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## IRISH DEBATE IN BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS

In the House of Commons of England, on Thursday, 28th January last, took place the division on the amendment to the address, proposed by Mr. John Redmond, and seconded by Mr. Hayden. As was to be expected the amendment was lost by a vote of 134 to 237—a majority of 103. The debate, however, brought forth some new facts and new arguments, and several of the speeches delivered are well worthy of being reproduced. The amendment, itself, which was very comprehensive, read thus:—

"But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the refusal of Your Majesty's Government to hold out any hope to the people of Ireland of a settlement of the Irish land question by a comprehensive measure of compulsory sale of the landlords' interest to the occupying tenants, and by the reorganization of the Congested Districts Board, with larger resources and with compulsory powers of acquiring land, has given rise to widespread discontent and agitation in Ireland. That the Government of Ireland, instead of applying itself to the removal of the grievances under which the people suffer, and so abating the causes of reasonable discontent and of agitation, have after a period of nine years and at a time when Ireland is absolutely free from agrarian crime put the Coercion Act once more into operation, suppressed the right of free speech, dispersed legal and peaceable meetings with unprovoked and brutal police violence, and used Coercion Courts, presided over by magistrates, removable at the pleasure of the executive, to send to jail without fair trial members of this House and other citizens of Ireland for no other offence than asserting their right to address their constituents and fellow-citizens in public meeting assembled; and, finally, to represent to Your Majesty that the Government of Ireland is not supported by the opinion of the vast majority of the people of Ireland, and that the condition of that country demands the serious and immediate attention of Parliament with a view to the establishment of harmony between the Government and the great majority of the people."

MR. REDMOND'S SPEECH.—We need not enter into all the details of the Leader's speech, but will reproduce the main points, and especially those affecting the immediate situation in Ireland. After declaring that the amendment was clear and precise, and raised definite issues, Mr. Redmond said that "it referred to several fundamental questions upon which all classes were in agreement. First, it urged the immediate necessity of further dealing by legislation with the Irish land question. That was no longer a matter of dispute in Ireland. All classes condemned it. The landlords denounced the present system of dual ownership as inequitable, because it had reduced

their rentals, and demanded its abolition. Finally, the Government declared themselves in favor of an occupying proprietary, and the chief secretary had on more than one occasion said in public that the great necessity in Irish politics was the introduction of further legislation affecting Irish land. His accusation against the Government was that, while they admitted the existence of these grievances, they proposed no adequate remedy at all; that they held out no hope of redress to the people, but, on the other hand, had fallen back on the old, old methods of English Government in the past, by the use of coercive and exceptional laws, the abrogation of trial by jury, the suppression of the rights of free speech, and the imprisonment of political opponents—(Nationalist cheers)—by means of tribunals consisting of agents and deputies of the Executive Government. Thus the twentieth century was commenced in exactly the same way as the nineteenth with regard to the application of compulsion to the creating of an occupying proprietary and the Nationalist case held the field."

THE WORD "NEVER."—The following was one of the strongest passages in Mr. Redmond's address: "Every Unionist member apparently from Ireland was pledged to the principle of compulsory purchase—that was to say, that 95 per cent. of the entire representation of Ireland was in favor of compulsory purchase. How was this demand, coming from Nationalist and Unionist, Catholic and Protestant, met? Was it met by argument or persuasion? No, nothing of the kind. The Chief Secretary did not condescend to treat the question seriously. He thought he disposed of it by shrieking 'Never' at a little gathering of Orangemen at Belfast, presided over by Lord Londonderry, who was universally accepted as the representative of the most reactionary landlord sentiment of the country. 'Never' was a dangerous word for politicians, and it was a dangerous word for ministers, and it was a specially dangerous word for English ministers to use with reference to Ireland. It was a word seldom found in the mouths of English politicians in speaking of the politics of their own country except in their green and salad days. It sprang as a rule from the overweening confidence of inexperience. (Nationalist cheers and laughter). They in Ireland were perfectly familiar with the word as coming from English governors. The Chief Secretary, who in his absolute recklessness, spoke not only for himself and his Government, but for all Governments in the future, said that in his opinion the principle of compulsion would never be applied by any Government to a settlement of the land question in Ireland. Nationalists

were not very much disturbed by this shriek. He (Mr. Redmond) had sat in the House for twenty-one years, and he had heard the word 'never' applied to Irish problems by stronger men than the right hon. gentleman, and by more powerful Governments than the present, as in the case of Local Government and interference with judicial rents. There was not a single one of the measures which had been passed for Ireland in his recollection which had not in the first place to meet these 'nevers' of shortsightedness and arrogant self-confidence. He had seen these 'nevers' melt away like snow before the determination of a united and disciplined Irish people. He told the right hon. gentleman, with all respect, that the Irish people would teach him to repent of his rash declaration, and compel him to adopt the policy which he had so airily repudiated."

