

IRELAND AS IT WAS AND IS

Its Glory in the Days That Knew Not Landlord Greed.

The wrongs for which Landlordism is responsible enumerated and framed in a strong but just impeachment.

Within the last few weeks ago the people of this country have been reading in the daily press of the sufferings of the inhabitants of Texas and Charleston from the failure of crops and the earthquake. With the true instincts of men and Americans, they have come to the rescue with a generosity and promptness that make one feel proud of humanity. Trains of provisions have gone southward to preserve the sufferers from starvation, enriching the givers and the receivers, and binding in bonds of love and charity the hearts of north and south. Americans take no credit to themselves for this noble work: it is only their duty to their fellow men and citizens, they say, and they say the truth.

Yet it is a great thing when men do as well as understand, their duty to their fellows. Now let us take a glance, at the foreign news of those same papers that brought us accounts of the Texas scarcity and of its relief. We find that 'Irish affairs' take up a space great beyond all proportion to the size of seeming importance of Ireland. The general tenor of these reports is poverty, fall of prices, inability to pay high rents, total stagnation of trade, eviction terribly on the increase, Belfast Orange riots the sending of troops into the country and the like.

From this, one can infer that there is a fearful state of misery in the land justly called "the gem of the sea."

Starvation is rife in Ireland, not through visitations of Providence, as in Texas and Charleston, but through the fault of men: and these the rulers of the most wealthy and luxurious country under the sun, who boast more than any others of their freedom, justice and generosity.

To those English rulers and their satraps, the landlords, a remedy very different from the American one of trainloads of provisions has occurred and been put in execution. They send ship loads of soldiers, horse, foot, and artillery, instead of pork and flour, and carloads of 'ejunction processes,' instead of dollar bills.

By acts of Parliament, passed and enforced with an evil persistence, the English destroyed every industry in Ireland except those of farming and cattle raising—the linen trade is confined to a corner in Ulster, and is well nigh dead there. Now that cattle and butter have fallen to less than half the prices of former years, and farm products have been brought down by American competition, the people are unable to pay the back rents that were an intolerable burden in the best times—so the fiat of English law has gone forth, that they are to be torn from their cabins and cast helpless on the world.

There is an exceeding great hard ship in the case of these poor people, as they have in most cases, by the admission of the very English law that destroys them a larger property interests in their farms than their landlords. The same legislation that ruined their once flourishing manufactures, has consequently deprived the boys and men of the trades that insure success in America and the colonies, and the exactions of the landlords in the past hindered the accumulation of capital, so that there is no more help less creatures among the children of men than the evicted Irish farmer and his family.

This their rulers are well aware of, as they are of the other interesting fact that these evicted tenants and their children are building up all over the globe a power fiercely hostile to the British Empire—a power that is neither timid or forgetful, and is awaiting its chance, if justice be not done soon, to pay the deep, long debt of the bitter past. It is well known to the landlords and the Tory Government that encourage and supports them, that further eviction can effect nothing but injury to Ireland and England. The Irish people have nobly offered to forgive the past, and close the quarrel of centuries by their acceptance of Mr. Gladstone's Irish Parliament. The best men of England have ratified those terms and given their votes and voice for this truce of God, when here comes these human tigers of landlords, whose history is one black, bloody tear stained record of execution persecution, lust and plunder, and stard between two nations, saying there shall not be peace.

Now a question arises to the lips of the nations whose holy desire for peace and good will is being so ruthlessly frustrated, who are you "to the landlords—who would prevent peace among men

what are your records in the past, what claims have you on us and on humanity that on your account war should rage for ever? This question has been often answered, yet it is still above ground, waiting to be answered again. In view of the interest it at present excites I desire to say a few words that may perhaps throw more light on a very complicated problem.

It is impossible without observation and the aid of tradition, for the casual reader, or even the more attentive student of history, to form any idea of the present misery of Ireland. When we compare what she is with what she was and with what under other circumstances, she might be to-day, the thought is sufficient almost to make a man mad. Ireland has now no skilled workers in gold, or silver, brass or iron. but it was not always so. An Englishman in the Magazine of Art has recently said that in gold and silversmith work the ancient Irish have never been excelled. Dante commends them for the excellence of their wollen fabrics in his day, and says they introduced the harp and the method of playing it into Italy. In days long anterior to Dante they taught public schools, as Dr. Keating says, for every king and prince in Europe. In St. Patrick's time they kept up an extensive trade with Gaul and Spain—in their Apostolic days they taught Latin and music to the Germans! Of their architecture and art we have specimens in their books and wonderful remains of church and tower that, despite time and Cromwell, have come down to our times. At a time when division of labor was not much in vogue, these men were employed to make an Irish harp. We know that places now covered with peat to a depth of fifteen feet were once cultivated, and where less than one century ago the song of the reaper was chorused by the whirring of spinning wheels and the whizzing of shuttles, a few miserable sheep and starving bullocks now relieve the houseless desolation.

