

Lotus and Lilly.

FROM KATHERINE E. CONWAY'S VOLUME OF POEMS "ON THE SUNRISE SLOPE," JUST PUBLISHED.

Sometimes a dark hour cometh for us who are bound to bear the burden of lowly labor, the fetters of lowly care. An hour when the heart grows sick of the work-day's weary round, Loathing each oft-seen sight, loathing each oft-heard sound! Loathing our very life, with its pitiful daily needs; Learning in pain and weakness that labor is doom indeed. And this the meed of the struggle:—tent, and raiment and bread? O for the "Requiescant," and the sleep of the pardoned dead!

REDPATH'S LETTERS.

In the North of Ireland—A Western Parish.

GWEEDORE, CO. DONEGAL, August 17th.

For the last seven years, Mr. O'Doherty, of Londonderry, in his professional capacity, has fought the landlords of Donegal as the legal councillor of the tenants. Probably no man is more familiar with their record.

RELIGION IN DONEGAL. Pointing towards Donegal from the round fort of the Greenan, he called my attention to the fact that cultivation was gradually creeping up the mountain sides.

That rich or comparatively fertile district was "planted" like Derry with Protestant farmers, and all the best land in it was then occupied by them, and is still chiefly held by their descendants. The best districts of Donegal were thus appropriated. The old Irish, or Catholic by their inhabitants, were driven into bogs unreclaimed, or up the mountain slopes almost unclaimable, and it has been only after generations of incessant toil that these meagre hillsides and marshy flats have been forced to produce a scanty subsistence. As the more thrifty or fortunate Catholic peasants acquire the means, whether by the spade or in trade, they have been slowly buying such of the more fertile farms as have come into market. For many generations, under the operation of the Penal Laws, the Catholics had no opportunity to buy—they were debarred from buying—even when they had the means. Hence THE MEANNESS AND THE CRUELTY of attributing to the influence of their religion the superior prosperity of Protestant districts, due solely to the original alienation or expropriation of Catholic estates, and to the persistent persecution of the adherents of the ancient faith. Whatever improvements have been made for a century past in the sterile districts of Donegal, have been due to the constant and unaided industry of the impoverished Catholic peasantry. This is the record of history in the north of Ireland. As a class—almost universally—the Catholics of Donegal have small and inferior holdings, while the great landlords, almost without exception, are nominally Protestants, who have robbed them by rack-rents from time beyond the memory of living men.

Although three-fourths of the population of Donegal are Catholics, yet with three exceptions all the magistrates are Protestant landlords or land agents. The public prosecutor (called Sessional Crown Prosecutor), is the law agent of most of these magnates. The poor relief is administered by landlords or their agents or nominees. The police officers are all partizans of the landed class. Nine tenths of the jurors from Legan and the Protestant district are Protestants, although, in land disputes, they are seldom influenced by religious prejudices.

DONOGAL LANDLORDS. Rack-renting is almost universal in Donegal. Tenant-right is also universal. But tenant-right (as I have already reported Mr. O'Doherty as saying), in this region means the right of free sale only; it does not secure fair rent or fixity of tenure. Free sale on many estates is also offset by free rack-rents—the landlord increasing the rent on each succession or other change of tenancy so greatly, that the good will of the farm is practically worthless or reduced in value. Landlordism in Donegal is still oppressive in its exactions by charging special rents for peat bogs, for the privilege of gathering seaweed, by confiscations of mountain tracts and common grazing grounds. Landlordism has made itself exceptionally odious during times of famine. When the whole civilized world was contributing money

for the relief of the starving peasantry of Ireland, the landlords of Donegal gave nothing, but, on the contrary, they tried to make the benevolent abroad believe that no distress existed.

These general statements of Mr. O'Doherty I have heard repeated more than once since I arrived in Donegal, and I have collected a large mass of documentary evidence hitherto unpublished, to sustain the indictment.

