

Ahern, as she sat down and began to play the accompaniment to 'Oh Holy Mother,' to which her voice, inexpressibly sweet and strong, added its soul-touching tones. The child stood breathless and unconscious to herself, folded her hands together, while tears filled her eyes and flowed silently over her cheeks. She had never felt thus before, nor could she understand the mingled rapture and pathos of her emotions, which were at the same time glad and solemn. She was only thankful that it was dark in the room, that Miss Ahern could not see how very childish she was. She did not understand that the natural religion indwelling within her, had been reached through her love for music, and stirred to its very depths, until it throbbed and responded to the sweet, solemn, reverent sounds.

'To-morrow I will play you a waltz, or shall I now, Therese?' said Ellen when she had finished. 'Not now, if you please, Miss Ahern,' replied Therese, stealthily wiping her eyes. 'Will you come with me to see grandmamma, she has sent for us?'

'Yes. I am sorry to have kept her waiting. I have been to see an old friend of mine who is staying at Mrs. Haverly's, and is very discontented at being separated from me.'

'Is he your father, Miss Ahern?' 'No,' replied Ellen, with a light-hearted laugh, which was quickly followed by a sigh. 'The old friend I allude to is a dog, whom you shall go with me one of these days to visit. He has known me, and attached himself to me ever since I was born.'

'That is a strange sort of friendship; but come this way, Miss Ahern.' Grandmamma's room is in the back building. She could not bear the front of the house, the noises from the street disturbed her so much, and she had her things all moved over here one day, said Therese turning into a passage that led to the back of the house. She stopped at a closed door, and tapped gently on it.

'Who's there?' responded a shrill voice from within.

'It is me, grandmamma, and Miss Ahern.' 'Come in then, and shut the door after you, and Therese, followed by Ellen Ahern, walked in. Almost surrounded by a Chinese screen, an old woman nearly eighty years of age, reclined in a large easy chair, covered with white dimity. Her hair was as white as a snow drift, and was rolled back over a cushion, which was surmounted by a high crowned lace cap, tied with black ribbon. Her eyes, large and sunken, were of a dusky gray, with a ghostly stare about them that made Ellen Ahern shrink back. She was wrapped in a dark chintz dressing gown, and grasped in one hand a gold-headed cane, or rather a staff on which she seemed to lean to steady herself, for, from her head to her feet, there was an almost imperceptible quivering of every member of her body. A bright fire was burning in the grate, and a small astral lamp suspended from the ceiling, hung near her. Altogether, this room with its quaint, time-blackened furniture, its white dimity draperies, and soft, pleasant light, was decidedly the most cheerful, home-looking spot that Ellen Ahern had seen since she left home.

The aged dame looked keenly and steadily at them as they approached her, as if she desired to forestall by her scrutiny, any after impression that the voice and words of the stranger might produce on her. 'This is Miss Ahern, grandmamma,' said Therese, kissing her withered cheek, which cared she suffered but did not return. 'Sit here where I can see you, Miss Ahern. I hope you are well, she said, extending the tips of her thin, claw-like fingers to Ellen Ahern. 'I am glad to find you better, Mrs. Wardell,' observed Ellen, in her soft, gentle tones, after she had arranged her chair as directed. 'Well, I am better, but what is that to you?' she asked with sudden quiescence. 'I am always glad, Miss Ahern, when those who have been suffering are relieved, and I cannot help hoping that if it is God's will, they may continue comfortable, especially if they are old and infirm.'

'Yes, yes, I am very old. But you see, I never forget anything. If I could forget things, I should get well, you understand. Are you the governess?'

'I am endeavoring to fulfill that important office, and I hope, with God's help, I shall do it faithfully.'

'God's help! What makes you talk so much about God? Who are you?' she cried out in a startled manner.

'Grandmamma, dear grandmamma!' said Therese, as she ran forward, placed her arm around her, and drew the trembling head to her bosom, 'be quiet now, that's a dear.' And there she leaned against the fragile child, her white head shaking and jerking about for full five minutes, when she became suddenly calm. (To be Continued.)

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

We learn from the Dublin Evening Post that his Eminence Cardinal Cullen will leave Ireland for Rome, it is expected, on or about the 15th of June, to be present at the celebration in the Eternal City of the eighteenth century of the martyrdom of St. Peter and Paul on the 29th of June; and on the following week will take place the Beatification of the Japanese Martyrs.