CANADA'S POLICY.—In closing a most comprehensive speech, Mr. Redmond said that:—

"It was the policy of Lord Durham in Canada which made that country so peaceful, prosperous, and contented, and it was the denial of such a policy to Ireland which kept her the discontented and rightly affected nation that she is now. The Canadians would not submit twenty-four hours to be ruled from Westminster, neither would Ireland. As long as the present rule existed Ireland would always protest, and Irishmen could never be contented, prosperous, or well affected, until they were once more masters in their own country. He concluded by moving his amendment, hoping that it would elicit some expression which would bring to the people of Ireland some hope in the misery and misfortune under which they labored at this moment."

COL. SAUNDERSON SPEAKS.—We need not reproduce any of the reply to Mr. Redmond that came from the notorious Unionist, Colonel Sanderson. It was what Mr. T. P. O'Connor characterized as "a weary reception of the same thing." "The gallant member had been for the last sixteen years uniform in his attitude with regard to the remedies he would offer for the ills of Ireland, and he could understand any superficial observer looking upon the debate as unreal, academic and threadbare." But what is of moment in the present situation is the argument advanced by Mr. Wyndham, chief secretary for Ireland. He divided Mr. Redmond's amendment into three sections and dealt with them separately.

MR. WYNDHAM'S SPEECH.—"The amendment of the leader of the Nationalist Party raised three questions, each of which, to deal with thoroughly, would take not one week, or one month, but several ses-

sions. As to the first allegation of the honorable member—viz., that it was the refusal of the Government to introduce compulsion into the sale and purchase of land that gave rise to and caused an agitation in Ireland, he entirely traversed that allegation. He also traversed the next point that the Government instead of seeking to remove grievances in Ireland had embarked upon the suppression of free speech; that the majority of the people of Ireland did not support the Government he should not dispute—(Nationalist cheers)—but whenever this last plea was raised, and it was raised against every Government, Tory or Radical, there was added to it the imputation that those who took office in Ireland believed that they in their generation could settle these Irish questions. Personally, he did not believe ministers were ever so foolish as to entertain such an idea. No one who undertook the Government of Ireland cherished the hope that he could do more than a very little to ameliorate existing evils. No one could look back upon the work of Chief Secretaries of the past without feeling that humility had been their characteristic and not arrogance. With regard to the land before 1881, dual ownership had become customary in places, and in that year Parliament made itself an accessory after the fact, and with great injustice to some gave Parliamentary sanction to dual ownership. Two things followed: By making it compulsory Parliament unintentionally caused great costs to the State, and in litigation they unintentionally caused great costs to the parties. (Hear, hear). At this moment the whole of Ireland was engaged in litigation and the parties were being ruined by carrying on this litigious war. (Nationalist cheers). The second period of revision of rents would fall due next year, and there would be an amount of litigation for which no parallel could be found. This litigation was entirely due to the introduction of the principle of compulsion in fixing fair rents, and it was the strongest argument against introducing compulsion into purchase and sale. There would be the same inducement, the same provocation to go on appealing from court to court. Litigation, which had been the curse of judicial fair rents, would be the curse of compulsory purchase."

THEIR SOLE ARGUMENT.—To this last remark Mr. Redmond said that both courses would then be over for all time. Here we have the only argument that the Government has advanced in support of an attitude antagonistic to the Irish party's demands. Mr. T. P. O'Connor's answer, though brief, appears sufficient to cover the whole issue. Amongst other things he said:—

"The debate of the two days would be regarded as historic and

epoch-making in the settlement of the land question. The most remarkable thing about the debate was the extraordinary concordance of opinion with regard to the main features of the discussion on the question of land purchase. The Chief Secretary had the voice of united Ireland, and there never had yet been a demand made by Ireland, united in all its parties and all its creeds, for a reform which Parliament had not been compelled finally to yield to. He had heard no condemnation of the present system more complete or more terse than that of the Chief Secretary. Peasant proprietary was the only just and effective solution of the Irish land question, and that was the policy preached from the Nationalist benches two and twenty years ago. Landlordism was doomed. (Nationalist cheers). Compulsory purchase was a well-established practice in England, and all that had to be established in order to justify the application of the principle was that it was for a great national purpose. If self-government was given to Ireland, Ireland herself would, without a penny of English money, apply it to the settlement of the Irish land question. To bring the pressure of public opinion to bear upon men who had taken their neighbor's goods was not a crime, and he maintained that there had never been trade union tyranny in England or agrarian tyranny in Ireland that in its ruthlessness and cruelty approached the tyranny of medical or legal trade unionism. The Irish spectre haunted England in every part of the world, and the time would come again when Irish representatives would have the making of ministries."