WORK OF THE LAND LEAGUE. The Land League is not especially strong in Donegal. Cox, Boyton, and McSweeney—three of its official organizers—are in jail as "suspects," and three of the best citizens of this parish are similarly situated. Yet Mr. O'Doherty informed me that all over the mountain or Land League districts, since the formation of the Leagues in them, rents had been reduced 3s., 4s., 5s., and even 6s. 8d. in the pound. Partial reduction had also been made in the Legan or Protestant district, since the organization of the League there, owing to the spirit of resistance to landlord exactions that it had aroused. The existence of the League had also prepared the way for the establishment of peasant proprietorship, by making many of the landlords willing to sell their estates. Rents (along the western coast especially), could not be paid, excepting by money sent from exiles in America, and by members of the peasant families who annually migrate to England and Scotland.

So much for solid generalities. THE MIGRATION OF LABORERS. The annual migration of laborers from the western counties of Ireland, especially from Donegal and Mayo, to England and Scotland, is one of the most noteworthy phases of Irish peasant life. Before the great famine of 1847, it was estimated that 60,000 of these laborers migrated to the steppe lands to do harvesting and other farm work. They put in their little crops of potatoes in the spring, and left the women and children to attend to them until they came back in the fall. After the great evictions, their holdings were so poor and so small, that it was impossible to pay the rent and support a family on their produce. There are from 30,000 to 35,000 of these migratory laborers still. The fact that their movements I have seldom attracted even a passing notice from the press, is a compliment to the Irish peasant. No riot, no drinking, no disorderly conduct, either in passing through the Irish or British cities, marks their march; and one of the bitterest enemies of their agitation has been forced to admit that it "cannot recall even a single instance in which one of the tribe has figured in any of our police courts." "The most timid Dublin lady, walking without a protector, meeting a hundred of these rough-looking men, pursues her way without a momentary apprehension of so much as a word or a look of insult. . . . The appearance of these migratory laborers bespeak a life of active toil and self-denial, and the possession of much intelligence."

Yet these self-same bright, virtuous, sober, and orderly people as soon as they aspire to be free men instead of being serfs of the soil are branded at home and abroad by this same Dublin Evening Mail—the most zealous champion of the landlords—as a race of assassins and outlaws whom only coercion laws can control. GWEEDORE. This parish of Gweedore, from which I write, I have selected as one of the best representative parishes of Donegal of the conduct of the poorest peasant population. It acquired a celebrity, not to be envied, for its wickedness during the last famine, which was widely made known by the noble energy of Father James McFadden, the Catholic priest here. Just a year and two days since, it suddenly drew the attention of the outer world once more by an unprecedented kind of calamity—the flooding of the Catholic Church and the drowning of five members of the congregation assembled at the Mass! The church is built in a ravine. A little stream—they call it a river here—ripples through the glen, and then runs under the church. There was a rain storm a year ago. The mountain streams swelled the little river into a torrent, which swept down, choked its channel under the church and rushed into the doors as the congregation were on their knees. Before escape was possible, the church was flooded to the depth of seven feet.

Why was the church built in a ravine and over a stream? The old, old feud, between persecuting Episcopalianism and its opponents that the Covenanters resisted in Scotland, and Catholics were the victims of in Ireland! The Penal Laws forbade the exercise of the Catholic religion, and the saying of the Mass was a capital offence. The same PRICE WAS PUT ON THE HEAD OF A PRIEST as of a wolf—and for the same purpose—to encourage the extermination of both. So the persecuted Catholics, like the persecuted Covenanters, assembled in little wooden gleus, and there, in secret, with fear and trembling, keeping sentinels on the watch, they worshipped God according to their own forms, and as their conscience dictated. History shows that these persecutions are never successful; and yet to-day Gladstone and John Bright are employing the self-same agencies of coercion and brute force to exterminate that new faith of humanity which teaches that not to protect dead property but living men, is the proper function and province of government!

As I looked at the prostrate worshippers at vespers on the first anniversary of this calamity, I saw not them but THE HUNTED PRIESTS THERE A CENTURY AGO, and my own ancestors in the border glen only a few generations earlier—victims alike of a power that has always prated about liberty, and always fought to the bitter end against the rights of man. If I ever show a hatred of the British ruling class, both civil and ecclesiastical, it is because I have honestly inherited generations of wrongs at their hands; and if, without an Irish ancestor, I cordially espouse the Irish quarrel, it is because I believe it to be the common cause of the common people of England and Scotland, as well as of Ireland.