CARDINAL CULLEN ON FENIANISM.—Cardinal Cullen, in a pastoral on the devotions peculiar to the month of May, read in the churches and chapels of the diocese of Dublin alluding to Fenianism says:—'Brethren, I beg of you to use your influence to banish every remnant of Fenianism from your respective parishes. Those who took part in that unhappy system must now see that, whilst they rejected all friendly advice, they put their lives at the mercy of spies and informers, the most wicked and degraded class of human beings. Exhort all who have been led astray, and who have incurred the censures of the Church by joining a secret organisation; to retrace their steps, to seek for absolution for their transgressions, and to determine to shun for the future all those societies which are so wisely condemned by the Church. When those who have gone astray show signs of true repentance, the Church will act as a tender mother towards them. While condemning the evil deeds of secret societies from which we may expect nothing good, we cannot be indifferent to the sad falling state of our country. The people are still flying from the land, and nearly three millions of its people have emigrated: our towns and villages

are decaying, trade and commerce are at a standstill, and desolation is spreading on every side. Can such a state of things be amended by human wisdom, or are our rulers able to encounter such difficulties? The Scripture says, 'Do not put your trust in princes, in the children of men, in whom there is no salvation.' But dearly beloved, let us put our confidence in God, and humbly invoke His protection. Let us recommend our country and ourselves to the powerful intercession of the Blessed Mother of God, and our hopes will not be frustrated.

THE POOR IN CONNEMARA.

(To the Editor of the Weekly Register.) Sir, I earnestly beg leave to solicit of your charity that you will kindly take up the cause of our poor suffering people, and lay it before your many charitable readers. Their generosity has often before allayed the pangs of hunger in many poor children of want; they will not now be indifferent to the misery and distress which exists around us in such fearful reality.

To many, I am sure, the recital of these scenes of distress must seem rather as an exaggeration than a simple statement of the reality, so hard is it to realise misery so intense unless present. But one day's daily life amongst the poor as ours is spent would show but too truly in its sad reality that our poor people are actually in a starving state. There are to-day whole families around us who have not one morsel of food, and the look of misery and wretchedness which everywhere prevails is depressing and heartrending in the extreme. We commonly hear the poor say, 'Oh, it is a fine thing to have even one meal a day,' and that poor wretched meal is no more than an insufficient portion of Indian meal food. One poor woman told us with great simplicity that 'She knew she should die of want this year.' And I have heard that one case of death from starvation has actually occurred; the wonder is that life does not sooner give way under the pressure of so much want. Provisions have almost doubled in price during the year, and the poor families who contrived to live on the precarious labor of the hand are now reduced to the common lot of misery, for the earning of an occasional shilling or twopenny cannot save a family from destitution. We are anxious to give employment to the female poor, and are doing something in that way in spinning, knitting, and weaving; but here, too, our want of funds prevents the good we might do, when encouragement brings on our weaving work to be a means of useful employment to our poor orphans and extern poor.

I earnestly pray you, dear sir, to advocate the cause of our poor people. Oh! would that it were known far and near, then, I know, aid would come; for who could refuse an alms when destitution presses so heavily on the poor of this remote friendless district. I remain, dear sir, yours very faithfully and obliged in Jesus Christ,

AMELIA WHITE Superiressa. Convent of Mercy, Ouliffen, Connemara, Ireland, May 7, 1867.

THE POOR IN GALWAY.

(To the Editor of the Weekly Register.)