Not in material wealth alone has Ireland deteriorated. The first sixty years of the seventeenth century were remarkable, not only for the splendid soldiers she produced, but by a still more glorious company of great scholars. Europe had no brighter names on the roll of her scholars in their day, than Fathers Wadding, Colgan Rothe, the O'Leary's O'Shiel, the physician, Usher and many lesser stars that burned brightly in the firmament of genius. Then as Campion, an Englishman, says, they spoke Latin like a vulgar tongue, and a band of shipwrecked Spaniards found the first farmer they met, in the County Leitrim, able to talk to them in pure Castilian.

There was not in those days a town-land in the island that did not contain persons who could play beautifully on the harp, and compose music and poetry of excellent sweetness and pathos. As long as the old tribal system of landholding remained, that gave the people as strong a right to their portion of the tribe lands as the chief to his, learning, arts music and commerce flourished and Ireland was able to withstand the whole power of England in every successive generation. When the present most iniquitous system of landholding was established, the sun of prosperity, art, science and learning set on Erin, and a long and terrible darkness has since endured.

It is not to be supposed that poverty and ignorance are the only effects of landlordism—moral and social consequences have resulted from that most degrading slavery, that are every day embittering the lot of Irishmen and their children all over the world. The sense of property has to a great extent been destroyed in them owing to the penal and the land laws. The German who owned a house and farm as real estate in the Fatherland, knowing that the possession of land is the foundation of power and prosperity, gets him a farm as soon as possible in America—the Irishmen who in reality never owned land at home, and whose memories of "tenancy at will" are anything but pleasant, cannot be got to go on a farm in this country. He hangs around cities spends his money with his friends, often losing most of his inherited good qualities, and either remains unmarried, or brings up his family in poverty, since he has no trade as a rule, and often ends in shipwreck of himself and all that is his.

Neither the education, training, nor association of his Irish farm home fitted him for the life of American cities, where in his life is too often one of slavery out of doors, and humiliation at home, if home he have. It is enough to make one's heart bleed, to see the hundreds of young men crowding daily into our cities, without a trade or friends or preparation of any sort to fight successfully the hard

battle of life. There is an aspect of Irish landlordism not to be touched on, so heinous, so brutal, so villainous, that one might pray to be excused treating of such, but it is expedient to make fully manifest the character and crimes of this chartered iniquity. In female purity the Irish Catholic population have always held the foremost place among nations. A few days since a famous English journal—The Pall Mall Gazette—produced very striking statistics regarding this matter. Here it was, that the landlord could inflict the severest humiliation on his hated serf. History is, unusually silent about these dark deeds, but tradition is not; and in some cases tradition has become history. The people who suffered were always very reticent, as no man willingly publishes his own disgrace or shame—but the landlords have exacted a terrible and extensive tribute from their serfs. The sacrifice of the daughter was often the condition of the father retaining his home and farm in those terrible penal days when "America was very far and heaven very high." The law, instead of punishing, shielded the wrong doers, and men are still living who have seen landlord "barems" filled with the victims of these human minotaurs perpetrated such horrors up to the middle of this century, and it was for this they so often provoked the blunderbus of the parent and brother.

But the infancy is dying fast—like the evil spirit it is, it will tear and rend the patient it so long possessed, at its going out—but out it is going. When it is dead and gone one of the darkest chapters of history will be closed.

JAMES KEEGAN.

A. M. D. G.

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The College of St. Boniface, incorporated by an Act of Parliament, and affiliated to the University of Manitoba, is, since the 19th of August, 1885, directed by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, under the high patronage of His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface. Its course of studies comprises the Greek, Latin, French and English languages and literature; History, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, higher Mathematics, mental Philosophy, Natural Sciences and Theology. There is also a preparatory course, and a commercial department, in which Book Keeping is taught.

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The conveyance to be made by horse and vehicle of dog train in winter, and by horse and vehicle or boat in summer, via Sandy Bay, Lakeside and Totogan. The rate of travel to be not less than 32 miles per day. The courier to leave Westbourne every second Friday at 7 a. m., arrive at Kinross within thirty three (33) hours. Leave Kinross on the following Tuesday at 8 00 a. m., arrive at Westbourne within thirty three hours. Or if more suitable for persons tendering; Leave Kinross, every second Wednesday at 8 a. m., arrive at Westbourne within thirty three hours. Leave Westbourne on the following Friday at 7 a. m. and arrive at Kinross within thirty three hours. Two sureties must become bound with the contractor in the sum of \$500 for the proper performance of the work.

Printed notice containing further information as to conditions of proposed contracts may be seen and blank forms of tender obtained at the Post Office of Westbourne from M. Hebron Moor, Manitoba House, and at this office, W. W. MCLEOD. Post Office Inspector. Post Office Inspector's Office, Winnipeg, 29th November, 1886.

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land Revenue Department, Ottawa, Feb 24th, 1884