden. No doubt, until the increase of capital shall have considerably added to the value of every nook and corner in these islands, it probably would hardly pay any one to reclaim some of the stony wilds and turf moors of Clare and Galway. No doubt, too, there are places in these counties that probably will always continue waste, for, even in the most highly cultivated lands Nature seems to insist on keeping to herself spots that defy the toil of the husbandman. But on my way I saw thousands of acres that might be won from barrenness to fertility; and what I wish particularly to point out, these were often such as a large farmer would avoid or leave in their present state, but such as are peculiarly fitted to attract and to reward the labour of an energetic and hard-working peasantry. Indeed, it was evident from the lingering traces of cultivation at some spots, that such a population at one time had collected on several of those tracts; but they were fast going back into primitive wildness, the children of the soil having vanished from them. As for the noble grasslands I went through, luxuriant and profitable as they are, their value would be greatly enhanced by a proper system of thorough drainage; and I suppose their condition would have seemed barbarous to an agriculturist of Belgium or Holland.

Galway is a vast tract of mountain and plain, marked off into two great divisions by the water-line of Lough Mask and Lough Corrib. Its eastern part, extending to the Shannon, is a region of rather light lowlands, a pasture field for flocks of innumerable sheep, or the tillage-grounds of the native peasantry, with some fine lands at occasional intervals; its western is a breadth of bleak moor and hill, eaten into by the stormy Atlantic. Like Kerry, this region is the land of the Oelt, and, like Kerry too, the vicissitudes of fortune maintained it in a somewhat primitive state until the present century was considerably advanced. Its first feudal suzerains, the Normans De Burghs, degenerated into Irish chieftains; though in part colonized by Elizabethan settlers, it nearly escaped the Cromwellian tempest, and after that period it continued under the way of a reckless squireship, lords of profligate half-serfs, with but little change until the present generation. Society accordingly here, too, assumed something of a clanish form, and until the events of 1846 the relation of landlord and tenant in Galway was somewhat of a patriarchal character. The famine, however, and its effects made an immense revolution in this state of things; vast clearances and evictions were effected; a race of new proprietors was largely introduced; and the children of the soil often found ill in the struggle of life and its altered conditions. Yet the traditions of the past are still powerful; and, taken as a whole, the landed classes of Galway are still less disinclined than in some other counties in Ireland. Galway, looking back at the last 20 years, is decidedly a progressive county; its live stock has enormously increased, and its agricultural area has but little diminished, this, as in the instance of some other districts, coinciding with a system of rather small farms, and with a decline of population small by comparison. There is not much that deserves notice in the social condition of the county, except, perhaps, that the aboriginal race seems to me inferior to that of Kerry, and that a large proportion of Galway landlords have of late done much in the way of improvement. As regards wages and the rate of rent, they do not require particular attention, but several of the lately acquired estates are, I am disposed to believe, very highly rented.

What I wish to consider in this letter are the circumstances of two or three estates in this and the neighbouring county of Clare, which throw a strong light on the Irish Land Question. In 1857 the vast property of the late Marquis of Thomond in Clare was sold in the Encumbered Estates Court, and portions having been broken into small lots were purchased by the occupying tenantry. I examined one of these tracts and made inquiries about the rest, and the results are, certainly, not without interest. In some instances the tenant proprietors retain and till the land themselves, and in these properties is the general rule and improvement is, for the most part, evident. But in other instances, from want of capital, or some other cause, the purchasers have sublet their holdings, and turned themselves into landlords, and here little progress is to be seen, and the sub-tenants feel themselves in the power of a class like the old grasping middleman. "Where Class No. 1 purchased," writes an intelligent person, "vast improvements are observable in the way of building, fencing, and, in some few instances, draining. In a word, they have applied a good deal of labour to the land and are enjoying the fruits of their labour in the increased value of their holdings.... Class No. 2, with few exceptions, had to take the stock from the land to sell it, in order to make up the purchase-money, and then let it to tenants, not at such rents as they themselves held it at, but in some cases at twice and thrice the rents. This class of new landlords has certainly done a vast deal of harm in the country; being themselves hungry for money, they squeeze as much out of their unfortunate tenants as possible.... These lands, I am sorry to say, with an odd exception, are still unimproved, and are likely to remain so."

In another instance, also in Clare, a small estate having escheated to the Crown, it became the duty of the law officers to provide for its management and administration. The tenantry were the ordinary Irish peasantry, holding areas of from three to 45

acres, but they were tenants at will, at exorbitant rates; and, in the words of a gentleman who knows them well, "what with rents, taxes, rates, costs of evictions, drivers' and sheriffs' fees, they were harassed and distressed to the utmost." The present Lord Chancellor of Ireland, then Attorney-General directed that the rents should be reduced to a sum within the means of the tenants; and that leases for a term of 31 years, with ordinary husbandry covenants, should be made to them, and my informant, whose credit is beyond dispute, proceeds,—"The result now is that they are a solvent and respectable class of tenants. They are as independent with their small farms, and as well able to pay their rent and other liabilities, as any tenantry in Clare. They are every day adding to the fertility of their little farms by draining, fencing, subsoiling, and building.... Although the present rent is much lower than the former, still the present landlord receives satisfactorily much more rent than any former landlord ever did, much of the former rent being spent in distilling, balliffs and sheriffs' fees, ejectments, and other legal expenses."