Sir,—Permit me, through the medium of your columns, to warn the Executive, and especially the administrators of the laws for the relief of the poor, that in portions of this locality distress is at this very moment existing in some of its most lamentable phases. I trust neither you nor the 'pervers' that be will consider me presumptuous or officious if I respectfully place before you and them a few facts which should be known to those in authority, and which goes to prove that our poor people are likely again to be sorely tried if the laws designed for the relief of the necessitous be not humanely and liberally administered by those on whom the duties—the serious and responsible duties—of guardians of the poor have been imposed. Let me, then, inform you that those who reside in Kilnaran (which is situated between the towns of Oughterard and Moycullen, on the south shore of Lough Corrib) are in a most deplorable condition. Of the families in my spiritual charge, there are at least 150 in want, many of whom must die of starvation unless they get relief by being permitted to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows or be supported otherwise. I would prefer work to almsgiving, the people would prefer earning to receiving even State charity. The cabins in which these people live are such as I would be ashamed to show any stranger. An American would think it an inhuman act to shelter even his hogs in such. On the opposite shore, the Headfort district, the poor are suffering, and will suffer terrible before the end of the summer, from want; but they are better housed. On neither side is there employment of any sort for the people, who would most willingly work if they could get it. Provisions are sold at present at famine prices—8d. per stone for potatoes, and over 21s per ton for Indian meal. Yesterday I visited a poor man, named Mathias Murray; he lives near the Ferry of Knock. He has a wife and four children. Himself and two children looked badly—the other two were not like human beings. They had the same faces, the same emaciated appearance with which I was unfortunately too familiar in the years '47, '48 and '49, when State political economists conspired to destroy the innocent and helpless children of Ireland, to plunder and enrich a few English meal mongers. One of those children was in his mother's arms, clasping and clinging to her breast and hisping 'mother, bread.' The mother, strange to say, looked well, but those familiar with famine times will remember this characteristic, and the picture of an Irishwoman, such as a Pagan or even an official, if he witnessed the scene, would not be moved at and cry shame upon the system whose laws permit such a state of society. The father told me, 'He was four days and four nights living on one hen, which he had killed on Sunday night, and two shillings' worth of food which he got from a charitable person, but he was at that moment without food, or any hope of such. He had three acres of land; he put down a little seed potatoes, and a little seed oats now; he could do no more, and was resigned to the will of God and that of the Mother of God.' This man walked six miles on Monday, to call on the relieving officer (who—why or wherefore I cannot say—does not live in the town of Headfort) and told him his pitiable condition. The relieving officer took down his name—a 'relief' usually conceded—and told him to go home—an advice generally vouchsafed—and that he would bring his case before the board of guardians—a duty sometimes performed. Murra: obeyed, and returning home—home is a misnomer—he crept six miles back, and thus obtained the 'relief' of an advice and a promise. This man had to travel 12 miles with hunger—and that, too, sharp and pinching—gnawing his very vitals. Where are our humane Poor laws—laws for the relief of the Poor? Where are our relieving officers?—where our Poor-law guardians? Is the whole system a mockery, a delusion, and a snare?

DISTRESS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.—Once more a cry of distress comes from the West. On this occasion it is neither indistinct nor equivocal. It has already reached the House of Commons, and the Chief Secretary has promised consideration. But the letter which we publish from the Rev. Peter Conway shows that the matter is outside the domain of consideration; and that immediate and liberal relief is now wanted—wanted in various districts of the West. It is wanted, pressing, wanted, in Kellnaran, in Headfort, and Ouliffen, in Boffin. In fact all Connemara is once more threatened with distress. Of this the Government have had timely warning, and it is to be hoped that neither apathy nor routine will intervene between the people and their right to relief. It is not when other people are stricken with famine, when friends and penitence have fastened on them, that relief can be efficacious. It is to prevent those inevitable consequences of distress that the Government should act with promptness and liberality. Of course it would be most desirable if some means of employment freed from the demoralisation of the public works of the famine years were devised, by which honest industry would be upheld and saved from humiliation of public charity. Let work be got for the people if possible—but let nothing prevent their receiving efficient and prompt relief.—*Freeman's Journal.*

DISMISSAL IN PARTS OF THIS COUNTRY.—The question put by our County Member, Mr. Gregory, on Tuesday, in the House, to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Lord Naas, confirms the statement received by us from a correspondent in Oughterard of the great distress which either exists, or threatens to exist, in that town. The writer assures us that there is a great scarcity of provisions both for man and beast. He apprehends death by starvation before the end of many weeks, and says that, already, some cattle have died for want of food. In a short time, he says, there will not be a young person—male or female, in the district. Nor does he blame them for emigrating, as at home there is no hope for their future, owing to the oppressive conduct of the landlords. The shopkeepers will be without customers, and must become insolvent. The same is the sad story in all parts of this country. Our own town and rural districts are much in the same deplorable condition. And as for Mayo, it is one scene of wretchedness and distress. The few officials and a few of the gentry are the only safe persons.—*Connaught Patriot.*

DISSEMINATION OF THE STATE CHURCH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