MR. HEALY'S HIT.—Possibly one of the best hits of the debate, certainly one of the most characteristic Irish methods of knocking down an opponent's argument was that used by Mr. Healy, when he showed how the Irish Party had the task of educating English Governments. There was a spice of humor about the whole thing that was well appreciated. Mr. Healy said that he regarded it as very curious that year after year the same arguments had to be addressed, the same lectures delivered to a new and equally inapt set of scholars. The Irish members seemed to him from generation to generation to be giving a liberal education to ministers and English members on Irish questions. When they were partly educated a dissolution occurred. They were sent to their constituents. A fresh set of ignoramus were sent to Parliament—(Nationalist laughter and cheers)—and the Irish members had to begin all over again their system of instruction and illumination. They could take the Coercion Act as it was passed in the year 1887. He was not in the House on the occasion of the second read-

ing, because he had been suspended. The day before he was in the Strangers' Gallery, and well remembered it was the day the Pigott forgeries appeared in the "Times," and that they were used to coerce the unwilling Unionist party to vote for the measure. But for those forgeries, he ventured to say that the Act would never have been passed. He should always recollect the shocking breach of faith committed by the First Lord of the Treasury on May 17, 1887, on the question of Repeal as a most appalling breach of the plighted word of a minister of the House. On that occasion the Opposition was represented by the tremendous force of the right hon. gentleman, the member for Midlothian (Mr. Gladstone), and, with the instinct of a statesman and of a warrior, he took up this question of evading the common law—of evading the right of trial by jury, and of re-mitting all those doubtful and delicate questions, questions of illegal conspiracy, illegal assembly, and the right of public meeting to removable magistrates—he would call them immovable magistrates—(laughter)—because they were never open to the arguments of the defendants. (Laughter).

THE STONE OF SISYPHUS.—Another good point in the debate was that made by Mr. Dillon, when he said that:—

"After six years of Unionist Government, with Lord Salisbury as its head, and a majority so great that they had actually a free hand in Ireland, they were now at the bottom of the hill, and now they were preparing to roll up the stone of Sisyphus by a new regime of coercion. The use of coercion was like any otherwise, drinking or gambling." "They began moderately and they did not know how far they would go before they are done, and he warned the Chief Secretary that he was entering upon a road upon which he would find it very hard to turn back, and which would carry him a great deal further than he had the least conception of, and he said deliberately he was entering upon that road against his better judgment, and not because he believed it to be best for Ireland, or the best calculated to make his administration in the country a possible success, but really because he is driven to it by the section of the Irish, led by Lord Londonderry and the 'Times' newspaper, because Ireland is never governed by men like the present or the late Chief Secretaries, who had not a free hand, but was governed from the office of the London 'Times'—(cheers)—to a large extent, and if they wanted to know what the Irish Government was going to do they would get a great deal more information from the leaders in the 'Times' than from the speeches of the Irish Secretary."

## The League of the Cross at Peterborough.

At St. Peter's Cathedral, Peterborough, on Sunday, Feb. 8, Rev. Father Murphy, of the Paulist Fathers, New York, delivered a powerful temperance sermon on the occasion of the inauguration of the League of the Cross, a temperance organization for women. From the "Review" we take the following report:—

Rev. Father Murphy at the outset announced that the first regular meeting of the League would be held four weeks from Sunday evening in the Church. He spoke first of its requirements and the advantages of membership. The League was intended for women and girls, and not merely for the reclaiming of drunkards, though he hoped there were no Catholic women such in the parish, or bring back the moderate drinkers; its purpose was the exercise of self-denial, looking to the establishment of total abstinence. Every girl who had made her First Communion, every Catholic woman in the parish was entitled to membership. She must practise total abstinence from intoxicating drinks. One may make the resolution at the beginning of Lent, and keep it until Easter, or for one year or ten years, but what was desired was that the resolution should be made and kept for a lifetime. Rev. Father Murphy

said he knew that within one year 75 per cent. of the women would be members of the League of the Cross. It was expected that at the beginning there would be a membership of five hundred, and that the work would go on until there was a membership of one thousand. There was no impossibility about it. The fact that some are not drinkers, or drink occasionally should not be made an excuse for not joining, but was a reason for becoming a member.