In the instance of the Thomond estate we see a remarkable illustration of the advantage of a small proprietary under certain conditions, and of the dangers incident to such a creation. The tenant purchasers who cultivate the lands themselves have done well and improved their holdings but a tendency to subdivision has become manifest, and in these cases there has been no progress, and a harsh class of middlemen has been one consequence. The instance of the estate leased by the Crown is another example of the extraordinary benefit conferred by giving security to a tenant, under a fair lease on reasonable conditions—two requirements, it is unnecessary to say, essential to make this kind of contract of any value to the occupier in Ireland, and not always sufficiently borne in mind. I turn now to an instance which shows the inherent mischiefs of absenteeism under certain conditions, and the hardships resulting from the change to commercial from a patriarchal system in the management of a single estate. A traveller from Oughterard to Clifden goes for miles through a vast lonely tract of bog, waste and heathery mountain enclosed only in a few places, and here and there revealing, at distant intervals, the green spots that mark a ruined village once the abode of a vanished population. This tract is only a part of what was the enormous domain of a family known well in the local annals of Galway, and conspicuous for its hospitality and its recklessness. The lords of this region preferred to have a devoted tenantry to letting their rude wastes at the highest value; and gradually, even on these bleak hills and moors, a peasantry was aggregated in considerable numbers, whose rude toil made isolated points fertile, and who led a not unhappy existence. The famine came, and this vast territory incurred previously far beyond its value, fell into the hands of a Corporation, which thus found itself at a critical juncture called upon to discharge the duties of property, and entrusted with the care of this mass of humanity. Every allowance ought in fairness to be made for a body placed in such a position but certainly the administration of this immense tract, since it came under the management of the strangers, has attracted painful attention. The rental of the estates has been enormously raised; an official return before me records that the society, between 1850 and 1869, caused or procured the eviction of not less than 1,442 families. It is said that rules of extreme stringency, unintelligible to the peasantry, were until lately rigidly enforced, and it cannot be doubted that some dealings of the company were of a harsh tenor. They have also been charged with want of generosity during the distress of 1861-2, and even with obstructing the development of the district, though I believe that this was really due to legal difficulties arising from their deed of incorporation. From all I have heard, no blame attaches to the present agent of this immense property. But judges, statesmen, and high official servants have censured acts of this association. The subject has been mentioned in Parliament, and I wound the feelings of no individual person when I say that the Law Life Assurance Company the successors of the Martins of Ballinahinch, are considered severe landlords.

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

London Jan. 4.—Mr. Greville Nugent has been elected to Parliament from Longford, over Martir, the Fenian candidate.

One of the latest rumours with regard to Irish affairs is that the Prince of Wales will shortly succeed Earl Spencer as Lord Lieutenant, at the request of the Queen and Mr. Gladstone.

The *Tipperary Free Press* publishes the following letter, which has been received in reply to a memorial to the Premier for the release of O'Donovan Rossa:—

"10, Downing-street, Whitehall, Dec. 20.
"Sir,—Mr. Gladstone desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th inst., and to assure you that he does not in any way question your title to refer to him in the matter to which you allude. Mr. Gladstone is, however, ready to assume the responsibility of the decision to decline the release which you desire.
"I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
"W. B. Gladstone."

"Martin O'Dwyer, Esq."

Irish journals report that during the Parliamentary election in Longford, which was bitterly contested, and attended with great excitement, the supporters of Martir, the Fenian candidate, and the friends of Nugent came into collision at Guller Hill, near Longford. After a sharp fight between the parties, troops appeared on the field and fired upon the Fenians, who quickly dispersed. A few men were wounded; no one killed. At last accounts there had been no further disturbance, but proper precautions had been taken to prevent a renewal of the conflict. The Fenian element is greatly exasperated over the defeat of its candidate.

Inquiries now prosecuting in Dublin, Ireland about that political corruption has been reduced to a science. One Bloxham swore that he had persecuted his brother, who was in England, and received £35 for so doing. Another witness, Saunders, testified that he had been employed by the conservatives to buy voters, and that he knew of forty or fifty 'freemen' who had been 'fixed.' Among the agents employed to manipulate voters was a woman, who, as the testimony showed, managed matters with celerity and adroitness.

The disestablished church has not as yet reached a satisfactory organization. The Democratic spirit has been largely developed and the laity claim rights which the Bishops are reluctant to concede. The English Church journals declare that nothing will induce the Irish Bishops to sit in the same assembly with the laity and the lower orders of clergy, but the Irish newspapers are equally positive in asserting that the bishops will not be permitted to have an absolute veto on all ecclesiastical legislation.

THE DISSENTED CHURCH.—THE SIRENE OF THE DUBLIN STRAND.—Order reigns at Warsaw! The proceedings at the adjourned meeting of delegates held on the 16th inst., were distinguished by an unusual amount of harmony and decorum; owing to the fact that the lay element had everything its own way—the clergy having retired from the undignified contest. Letters were read from the Protestant Archbishops and the reverend secretaries declining to attend, whereupon the Earl of Meath was called to the chair. The report of the scrutineers as to the voting for lay delegates to the general convention having been read and some matters of detail disposed of, the subject of parochial committees was discussed. Dr. Carter suggested that "the lay-delegates in each parish should form a local committee," and said, "they