

The Tragedy of Charles Stewart Parnell

Lord Eversley's Book Traversed by T. P. O'Connor,
M. P.—Peculiarities of the Irish Leader—The
O'Shea Episode—Was Dying for Years.

[By T. P. O'Connor.]



It is one of the indications of the renewal of interest in Ireland which the certain success of the home rule bill is creating that Lord Eversley—a Liberal Englishman, now approaching 80 years of age, and a Liberal minister during the greater part of Parnell's career—has written a lengthy volume on the relation between Gladstone and Parnell. Parnell is an exception to so many public men whose deeds and fame suffer eclipse with their death. His fame has risen instead of declined. Parnell has passed into history and now may be discussed with the frigidity of a historical retrospect. This is partly because, apart from the man's political career, he was the central figure in one of those great tragedies of human passion which always excites pity in all hearts. Love and the world well lost is still the romantic theory of most men and of nearly all women, and as Parnell gave up everything for love, his fame, his power, and finally his life, he will remain a dominating figure in the human imagination long after his death.



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.

BISHOP OF OXFORD ON THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Says He Is Not Affected Because Some Women Do Things With Which He Does Not Agree—Says Churches Should Recognize Equality of Women.

The feature of the large meeting held in the Queen's Hall, London, to draw attention to the religious aspect of the women's movement was the brilliant speech from the chair of the Bishop of Oxford. In the course of his address he said: "I find myself confronted by bodies of people so disgusted with actual conditions that they are prepared to do what, in my judgment, are revolutionary acts, and things as they are a great deal that to me appears to be part of the structure of all that is most sacred in human life. I find myself, on the other side, faced with the argument about 'the thin end of the wedge.' The devil invented many things, but there is nothing which I am more certain he invented than this argument of the thin end of the wedge. (Cheers and laughter.) It ministers to everything which in the worst sense of the word is revolutionary in human life. Because just claims are urged in an excessive manner, because noble aspirations sometimes run riot, it says: 'I shall remain exactly as I am. I shall ask myself no questions.' That is the ground of the worst kind of revolution. I am certain, in regard to any large and mixed movement of this kind, it is our duty to confront it with a candid mind and ask what is just and right, and to take for our maxim nothing but 'Be just and fear not.'"

Women's Interest in the Laws. I understand by the women's movement, a movement which has led to the opening up to woman's activities of a vast number of new fields of effort. As it presents itself to me the entrance of the women's movement into the strictly political area and the demand for the suffrage has been part of the movement in its essence. (Applause.) movement is the necessary for the securing of that ground which individual initiative has always taken part in securing, but which cannot only be secured by legal and formal action. I would say that the horrible abuse which we are seeking to remedy by the criminal law amendment bill is a relic of a state of things in which, by a part of male society which was allowed to

into the House, he had become one of the most soft-spoken, soft-voiced members of the House. One of the secrets of his success was an entire absence of the ordinary varieties of a faith whatever in his own oratorical powers, and strangely indifferent to what people thought of him, he spoke on, hour after hour, to benches absolutely empty. I have heard him speak at length when his audience consisted of but two or three people, sometimes of only three, the faithful Piggis by his side, and the unfortunate minister whose department he was criticizing.

Lived in the House. Parnell was not naturally an energetic man, at least he was not in his late years, but at this period of his life he worked twelve or fourteen hours a day, and he literally lived in the House of Commons. With a sufficient but small income he was content with poor lodgings in Keppel street, Russell square. It was, perhaps, the years of loneliness, apart from all society, male and female, and the frightful reaction that comes to over-worked politicians, that paved the way of the disastrous passion in which his career went down.

One of the marvels of Parnell's career is the extraordinary and immediate instinct he showed for political warfare, and especially in that difficult and perilous arena of the House of Commons. Lord Eversley brings out the well-known fact that when Parnell at twenty-eight began his parliamentary career, there were very few men in the House who were so profoundly ignorant of the things his political career demanded. He had never read Irish history, probably he had read but little English, indeed, he never was a reader of anything literary to the end of his days—I doubt if he ever read a novel or a poem in the whole course of his existence. And yet within a couple of years of his entrance into the House of Commons without any pretensions to great oratorical power, this unlettered small squire was the equal of the greatest parliamentary warfarer.

Started Land Agitation. Parnell's Conservatism fought with Davitt's Radicalism on the land question. Davitt was in favor of a policy, not of patching up the system of land, but of pulling it down altogether. Parnell, after long hesitation, accepted the policy of Davitt, and started the formidable land agitation which has been one of the most startling phenomena of our time. Parnell had to pass through fire and water, and ultimately never reached final success, but long after his death a great Conservative minister, Mr. George Wyndham, accepted Parnell's policy, and today more than half the land in Ireland has been transferred from the landlord to the tenant—very much to the benefit both of Ireland and of England.

