

## HOME RULE FROM THE STAND-POINT OF HISTORY.

We Nation take the following passages from one of the able letters on Irish self-government which have been addressed to the *Weekly Register* by Mr. Orby Shipley:—

Home Rule viewed from the stand-point of history presents many hopeful features to the advocates for yielding greater liberty of self-government to the Irish people. Two noteworthy facts are traceable throughout the entire career of the Irish race, at least during its historic period. They are visible in the times of and succeeding to the dominion of the heathen Danes; when the ascendancy of the Norman barons was secured; and during the iron rule of the Tudor and Stuart kings, of course, including Cromwell's stern and bloody tyranny. The positive and obvious inability of the conquerors entirely to subjugate the people of Ireland has only been equalled by the apparent inability of the Irish people to live entirely free from the dominion of some other power extraneous to its own. It is a curious historical problem; and it is one which cannot be summarily dealt with by the commonplace of political science, nor by what goes by the name of the philosophy of history. Why Ireland, with advantages which are superior for defence than attack, or, at least, with advantages which make it harder to retain than to invade; with a population, at the several dates of conquest, sufficient in number to repel any force that practically was ever brought against her; and with a people not less brave and equally warlike with its many consecutive oppressors—why Ireland under these conditions should yet have been held in subjection to a succession of alien races for so many generations, is one of the insoluble questions of history. The problem has never been satisfactorily solved even on paper; nor, as I know, entertained. Will it be solved practically and peaceably in the domain of active politics? It is true that the Danes were eventually repulsed and expelled from Erin. It is true that the English Pale exercised but a limited authority over a small fraction of the country, and no authority at all over the major part of it. It is true that the cruelty, hardly paralleled in kind and savagery, and without a parallel in extent and duration, in the history of any European Christian nation—Poland not excepted—by which the later dynasties held the unhappy and by the power of the sword, vanquished and kept down without conquering the invincible Celt. But is also true—and this fact is encouraging if not prophetic to the Irish patriot—that, unlike many another European country, unlike the present position of the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Irish people have always and ever kept themselves distinct from the English conqueror and from the great bulk of his race. Nor is this the only national peculiarity to be noted. It has been often remarked, but it is well to repeat the observation—which sounds paradoxical, but is not really so—that the English, not to speak of Scotch and other settlers, who forced themselves or were forcibly planted on Irish lands, so far from absorbing the surrounding native population, became themselves absorbed. Whether or not these English immigrants were converted to the faith of the conquered nation, they eventually were inoculated with their political sentiments and social habits and national instincts, and became, or their children after them became, more thoroughly Irish than the Irish themselves. Indeed, to breathe the air and to walk the land of St. Patrick makes even a latterday traveller conscious of English ill-deeds and Ireland's woes of which he was not previously so clearly nor so deeply persuaded. But in England it was and is otherwise. Politically, socially, religiously, the Saxons first, and then the Normans and the people respectively conquered by them are now undistinguishable in English counties—saving perhaps in a very few isolated cases of noble or yeoman families. Though they differ in minor matters of religion, and to an extent in language and customs, Wales and Scotland are politically one with England as much as Yorkshire or Cornwall. But there is no approach even to unity between the Saxon garrison and the Celtic population in Ireland in any one particular of fact, or belief, or desire, or sentiment. A new vulgar tongue indeed, exists which tends outwardly to assimilate alien races who live under a common sway, and this to some extent minimises gradually, and exterminates eventually, many differences between the victor and the vanquished. But such unanimity is superficial—witness the ingrained and ineradicable national differences between Englishmen and Americans, though both speak the same common and sweet mother tongue. Even the style and title of the imperial British nation testifies to these truths. For whilst the name of the proud Scot has been utterly lost in the complimentary title of Great Britain, the name of despised but irrepressible Ireland yet holds its own as a still integral but distinct, and if not independent, an indestructible portion of an United Kingdom. Which fact may yet prove to become an allegory in the political future of the two countries!

The first declaration on the part of the Irish National League in opposition to Henry George's land scheme was made at a meeting at Cork on Sunday, March 2, at which the scheme was declared to be impracticable. Mr. George continues to lecture to large audiences in Scotland. He is also engaged in the organisation of a Scotch league for permanent agitation of the land question, on the basis of the views expounded in "Progress and Poverty."

Ninety-five persons, comprising the Catholic mission at Khar-toum, have arrived at Assouan. They assert that the Mahdi has eleven missionaries and a number of Sisters prisoners at El Obeid where the Arabs sacked the mission, with much ill-treatment of the women." This a Press despatch, dated February 8. Will the "patriots" who are howling for El Mahdi as a destroyer of British rule consider it? There is no doubt that the Catholic missionaries and the devoted Sisters have suffered and will suffer much from the barbarians who follow El Mahdi. If the British are cowardly enough to surrender the country to the horde that has over-run it, and France continues to show the impotence of a cripple, the lives of Catholics in the Soudan will be at the mercy of the fanatics who hate the cross.

—New York Freeman.

## Commercial.

MR. DONALD STRONACH (on behalf of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited) reports for the week ending 23rd April, as follows:—

**Fat cattle.**—The market to-day was glutted, no less a number being forward than 307 head. About the half were prime, the balance being only light and of medium quality. This number being far in excess of trade requirements, competition was dull all through. Several pens were withdrawn and prices were lower. Best bullocks brought £8 to £10 15s; others, £5 10s to £7 10s; best cows, £8 to £8 17s 6d; others, £3 10, to £6 10s. We sold on account of Mr. John Duncan, Chery Farm, cows at from £3 12s 6d to £8 17s 6d; J.C. Buckland, Tumai, cows at from £3 10s to £4; and quote prime beef 17s 6d to 20s; ordinary, 15s per 100lb.