I found Father McFadden at work, using dynamite to blast the rocks around the church, to make a new channel for the river. The site thus selected a century since by persecution, became the property of the church when the Penal Laws were repealed; and to avoid asking favors from

unfriendly landlords, it was determined to erect the chapel in the ravine in which the hunted Catholics had secretly worshipped God long ago in mortal peril, but immortal courage.

JAMES REDPATH. XII.

IN DARK DONEGAL—A PARISH BY THE SEA. GWEEDORE, DONEGAL, August 19.

The ecclesiastical name of this parish is Tullaghbegley West. It is nearly identical with the Petty Sessions District of Bunbeg. It contains about 50,000 acres. It seems to have a fan-shaped area, which is shut in (or, as Father McFadden more poetically termed it, garrisoned) by great dark-grey granite mountains. The soil is wet, boggy, black moor, thickly strewn with great granite rocks and boulders. This is the character of all the adjacent region. The whole district is hilly even where it is not mountainous. The land is all broken and stony excepting where it is flat, and then it is or was, until reclaimed by the tenants (always at their own expense), a spongy bog, so soft that a child could hardly cross it. Neither the low land hills nor the flats, nor the mountains, in their natural state, were capable of sustaining animal life, excepting hares or rabbits, for they grow only heath and coarse mountain grass. It is the kind of land of which they say in Connaught that "IT WOULD TAKE A HUNDRED ACRES OF IT TO FEED A SNIFE."

The entire productiveness of the parish is the result of the ceaseless and patient toil of generations of unassisted tenants.

The mountains, when the sun shines (it rarely does shine), are of the darkest gray, but mostly they look jet black. Some of them are covered with bog up to their summits. Yet this stony, sterile, boggy, bleak parish is densely populated. There are little cabins every few acres. A thousand families, or about 5,500 persons, struggle for existence here. The holdings are not let by the acre but by the "cows grass." This is an indefinite term, and may mean more or fewer acres. Originally it seems, in Kerry, for example, to have meant land enough in the valley to raise food for the family while the tenant paid rent on the number of cows, or other cattle or sheep, or goats, he owned, and that pastured on commons or on the mountains.

Whatever may have been the original meaning of the term here—nobody seems to know—yet there is no doubt that in practise it means that every peasant in all this district is forced to pay for permission to dig in a few wet acres, and to live in a filthy cabin by his toil here, and by the wages that he earns during the summer months in England and Scotland. The people are more wretched now than formerly. With the advent of "improving landlords" came severer distress than they had known before. At no time within living memory could the parish support itself without external labor supplementing the home earnings. It never has been known to yield enough, either in labor or produce, to keep its inhabitants for four months; but when Lord George Hill, a landlord once and still—in England—eulogized for his "benevolence," became a landlord in Gweedore, thirty-five years ago, the conditions of life were made harsher than even nature had rendered them.

Up to that time the mountains had been commons on which the peasants fed their sheep. Lord George Hill bought estates and gradually began to "improve" them. This was first NECESSARY TO INAUGURATE A REIGN OF TERROR, ALL HIS UNSELFISH IMPROVEMENTS were turned to his worldly benefits. The truth is, he built his hotel as a head-quarter for tourists, and took away the mountain and stream privileges, or rather rights, from the tenants, in order that he might sell them to the wandering and wealthy visitors. I find it everywhere the same—in Donegal and Kerry, the landlord who has a self-made or agent-made reputation for benevolence abroad, is cursed as a merciless despot at home. Lord Lansdowne, who was praised in America for sending a shipload of potatoes to his Kerry tenants, I found was regarded by his tenants as a miscreant—and that although he did send the potatoes, he sold them on time at the highest market rates!