I pass on to that dramatic epoch in Parnell's life when he was imprisoned in Kilmallinham. And here there enters on the scene the strange and sinister figure who played so large a part in Parnell's life, and was ultimately destined to be his ruin. It is curious,

with our knowledge of what followed, to read of Capt. O'Shea being the confidential agent between Parnell and Mr. Chamberlain during this imprisonment. The name of Captain O'Shea figures on every page almost of this part of Lord Eversley's narrative. He is running in and out of Parnell's cell, he is now with the imprisoned Irish leader, and the next moment in the drawing-room of some great cabinet minister, he figures as the confident and friend of Parnell; the depository of his most secret political purposes; his advocate; his plenipotentiary. And it was Captain O'Shea's efforts to induce the ministry of Gladstone to adopt legislation which appeased the then terrible Irish situation, and incidentally, facilitated Gladstone's reelection to release Parnell from Kilmallinham. How explain the conduct of Capt. O'Shea at this fateful moment in Parnell's life? There is no doubt that the fatal passion which wrecked Parnell and the woman he so fanatically loved had already taken possession of both their souls; could O'Shea alone have been ignorant of this so palpable? I don't know; I suppose not. O'Shea in the end became Parnell's most relentless enemy. I remember still how my blood ran cold as I heard the saying of Captain O'Shea, uttered years after Parnell was dead, "I killed him inch by inch."

For Years He Was Dying. Another skip brings me to Parnell's closing days. When the great crisis came to Parnell after the divorce case, he was far more unequal to the daily struggle than anybody—even his intimates—realized.

None of us realized that Parnell for years was almost a dying man. He burnt his own smoke, but assuredly when often he came down to the House, tired, drawn, walking with an enfeebled step, and with glassy eyes, one ought to have easily seen what agonies of body and mind he must have been passing through.

The final struggle of Parnell after his deposition by his party lasted only ten months. Some years before Parnell had been ill for months. Nobody knew it, for he had disappeared into that region of mysterious cloud in which he so often veiled himself, and he had not recovered until 1891. He then went into this campaign for his leadership with something of the same energy as Mr. Roosevelt has been showing in his fight for leadership. Parnell crossed every week-end from Brighton to Ireland, and exposed meetings in the open air, and exposed himself to all the inclemencies of weather. His last public speech was delivered in the midst of a pelting shower of rain, he had to travel by carriage 25 miles to reach the meeting, he travelled back to Dublin through the long dreary hours of the night, and on the railway train, he spent the next day in Dublin making efforts, many of them vain, to raise the money for a new newspaper that would defend his cause, then he travelled over again by night, and reached Brighton on his wife, for by this time he had been married to Mrs. O'Shea, had to take to his bed, and in a few days the world, which had not even heard that he was dead, was startled to hear that he was dead. In human history there is scarcely a tragedy of passion, more pathetic and more complete.

THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

July 14, 1912.
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The Seed in the Four kinds of Soil Mark, iv., 1-20.

Golden Text—Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. Jas. i., 21.

1. Verse 1—What was the particular charm in Jesus which attracted to him such great crowds?

2. Is preaching from a boat just as holy and acceptable to God as from a pulpit in a cathedral or a church?

3. Verse 2—Why did Jesus teach in parables and what are the advantages of that method of teaching?

4. Verse 3—In what respect is the teaching of religion like the sowing of seed?

5. Verse 4—How would you regard a gardener who deliberately sowed seed on the highway?

6. Should a Christian sow the seed of the gospel in those hearts that are not prepared to receive it?

7. Verses 5-6—What class of people are those who resemble the stony ground?

8. When emotional or shallow minded people hear the gospel and are moved by it are they or are they likely to develop into strong Christians as those under like influences who are not so easily moved and think more deeply? Give your reasons.

9. Verse 7—What effect does preaching the gospel have upon those who will not give up their sins?

10. If a person is ever so much influenced by the gospel, but still holds on to some sin or sins, how much

Christian fruit is he likely to bear?

11. Verse 8—How can it be possible for every person who is appealed to by the gospel to become a "good ground" hearer?

12. How do you account for the different degrees of fruit bearing from those who answer to the "good ground" in this parable?

13. Verse 9—Is it a fault or a misfortune, and why, to have dull or no spiritual hearing?

14. Verses 10-13—Why did Jesus speak in parables that he might not be understood or would misunderstand?

15. What is the only way by which we may understand the teaching of Jesus?

16. Verse 14—What is "the word" which all Christians must sow?

17. Verse 15—What class of persons are "wayside" hearers?

18. Verses 16-17—Do those stony ground "hearers," who receive the word with gladness, and afterward fall away, actually get converted? Give your reasons.

19. Verse 20—What reward will they who are "good ground" hearers get?

Lesson for Sunday, July 21, 1912. The Growth of the Kingdom. Mark, iv., 26-32; Matt., xiii., 33.

Golden Text—Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as in heaven. Matt., vi., 10.

1. Verse 26—What does "the kingdom of God" here stand for?

2. What is here referred to as "the ground in which it is sown?"

3. Whom does the "Man" represent which sows the seed and how is the seed sown?

4. Verse 27—After a minister or teacher or any other Christian has sown the seed of the gospel ought he to be restless or anxious concerning its growth? Give your reasons.