There may be another society formed in opposition to the league. Not long since a liquor man said to a member of the Temperance Society:—"You may think you are doing a great work, but you are not going to get all the women." Said Rev. Father Murphy: "We don't expect to get all the women but any Catholic woman who prefers to belong to his society, may join it." The League of the Cross was a claim upon mothers, wives, daughters, old and young, in the name of Jesus Christ; He it was who had the first claim.

The first condition was stated to be, the practice of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks. Moderation is impossible; total abstinence is possible.

The second condition was that four times a year—at Christmas time, the feast of the Ascension, in March, the feast of the Assumption, in August, the feast of All Saints and All Souls—the members of the League of the Cross will attend Holy Communion. There was no

Catholic girl or woman who could not carry out this condition. There were no fees attached to membership, no initiation, no dues.

The third condition was that members should pray for those who are tempted to drink, for those who are drunkards, that they might see their folly; pray also for the associate members of the League of the Cross and the T. A. S.

Condition four required that every member should seek to obtain new members for the Society, and to seek to influence for good those who are now addicted to drink.

Speaking of the privilege of the Society, Rev. Father Murphy said that nothing in the Catholic Church counted for more than the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, not simply for the living but also for the dead. The Holy Sacrifice is offered up once every week, fifty-two times in the year, and it will be as often offered up by the spiritual director of the society for living and deceased members of the League and of the T. A. S. This was the greatest privilege that could possibly be obtained. In the death of any member the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered up for her soul. She may be forgotten by her own, but the League of the Cross will never forget her in the prayers and good works of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Rev. Father Murphy urged upon all women present to join the League at the close of the service.

A DEATHBED is a good one if it has charity for a mattress.

## What Kind of Books Do You Read?

We address our Catholic people and we ask, do you make it a point to read indiscriminately the so-called popular books as they come out, and do you feel justified in doing it? If so, you are probably not aware of the danger, to both faith and morals, which you court. Perhaps the question of faith or morals does not present itself to you. But when it is remembered that a large proportion, especially of the light literature of the day, contains much that is dangerous to both faith and morals, it is strange that, professing yourself a Catholic, this most important of all questions should not suggest itself to you in selecting your reading.

Unfortunately the poison of heresy and immorality is hidden under such an attractive and even fascinating style and with such plausible reasoning that it is greedily swallowed without a suspicion of its harmful nature. It is especially pernicious to our young people. It is pernicious to single persons, but it is doubly dangerous to parents who are responsible to Almighty God for the proper education of their children. It ought to seem quite unnecessary to say that the greatest care should be taken in the selection

of the books for our young people. Not only so, but parents should take the greatest pains to see that their children do not take the selection of their reading into their own hands. This is too often done on the sly, and the minds of our children are poisoned while we, perhaps, are dreaming of their purity and goodness.

But another question of equal importance is, do you do any religious reading? For instance, do you take a Catholic paper or periodical of any kind? It is very natural to suppose that every loyal Catholic who cares the least about his religion should take interest enough in the progress and prosperity of the Church and its defence from the attacks of its enemies to take at least a Catholic paper and read it. We all think that we must have our daily or weekly secular paper, and sometimes that is made an excuse for not taking a Catholic paper. A very poor excuse, it must be admitted. It would really seem to indicate that a man's interest is altogether more in the world than in his religion.

But we go a step farther and ask, do you do any spiritual reading? Ah, this is a test question, but it is certainly a very important one. What is the meaning of our religion? Is it not that this world is not our home, but that we seek a better country beyond, and that for the securing of a title to and for enjoying that country when attained a certain degree of moral and spiritual discipline is necessary in this

world? For this purpose a certain amount of spiritual reading would seem to be quite indispensable. Do you say you have no taste for it? Perhaps that is a very good reason why you should practice it. Our poor, cold hearts are naturally averse to spirituality; and that disposition is increased by neglect of proper means of cultivating it, as well as by constant indulgence in mere secular reading.

Suppose a man should make an excuse for not succeeding in some important business, that he had no taste for it. Would not the world laugh at him? And justly, too, for if we made it a principle of action not to engage in any business that we had no taste for, what would the world come to?

You are a man of principle and conscience, no doubt, and a man of faith, though not very lively. You find by experience that the practice of some virtue which is difficult and disagreeable to you gradually strengthens the virtue and renders its practice less difficult and disagreeable, till finally you learn to love it. Many who have no taste for music, by persevering practice become quite proficient, and learn to love it. In an effort of this kind motive is everything. Now suppose that, in view of the great importance of the work, you resolutely adopt the practice of reading a chapter in some good religious book, or what perhaps is best of all, a chapter in the New Testament, every day, or at least on Sundays, and persevere in it with a sincere desire to improve your spiritual condition, and see what the result will be. It is certainly worthy trying. From the Sacred Heart Review.