It is with great pleasure we place before our readers the following admirable form of petition against the ecclesiastical grievance, which the National Association adopted at their meeting on the 23rd April. The document not only gives terse and clear expression to the salient features of that gigantic wrong, but it also prays for the only feasible mode of redress; namely, the disendowment of the State Church and the secularisation of her revenues, advocated at a former period by the great Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, and urged in our own day by the venerated Archbishop of Cashel, the Bishops of Gloyne and Ross, Mr. Daunt, Sir J. Gray, and in fact we might add by the whole Catholic body of Ireland and the body of Liberal Protestants; for the exceptions, although individually most worthy of respect are numerically insignificant. We earnestly urge all our friends to promote the extensive signing of this excellent petition as soon as copies reach the parishes:—

The Very Rev. B. Verdon proposed the following form of petition for the State Church Disendowment. Mr. E. Macready having seconded it, it was adopted:— To the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament Assembled. The Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of—, in the county of— Sheweth—that Ireland is the only country in the world in which the whole ecclesiastical State revenues of the nation are monopolised by the religious teachers of a small minority. That such an appropriation is in itself so absurd and unjust that the bare statement of the fact is, we submit, sufficient for its condemnation in the opinion of all men who have not a personal or party interest in its continuance. The injustice is, in our case, aggravated by the circumstance that the ecclesiastical revenues now applied to the support of the Protestant Church were originally founded by our Catholic predecessors for the endowment of their own Church.

That the present endowment of Protestant clergy in Ireland is not only an injustice but a gross insult to the overwhelming majority of the Irish people, and as such is calculated to create and perpetuate mutual animosities between the party who profit by the insulting injustice and the party who suffer from it. The Scotch, or French, or English people, or the people of any country sufficiently strong to assert their rights, would not suffer the infliction of a State Church opposed to the religious convictions of the national majority. We know not why Ireland should be in this respect an unhappy exception to all other countries, and compelled to submit to a gross and glaring wrong, which no other nation would endure.

We seek not any restoration of the ecclesiastical revenues to the Catholic Church. We have hitherto supported, and will cheerfully continue to support our own church by our voluntary contributions.—But acutely feeling the insult, and the monstrous pecuniary fraud which the present malversation of the Irish ecclesiastical state property inflicts upon our country, we earnestly pray your honorable house to disendow the State Church, and (having due regard to existing vested interests) to appropriate the revenues thereof to such secular purposes of public utility to the Irish people as to your wisdom shall seem advisable.

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c. THE IRISH PROTESTANT ESTABLISHMENT.—Why should it be allowed to exist? It is doubtless incumbent on those who advocate a change to have their plan ready. Many plans have been proposed and fully discussed in these columns, but no plan can be satisfactory that does not apply the funds to religious uses, and make them in some manner beneficial to those for whose benefit they were originally destined, namely, the Irish Catholic people. The clergy, it is said, have refused to accept a State endowment. They have done so. It has been offered them and they have refused it, but they have not refused that which has never been offered them a proportional share of the Church temporalities. This would be not a State endowment, but rather a restitution.—It would benefit the peasantry by relieving them of the support of their clergy. It would place the latter in a position of independence without diminishing their legitimate influence over their flocks.

It is doubtless a discouraging circumstance that apathy on this subject can even be alleged. If there be one thing more than another calculated to cool the ardour of a champion or to damp the energies of an advocate, it is to find the chief himself indifferent to his success, and unthankful for your exertions. But we are sure that this is not the case with Ireland. We cannot and will not believe that Ireland loves the Protestant Establishment, although we are quite ready to credit the statement that the Protestant clergy are, in very numerous instances, most estimable members of society—charitable, kind, and benevolent to their poor Catholic neighbours. We can well believe in the private worth of these gentlemen as individuals when we see some of their number, without any theological bias, actually siding with the Catholics on disputed points of Church history, denouncing proselytism, exposing the machinations of the sowers, and deprecating the attacks which in social life are continually levelled against Catholics. We could wish indeed that Ireland would make her real sentiments heard unmistakably on the point. It is undeniable that the appearance of indifference does weaken the hands of those who advocate her cause. The Ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer probably meant to convey a side hint when he referred to the parallel case of Scotland. Mr. Gladstone said:—'If there be any Scotch member in the House, I put to him a question, would any Scotch member tolerate the endowment of Episcopacy in Scotland in the way that it is endowed in Ireland?' The answer, of course, is that, as a matter of fact, Irishmen do tolerate it, and that there is no disputing about it. But did Scotland give the redress of her grievances by constitutional agitation, by Parliamentary action, by appeals to the justice and kindness of England? We think not. Scotland obtained redress by the way of armed resistance, by the detroning of two kings, and the beheading of one of them. In a word, 'Scotland got justice because she was able—not exactly to take it at the sword's point but at all events to make things so unpleasant to England as to induce, at last, her justice, that justice was at length granted, if only for the sake of a quiet life.