The other landlords in this parish who CONFISCATED THE MOUNTAIN LANDS, were Rev. Mr. Nixon, who took 1,940 acres; Mr. Joulis' predecessor, who took 1,130 acres; and Lord Leitrim, who took 255 acres. Nixon raised his rents £119 17s 1d a year; Keys, £39 6s 9d a year; Mrs. Stewart, £17 19s 6d a year; Mr. Joulis, £36 3s 9d a year; Mr. Olphert, £40 18s. 0d. a year; the Earl of Leitrim, £28 7s. 0d. a year; and Mrs. Russell, of the Dunleiveig estate, £58 12s. 0d. a year. Three thousand pounds were levied in taxes on the people, as police and sheep taxes, in addition to these large "land grabs" and permanent increase of rents! The total annual increase of rent has been nearly £1,000!

There are eight landlords in this parish—Captain Hill, son of Lord George, who owns 24,616 acres; W. A. Ross, who owns 7,092 acres; Benjamin St. John Baptist Joulis, who owns 35,000 acres; Rev. Alexander Nixon, who owns 3,212 acres; Richard W. Key, who owns 2,471 acres; Wybrants Olphert, who owns 1,937 acres; Mrs. Charles F. Stewart, who owns 1,167 acres; and the present Lord Leitrim who owns 492 acres. NONE OF THEM LIVE IN THE PARISH. "Mr. Ross" according to Father McFadden, "is a noble exception to the family of landlords who have always trodden under their feet the poor of Gweedore. His property was heavily rack-rented before he purchased it, and for this he paid heavily in the courts. As a touch of land jobbing, the rents were raised by Mrs. Russell before the estate was put in the market. Mr. Ross, since his advent to the place, has spent £5,000 or £6,000 for the permanent good and benefit of his tenantry, and the good of the parish generally."

It is pleasant to have a good word to say about one Gweedore landlord; and while this testimony exonerates Mr. Ross personally from blame, yet, all the same, the income that he derives from the parish, is expended elsewhere, and if Ireland were entirely owned by such men the condition of her people would be but slightly

improved. Landlords may be good or bad, but Irish landlordism is ruining Ireland.

JAMES REDPATH. A SCOTCHMAN ON IRELAND.

The following letter is from a prominent merchant of Paisley, Scotland, to Mr. J. P. Farrell, the eminent importer of Broadway. As it contains much that is interesting about Ireland from a Scotchman's standpoint, with Mr. Farrell's permission we give it publicity after eliminating the business matter contained in it:

The receipt of yours of 1st inst. puts me in mind of an unfulfilled promise—namely, to tell you my impressions of Ireland from my short visits there. I think you know I am a partner in a chemical work for the manufacture of the products of kelp, and that a large portion of our supply comes from Ireland.

For several years we have confined our operations to the Antrim and Sligo coasts. This year we have extended our operations greatly and appointed agents all over the west coast to Kilrush. It was in connection with these arrangements that twice I have crossed the Channel this spring and spent a few weeks in Ireland; consequently I have seen a little more of real life than I would have as an ordinary tourist. The places I saw and at which we are now represented are Antrim, Donegal, Sligo, Connemara, Ennis, Galway, Clare. At each coast we have two agents, one for the north and another for the south. And I am glad to say that our operations on these shores have been of considerable benefit to the natives of those shores. One only requires to take a run through Ireland to see that THERE IS SOMETHING ALTOGETHER WRONG THERE, and very different from our side of the channel. You drive along miles and miles of roads and nothing to be seen but bogs, huts (you can't call them cottages), people scantily clad, and children running about half naked, very few good farm-houses as we have them here. When I got into the Claremorris and Connemara districts I felt a little nervous from the reports that were in the daily papers, but so far as I was personally concerned I met with nothing but kindness wherever I went. At Ennis there had been a man shot the previous day in a riot, but I saw no trace of disturbance further than a lot of broken windows, etc. A small matter I could see made often a great noise; the people were easily worked up to anger, but it passed away as quickly. We were also on the road from Killarney and Cork when the riots took place there, and as my wife and daughter were with me I turned off at Malloy and went straight to Dublin. Had I been alone I should not have turned for the disturbance, as I have never done anything to hurt an Irishman, and I have never found they will meddle or hurt any one who does not meddle with them—whatever the faults of the Irish may be, ill nature or rudeness is not in the list.