**Fat Calves.**—Six were penned, and, under spirited competition, were disposed of at from 8s to 32s 6d each.

**Fat Sheep.**—There was only a small number penned, viz., 1029, of which about 125 were merinos of medium quality, the balance cross-breeds, most of medium quality, and a few prime. Considering the number forward biddings were not over lively; nevertheless a rise on last week's prices was apparent for good and prime. Best cross-breeds brought 16s to 16s 6d; others, 11s 3d to 14s 6d; merino, 6s 6d to 9d 9s. We sold, on account of Messrs. Buckland and other—merinos at 9s 9d, and cross-breeds at 12s, and quote mutton at 2½d per lb.

**Fat Lambs.**—115 were penned and sold at up to 9s 9d.

**Fat Pigs.**—101 were penned. Competition was not so brisk, and prices were scarcely so high at last week. Suckers sold at 16s to 18s 6d; porkers and bacon pigs from 28s to 71s each.

**Flock Rams.**—Privately we sold, on account of Mr. G. L. Sise, 65 two-tooth merino rams at a satisfactory price.

**Store Cattle.**—The present demand is not calculated to result in much business, graziers having to accept almost store prices for their fat stock.

**Store Sheep.**—There is still a demand for young ewes, both merino and cross-bred, but buyers are not inclined to pay the prices ruling a short time ago. Privately we sold 1000 full-mouth merino wethers, and at auction during the week 1200 fullmouth merino ewes.

**Sheepskins.**—We offered a large catalogue on Monday. The usual representatives of the trade were present, and the various lots offered were well competed for, prices being in advance of those of last week. Butchers' green crossbreds brought 1s 10d to 2s 8d; dry do. 2s 2d to 3s 4d; green merinos, 1s 9d to 2s 2d; dry do, 2s 8d to 4s 9d; dry pelts, 2d to 6d; green lambskins, 1s 9d to 2s 1d.

**Rabbitskins.**—There is a fair demand, but supplies are small. Prices are advancing in proportion as the season is advancing, and good summer skins are now worth 1s 2d to 1s 3d; medium, 9d to 1s; and suckers, 1½d to 6d per lb.

**Hides.**—We have no alteration to note. The market is steady, and all coming to hand are being disposed of at low rates.

**Tallow.**—Our supply on Monday was smaller than that usually offered. Competition, however, was brisk. Medium to good brought 31s; mixed, 25s to 25s 6d; and rough fat, 25s per cwt.

**Grain.**—Wheat: The market in the meantime is confined to the operations of our local millers, who continue to buy no more than is sufficient for present requirements, and as hitherto really choice milling samples have not been in over supply, the price for this quality has been well sustained. There is no outlet at present for damp or inferior, unless at very low rates, and that in small quantities. We quote prime milling at 3s 10d to 3s 11d; fair to good, 3s 6d to 3s 9d; inferior and fowls' wheat, 2s to 3s, bags included.

**Oats:** There is a fair demand, and last week's values are still obtainable. The seasonable weather for the last fortnight has enabled farmers to thresh, and consequently the deliveries this week have been much larger, affording to buyers a better choice, so that only the choicest samples bring late rates. We quote stout milling at 2s 2d; short bright feed, 2s to 2s 11d; medium, 1s 9d to 1s 11d. **Barley:** There are a good many samples offering, but as the bulk is for the most part not yet threshed there are but few deliveries. Sales have been made of prime malting since our last report at 4s 1d, bags included. **Milling is worth 3s. Ryegrass Seed:** No demand.

### PRODUCE MARKET.—APRIL 24.

MR. F. MEEHAN, Great King street, reports:—Who'sale prices for the week are as follows, including bags, Oats, 1s 10d to 2s 2d; milling wheat, 3s 8d to 4s; fowls, 2s to 2s 10d; barley, malting, 3s 6d to 4s 3d; milling, 2s 6d to 3s 6d; hay, old, £4 10s; oaten, new, £3 10s; rye-grass, £3; chaff, new, £3 10s; straw, £2 5s; bran, £3 15s; pollard, £4 to £4 10s; flour, £9 10s to £10; oatmeal, £11; fresh butter, medium to prime, 9d to 11d; eggs, 2s 3d; salt butter, 8d to 9d; cheese, 4½d; bacon, sides, 8d; hams, 10d; rolls, 8d; potatoes, £3.

Messrs. MERCER BROS., Princes street, report:—Fresh butter (in ½lb. and 1lb. prints), best quality, 11d per lb.; ordinary butter, 9d per lb.; eggs, 1s 9d; roll bacon, 8d per lb.; good salt butter, in kegs, 9d per lb.; cheese, 4d per lb.

The Radicals of Lyons, France, have just received a lesson in tolerance from one whom M. Gambetta himself called "the great Frenchman." At a meeting to commemorate the foundation of the Geographical Society, M. de Lesseps said energetically, speaking of hospitals: "When I saw the Sisters chased from French soil I begged them to come to Panama; sixty of them accepted my invitation, and there is now no longer an exceptional mortality in the hospitals; I belong to no administration, but I do not like Republicans or Liberals who make war against religion as some have done." The editor of *Les Annales Catholiques* wonders what the Radical organs which have, in imitation of their leader, ostentatiously praised "the great Frenchman," will say to this!—*New York Freeman.*