Why, then, did not Ireland do as Scotland did, and gain justice in the same way? Ireland has attempted it, but she has failed again and again, because, unlike Scotland, she has been unable to ally herself with the revolutionary party in England. It was by such an alliance that Scotland wrung tardy justice from England. The parallel, therefore, fails at its material point, for where is the revolutionary party in the England of to-day? What allies have the Fenians amongst Englishmen? We, therefore, think the allusion to Scotland inopportune and ill-omened at a time when, as Sir John Gray said, 'two revolutionary movements have just exploded in Ireland, and when at this very moment all the paraphernalia of State prosecutions are displayed; when the hangman's rope and the headsman's axe are being called into requisition, and the bodies of two unfortunate men are to be divided into quarters to be disposed of according to her Majesty's pleasure.' How often, alas, were such sights seen in Scotland during the struggle against Episcopacy? It is sorely undesirable to suggest the connection, in the way of cause and effect, between those struggles and the prosperity and contentment which, as Mr. Lamont remarked, Scotland now happily enjoys.—*Weekly Register.*

THE IRISH CHURCH QUESTION.—The Pall Mall Gazette has the following precis of opinions from the papers of Wednesday respecting the Irish Church question. The Times deems it unnecessary to waste argument on the unresisting feebleness of such pleadings as those of the Irish Attorney-General on behalf of the Irish Church. Mr. Gladstone's speech is a proof that the settlement of this question cannot be much longer delayed. If, as seems now likely, the question of Parliamentary Reform be finally settled in this present year, any Government that may be in power will do well to institute inquiries as to the best means of reconciling the rights of property with the demands of justice and common sense in the matter of the Irish Church. What may be the ultimate disposition of the funds is a question that does not concern us now. Such difficulties always appear insurmountable at first; and vanish when they are boldly approached. When the time comes they can and will be overcome.

The Telegraph remarks that one of the most powerful alms to Toryism in a free State is the fact when a political evil is old, complicated, and great; it has also the tendency to degenerate into what languid politicians call a bore. In ordinary life, no man with any pretensions to honest feeling would have the face to say, 'My debts are so great and of such old standing, that I must refuse to pay them.' Yet in politics the plea is often unblushingly put forth. This is in fact the only plea for the monstrous iniquity of the Irish Establishment. So long as that grievance exists, we must expect Roman Catholic disaffection.

The Daily News declares that the real confiscation consists in the diversion of revenues which belong to the Irish people, and ought to be employed for their benefit; to the purposes of a small and half-foreign Church. Lord Naas contended that the Irish Establishment has nothing to do with Irish discontent, inasmuch as the Fenians avowedly care little or nothing about it. Are we to legislate under Fenian tutelage; to abolish all that they disapprove, and to retain only what they will tolerate? The state of Irish sentiment is the result of the action and reaction of an infinite number of causes, some of them separately untraceable. To decline to deal with any of them because its removal will only tend gradually to abate what is wrong, and not wholly and suddenly to extinguish it, is to mistake the causes of social disease and conditions of social progress.