The Irish peasants are as gentle a people as you can meet anywhere, and it is only when driven mad by cruelty, or what they consider to be so, that they are for a moment driven to fury. I am sorry the landlords have not tried to attach to themselves so kind-hearted and tractable a people. As it is, by the want of care, interest, and guardians they have been reduced to the condition and circumstances of savages, though there is NOTHING SAVAGE OR UNPLEASANT IN THEIR NATURE. I had no idea till I saw it of the great extent of bog or unreclaimed land there was in Ireland. Miles and miles of it in every direction. Not like the bogs we have among the hills of Scotland, but good level bog, every foot of which might be cultivated. There seemed to me to be work in plenty for a far larger population and land to support them in comfort if properly attended to; for as far as I could judge the climate and growing powers of Ireland are very much superior to that of my native land. Another thing that astonished me was the number of huts and the small patches of land connected with each. I had no idea a man could exist on so little. I say exist, for it is not living. I had heard and read of the poverty and squalor of the Irish peasantry, but never realized it till I entered one for a drink of milk. The milk was given me, was very good, and the kindness and politeness of the people to be admired. The conversation was intelligent and good-humored, although somewhat one-sided on the land question, as was to be expected, and they would accept no payment for the milk. And this was in a house words fail me to describe—built of stone, certainly, with little or no mortar; the floor (the bare ground, rather) under the level of the road outside; a fire at the one end, and the smoke largely escaping through a hole in the roof; a broken table, a confused lot of odds and ends that served for bed, chairs, and other household furniture; a pig in one corner, and several young ones coming in and out of the door as it pleased them. The owner, his wife and daughter were there, also some hens and ducks. Outside the house was like the inside, much in want of a good cleaning up and a few improvements. I hope and trust that this new Land Bill will inaugurate A NEW STATE OF THINGS IN IRELAND.

I have not found that the English landlords in Ireland are any worse than the Irish landlords in their treatment of their tenants; on the other hand, I have found the native proprietors often the worst, and I think this comes from their poverty and inability to do anything. At Milton, Malby, for instance, I found Lord Lichenfeld spoken of with great respect, and Mr. Maloney severely blamed for rack-renting. If our Government continue as they are doing to strengthen the hands of the tenants and see that the land is made the best of, we shall soon have an end of the troubles and dissatisfaction so prevalent in Ireland. During my few weeks' rambles in the west I saw much that was beautiful, but little that approached the cultivated loveliness of the lowlands of Scotland. It is eminently a land suited for agricultural purposes, and I must say I hope it will never be anything else. Ireland should be the garden of the United Kingdom, and in it there is plenty of work for all its inhabitants many times over, as soon as they can get properly to work on it. The people in many ways are remarkably ignorant. I asked several why they did not use a plough on the land, but very few

knew what a plough was; they were quite contented with a spade and shovel. But ignorance will rapidly vanish now. Everywhere I could see the national schools were doing some work, and most of the rising generation could read and write; and poverty will, I feel sure, soon begin to vanish too. An educated people will not be content to live in pig-sties, undergoing the pain of hunger about half the time. In fact, they are not content, and nothing will now arrest the movement for a material reform, and the next generation WILL REAP THE BENEFITS IN A GREATER DEGREE.

We stayed at the Atlantic Hotel at Spanish Point for ten days. On the Sunday I went to the chapel to see assembly, and was very much pleased with the sermon preached by Father White. It was very useful and suitable to his congregation. On the following day I called at his house, and spent a very agreeable hour with him over a glass of wine. He is a Land Leaguer; with intelligent and commonsense views. He had great faith in Gladstone and his sincerity in promoting the welfare of Ireland, and would be pleased with the bill then brought in, but feared very much if he would carry it through the Lords. He spoke very feelingly of the state of the tenants in his parish and I could see took a great interest in them all.

