

After the oppression of seven hundred years, thanks to God and the growing intelligence of the age, and, shall I say it, to the genius of the Catholic religion, which, I know, to a large extent is gradually permeating the upper classes in England, the dawn of practical emancipation is already upon us, and, like all the choice gifts from God, it comes from a compass point from which it was least expected. The scare of Fenianism no doubt may have contributed its quota, but, like the scares of all the rebellions before it, without the change that has taken place in English public opinion it could have effected nothing. If the Fenians met the British army in the field, as they promised to do, and killed fifty thousand of their enemies, every man of sense well knows that their short-lived victories, like those of the Southern States, would have no other effect but that of riveting their chains the more cruelly. Twenty years ago the most sanguine friends of Ireland could not have possibly anticipated the great moral victories that are being achieved in England before our own eyes. What all the men and means of poor Ireland could never have effected, will be soon and triumphantly accomplished, please God, without the shedding of one drop of human blood. Within another short year I believe the last imprint of the bond-chains of centuries will be rubbed off our limbs, and the Irish Catholic will be on a footing of perfect equality with every other man in the empire.

Such are the two antagonistic principles of physical and moral force, the right and the wrong of the two political parties in Ireland, as tested and proved by the infallible criterion of palpable and unquestionable results. Physical force in Ireland always failed, for the very obvious and mathematical reason, that it was ever a question of the weaker against the stronger. Once that the strength of the weaker is tested to its utmost, and that the last of its resources is exhausted, the next move, the next effort needed and not forthcoming, is the death knell of the whole. The last man killed, the last shot fired, the last shilling expended, and then the stronger—as Russia in Poland, and the North in the Southern States—is not merely in the ascendant, but is the only force in the field. The weaker is not only vanquished, but is annihilated as a force. If it survives at all, it lives only at the mercy and tol-