THE IRISH LAND QUESTION.—We were quite aware that the Government measure for facilitating the improvement of land in Ireland was not likely to settle the vexed question with which it deals in so timid and hesitating a manner. But we must confess that we were not prepared for the statement of Mr. Chatterton, that it is not even intended to settle it. Although we give the hon. and learned gentleman every credit for the candour of his declaration, we can conceive nothing more damaging to the Administration which he represents. It is a confession of incompetency on the part of the Government; and it is something more worse. It convicts them of exciting hopes which they do not intend to realize, and of disturbing the existing relations between landlord and tenant without being prepared to re-settle them on a new basis. It affords complete justification for the assertion that their bill is a mere party or political manoeuvre—a measure introduced without faith in its efficacy, and without any expectation that it will do more than tide over a temporary difficulty, and assist them in prolonging their lease of power. We do not concur in the arguments of those who like Mr. Lowe and Mr. Sandford, contend that the best thing to do is to leave Ireland alone, and to allow things, as it is said, 'to settle themselves.' But we can quite conceive that such views may be held by men of capacity, who have brought themselves to believe that the relations which subsist in England between the proprietors and the cultivators of the soil are the perfection of wisdom and that it is desirable to maintain their form, if not their substance, in the sister country without regard to the different circumstances of the two islands, and without reference to the cost or the consequences of working out the theories on which they are based. But what we cannot understand is, how any man who is charged with the responsibilities of government can bring himself to think that it is a statesmanlike course to touch a grave social question, like that of the Irish land tenure, without at least believing that the measure they propose is likely to set agitation at rest. It is clear that anything which raises but which does not settle such a question, must add to the difficulties which surround it, and tend to keep alive that irritation which it is on every account desirable to remove. Even if the intrinsic merits of the bill were not referring to were far more considerable than they are; it would in this way operate mischievously rather than beneficially, and would be fairly liable to condemnation, as a measure, by the confession of its authors, inadequate to the exigencies of the case. The Attorney-General for Ireland is indeed of opinion that if it be passed into a law, the promoters of the existing agitation on the subject will find their occupation gone, because their demands must then resolve themselves into the plain and naked proposition that the property in the land should be transferred from the landlord to the tenant. But no one can indulge in any expectation of the king without entirely ignoring the real source of the discontent which prevails in Ireland. The notion that the cultivator of the soil has a right to some security for his holding may or may not have a common-sense taint; but it is deeply rooted in the Irish mind, and it will certainly not be eradicated by enabling tenants to borrow from the imperial treasury money which in most cases they do not want; for the improvement of farms out of which they may be turned next day. Indeed, the present bill offers the most direct encouragement to the continuance of agitation. Imperfect, niggardly, and illusory as are its provisions, they are palpably at variance with the amendment moved by Lord Naas to Mr. Chatterton's measure of last year; for while they grant to tenants in certain cases compensation for improvements made without the consent of the landlord, the noble lord then asked the House to affirm the principle that compensation should be secured in respect of those improvements only which are made with the consent of the landlord. A much slower witted people than the Irish might draw the conclusion that if the transition from the Opposition to the Treasury Bench has in one twelvemonth wrought so great a change in the opinion of Conservative statesmen, the operation of a like cause may some day induce these same statesmen or their successors to perceive the justice, and the expediency of conceding a full title.

This question cannot be got rid of by ignoring it. It is at the root of the chronic disaffections of Ireland and it will continue to trouble us so long as there are any Irishmen left on the other side of St. George's channel. Sooner or later we shall have to make a deliberate choice between the tranquillity and the unity of the empire and the maintenance of the extreme rights of Irish landlords. A Celtic race will never submit contentedly to be mere tenants-at-will on their native soil; nor do we believe that if they have complete security for any money or labour expended in improvements, Irish tenants will ever be satisfied as long as they know that they are at any moment liable to eviction. Their farms are to them more than the mere means of livelihood. Their feelings, associations, and habits centre in their holdings, and whether reasonably or unreasonably, they feel that a wrong is done to them when they are ejected at the caprice of their proprietor. That is a feeling in which an Irish Parliament would at once delirium if Ireland were an independent country; and it is one which we shall have to take into our most serious consideration, unless we are prepared to renounce the hope of ever rendering the Union a reality. We do not propose now to enter into this large subject. It is unquestionably full of difficulty, and that difficulty is not likely to be diminished so long as the landlords persist in refusing leases to their tenants in order to retain political influence over them. If the proprietors were wise they would gradually introduce a system of leases; if they do not, they may force Parliament to adopt some measure which, under the name of 'encouragement,' will amount to something very like compulsion. It is certain that a reformed Parliament will not permanently subordinate the interests of the empire to the maintenance of the Irish landlords' right to do what they will with their own. If, however, we had previously entertained any expectation that those gentlemen might be led to adopt a reasonable view of their position, we should have been compelled to abandon the idea by the debate of the other evening limited as is the scope of the Government Bill, it was vehemently opposed by one Conservative member after another, as an invasion of the sacred rights of property; and in deference to their denunciations the Attorney-General announced that he should not insist on the provision which entitles the tenant to compensation for improvements in the land, although made without the consent of the landlord. If that be omitted, the measure will not contain even the semblance of a concession to the demands of the Irish people; it can only be regarded on the other side of the Channel as a proof that the proprietorial class will yield nothing to argument or to considerations of public expediency; and it must therefore operate in the most direct manner as an incentive to renewed agitation.