When I commenced this letter I intended to give you my impressions of the country, and not of the people, and my pen has followed my thoughts in a very roundabout, wandering way. I have not time now to speak of the "Twelve pins," the cliffs of Mober, the beauties of Killee, nor yet of the enchanting loveliness of Killarney; enough, we enjoyed them all. The guide we had at Killarney resembled you so very much in feature, size, and manner that I asked his name of his relations, and if he had none of the name of Farrell, etc., I could not believe but that he was a brother, cousin, or some near relation of yours. Going through the "GAP" and down the lakes he kept us quite merry with his endless stories and songs. It was only in Killarney we were troubled with beggars. I suppose this is a development of the tourist traffic. In Wales it is quite as bad.

I think I have now written as much as you will care to read. At another time I may give you another page or two of the sad story. R. M. PATERSON. PAISLEY, SCOTLAND, AUGUST 20, 1881.

T. P. O'CONNOR, M. P., ON "IRISH BLACKGUARDS."

Speaking at Strabane on Thursday, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M. P. for Galway, in the course of a long and eloquent speech said: Who, and what gave you the Land Act? Was it Gladstone? or Bright? or Hartington, or Backshot Forster? (Groans.) You know very well what names should be on the back of the bill. I will tell you the names that should be on the back of it. First of all Michael Davitt (cheers); secondly, Charles Stewart Parnell (cheers); thirdly, John Dillon (cheers); and I tell you what it is, the Ulster Liberal members, the English people know as well as I do that it was these three men got you a Land Bill (cheers). And it was not the leaders alone that got you this Land Bill—it was the courage, the constancy, the fidelity, it was the principle animating the Irish tenant-farmers (cheers). Well, don't you think you could get a little more if you would try?

A voice: Yes, through you. Mr. O'Connor: Don't say through me. You must do it through yourselves. You are getting a chance to-day (cheers). You have no right to expect us to waste the best years of our lives in your service if you are not willing to show your appreciation by being true to your country and your own interests. Now about this Land Bill. Englishmen are very much disgusted with the Irish members—I mean what they call the Parnellites lot. They say, "How different are these men from the former Irish members. Why, twenty or thirty years ago we had Irish gentlemen in Parliament, but now we have nothing but Parnellites, obstructionists, and the like." Well now about twenty years ago there was what is called a respectable Irish party in the House of Commons. They did not give the Government any trouble; they did not make 125 speeches against the Coercion Bill, they did not want night sittings, they did nothing that was not in the mildest language—they were a thoroughly genteel party. One was John Sadlier and the other James Sadlier, and the third Edmond O'Flaherty, and the fourth William Keogh (groans). Those were the days when they had Irish gentlemen in Parliament truly (laughter). John Sadlier first committed forgery and then poisoned himself. James Sadlier forged and had to be kicked out of the House of Commons. Edmond O'Flaherty robbed, and then fled to the United States. William Keogh (groans) was nearly as bad as the rest, and being a "respectable" gentleman the Government placed him on the bench (groans). I don't know whether you want a respectable or gentlemanly party of suicide forgers, or robbers, or wish rather to put up with those "blackguards" like Parnell, Healy and myself (cheers for Parnell).

MR. HEALY'S JUDASES.

Mr. Healy, M.P., addressed a meeting yesterday at Castlebridge in support of the candidature of Mr. Rylett for Tyrone. On what platform, he asked, did Mr. Dickson come forward to claim the suffrages of the Tyrone tenant-farmers? While writing to a supporter on the previous day Mr. Dickson declared that "as to any fresh agitation in connection with the land question, nothing to his mind could be more deplorable or disastrous." Was that the sort of man the Tyrone farmers wanted to represent them? Would not they help him into Parliament to follow in the footsteps of his friend Litton, and get £3000 a year? Nearly every man they sent in from Ulster was looking for a place, and would it not be too bad if "honest Tom Dickson" alone were left out in the cold? (laughter). Every Judas of them, instead of being ashamed of his treachery and hanging himself decently and quietly, came back to them, jingling his thirty pieces of silver in his breeches pocket and asked them to return nine Judases to Parliament to keep up a supply in the market.