5. What is the proof that the seed of the gospel will when sown always bring forth its proper fruit?

6. Verse 28—The earth produces a great variety of things by self-propagation, without human instrumentality. Would you say, or not, and why, that Christianity is in any measure analogous to this?

7. In preaching the gospel in heathen lands what are generally the first results and what are the various stages in the progress toward the ripe fruit of Christianity?

8. What is the meaning of "the full corn in the ear" as applied to the fruit of Christianity?

9. Verse 29—When the seed of the gospel is sown in a human heart or in a country does it ever die without germinating even if years intervene without visible fruit? Give your reasons.

10. What is the earthly fruit of Christianity?

11. Who are they that reap the harvest and enjoy the fruit of the gospel?

12. When will the final harvest of Christianity be reaped and what will it be?

13. Verse 30—What would you compare the Kingdom of God to and what are some of the other comparisons which Jesus makes elsewhere?

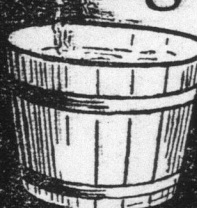
14. Verses 31-32—What are some things like the mustard seed, exceedingly small, upon which vast issues depend?

15. What evidence or incidents can

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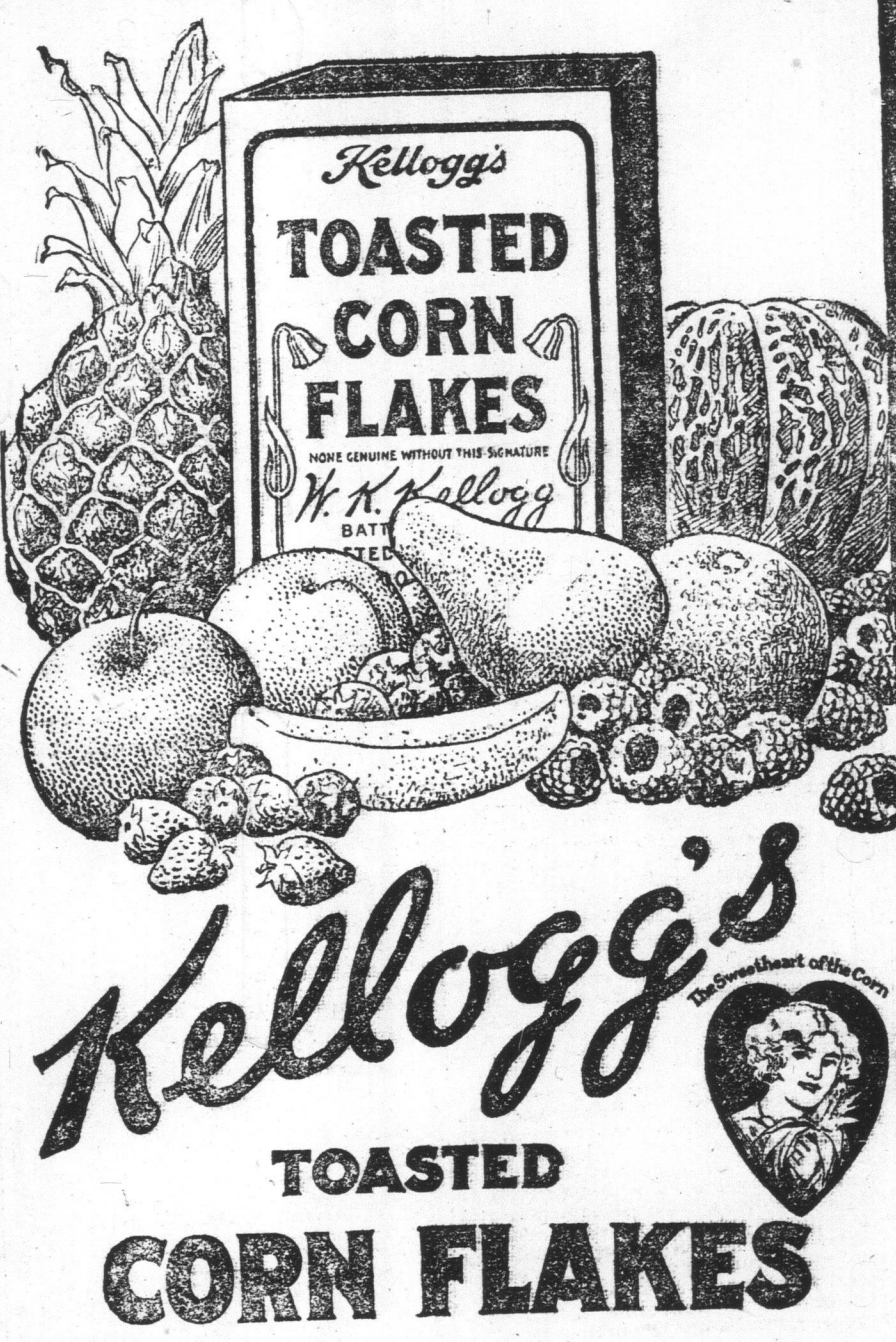
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