The discussion which took place on Monday evening only tended to confirm our previous opinion that for all practical purposes the bill will, in any case, be little better than a dead letter. It is just possible that if the Irish tenants held large farms, and were men accustomed to complicated transactions, they might think it worth their while, and might be able, to fulfil all the formalities requisite to enable them to make their improvements a charge on the land. But it is difficult to believe that a mere peasant farmer, cultivating fifteen or twenty acres of land will be able to take advantage of a system which involves appeals to Commissioners, notices to landlords, and elaborate inquiries into the value of every improvement before it is made, or, at any rate, before it is allowed to be charged upon the land. The measure of the late Government was self-acting, and so far as it went it would undoubtedly have done good. Under that bill, the tenant might make improvements he pleased, and on leaving or being turned out of his farm he would be entitled to receive as compensation the increased value which he had given to it. Whatever he did, he did, in one sense, at his own risk—that is, if he expended his money or his labour wastefully, he would not be entitled to any return for it. But, on the other hand, it was not proposed to place him in a position of antagonism to his landlord, or to bring them into direct collision as must be the case in Lord Naas's bill. As it is doubted that if the tenant states his intention to make any improvement of which the landlord or his agent does not approve, a notice to quit will immediately follow; and it is not clear that the fear of this will, in a vast number of cases, prevent the tenant from improving at all? Nor is that all. So long as the tenant holds merely at will, he can have no real security that he will reap the advantage of his outlay, since the landlord may increase his rent to an extent at least equal to the sum charged upon the farm by way of compensation for improvements. The position of the tenant class will continue, as it is now, one of absolute dependence upon the proprietors; and the only result of this bill, so far as we can see, will be to increase the feeling of distrust which now exists between them, and to afford additional causes of irritating controversy. In the case of leaseholders it will, no doubt, to some extent operate beneficially, because they will neither be afraid to give their landlord notice that they are about to improve, nor will they be under any apprehension lest their rents should be raised. But, unfortunately, this is a very small class; and it is moreover, exactly that for which it is not necessary to legislate at all. For the mass of the tenant-farmers of Ireland it will do nothing whatever; and, so far as they go, it is only valuable inasmuch as it amounts to a concession on the part of a Tory Government that the rights of the landlords must give way to the interests of the nation. It will be for statesmen of a more liberal type to turn that concession to practical account; nor can we doubt that will be done when the condition of Ireland becomes the prominent question of the day, as it must do so soon as we have settled that of Parliamentary Reform.—*London Review.*

THE TENANT RIGHT BILL.—If its departure from the principles formerly maintained by its authors were all that could be brought forward against the Bill, the opposition to it would not be formidable.—Inconsistency is but a venial sin among politicians; while the increased means of information, and the increased sense of responsibility, which naturally accompany accession to office, are sufficient to account for a modification of Conservative opinion on the wants of Ireland. In the matter of the land question, Lord Derby and his colleagues have gone far enough to alienate the sympathies of some among their friends, but they have stopped short of those concessions which are needed to win the support of their opponents. In the debate of last Monday the provisions of the Bill were not discussed in detail; but the Irish Liberal members who supported Mr. Gregory's amendment gave their united testimony to the uselessness of any enactment which does not confer on the tenant a reasonable security of tenure. It is a mistake to suppose that poverty constitutes the main grievance in the position of the Irish farmer at this moment. The Celtic peasant is everywhere accustomed to live hardily, and to hoard diligently; and the £17,000,000 which the Irish tenants-at-will are said to keep in various banks need only be spent on their several holdings to effect a radical change in the aspect of Irish agriculture. As the law now stands, however, the money that lies useless at the bank is the tenant's own; the money that he lays out on the soil may, at any moment, become his landlord's. It is not surprising that he prefers a mode of investment which secures the principal at the sacrifice of the interest to a mode which gives him the interest at the risk of the principal. The Government, however, have assumed that the first requisite in the settlement of the Land question must be to provide improving tenants with the money with which to improve. In so doing they have elevated a subsidiary, though by no means an unimportant element of the subject, to a position of undue prominence. And they have done this at the expense of the element which is really of greatest moment in the matter. Politicians who ask for some legislative 'encouragement' of 'improvement' in Ireland are making an exorbitant or revolutionary demand. They do not so far seek to interfere with freedom of contract, or to prevent landlords and tenants from making, as