

pose. I wish I could convey to your readers an adequate idea of the anxiety, the alarm, the excitement which prevail on both sides of the House concerning the probable vote of the Irish party when some critical division is coming on. We are beset, each and every one of us, by official, or at least, semi-official, delegates from this side or that, eager to explain to us wherein, according to their ideas, are to be found the true interests of Ireland. We act as our own view of Irish interests tells us that we ought to act. Where there seems to us no public principle involved we hold ourselves free to act with a sole regard for the effect which our vote may have on the interests of Ireland. But I am bound to say that we never yet gave a vote to the side of what we believed to be in itself a wrong cause. There never was a question involving the interests of humanity anywhere which had not the Irish vote given on the right side. The cause of the poor, the cause of the working people, has always the support of the Irish vote. Every oppressed foreign population, under English rule or other rule, has the sympathy and the help—when help can be given in the English Parliament—of the members who follow Mr. Parnell. But there are occasions when a critical division is to be taken on some mere question of English party—of Ministry and Opposition—and then we are free to act. Is it for the interests of Ireland at the present moment that we should strengthen or weaken, sustain or damage the Ministry? We discuss the question among ourselves and come to a conclusion, and act accordingly. By such a course of policy, by standing together and watching our opportunity, we overthrow Mr. Forster and shall overthrow Lord Spencer. In the next Parliament it will be a question not of Viceroy and Chief Secretaries, but of whole administrations. With such existing conditions and such a prospect, what do we want of obstruction? What do we care about delaying the general movement of business in the House of Commons? The Conservatives do enough in that way; and, indeed, under the most favourable circumstances, the movement of business in the House of Commons is so slow, cumbersome, and clumsy that a future generation will find it hard to believe that any assembly of sane men could have endured a system which sacrifices the needs of an empire to the pelting, petty work of a parish vestry."

With the House of Lords obstructing and destroying useful measures, Mr. McCarthy believes that the best-intentioned Government could do but little for Ireland. He then proceeds:—

"This is the conviction which underlies and inspires the policy of Mr. Parnell. He assumes as a matter of certainty that the English Parliament cannot do for Ireland what Ireland wants to have done—what Ireland could do for herself. Therefore he bends all his energies to the task of getting Ireland extricated from the cruel coils of her Parliamentary connection with England, and he sees but one way of accomplishing this task, and that is by the strength of a powerful Parliamentary party which shall have the Irish people behind it. Mr. Parnell is essentially a Parliamentary politician. He is not a theorist or a dreamer. Airy speculations do not captivate him, do not even interest him. He treads the firm earth of present and practical politics. For this very reason he is fully possessed of the knowledge that no Irish Parliamentary party, however numerous, able, and resolute, would be of any real use if it had not the Irish people at its back. To put it metaphorically, the Irish people are the shaft of the spear. The Parliamentary party are the spear-head; Mr. Parnell's is the hand that propels and guides spear, shaft, and spear-head to the mark. Mr. Parnell's purpose is so clear and certain that he does not think it necessary to talk much about it. He does not much care for the formal and long debates on Home Ru'e which were a ceremonial of every session during Mr. Butt's leadership. The English Press and public seemed to be greatly amazed and alarmed when, two or three years ago, Mr. Parnell said he would not have 'taken off his coat' merely to pass a measure of land reform. The fact that any surprise was felt only showed how little the English Press and public understood of the real Irish question. With Mr. Parnell it is simply an article of faith that a thoroughly satisfactory measure of land reform cannot be got from an English Parliament as at present constituted, and that no measure of land reform, however complete, would satisfy the Irish people in such a way as to extinguish their desire for self-government. Anyone who does not understand that fact, who has not got it fully into his head, who does not assume it as an elementary condition of the controversy between England and Ireland, will only waste his time and puzzle his brains to no purpose if he troubles himself to think about the Irish question.

"The end is a great one; and a man or a party cannot steadily seek a great end without accomplishing in the pursuit of it some other good objects as well. His policy is purifying the constituencies. The authority of the public spirit he has evoked sets corruption and undue influence of all kinds at absolute defiance. The representation has been purified as well as the constituencies. I remember John Bright telling me some years ago of a saying once familiar in the House of Commons, that an Irish member could always be known in the street by reason of his invariable movement towards the offices of the Treasury. Even the wildest spirit of burlesque, of extravagant sarcasm, would hardly apply such a saying to the Irish Nationalist members of Parliament to-day. They beg for no places; they ask for no favours. The man who votes for an Irish National member knows that he is voting for one who is pledged not to seek for or accept any favour from any Ministry for himself or for any of his constituents. Charles Lever's 'Kenny Dodd' describes some Irish constituent writing to his representative, and replying to the representative's account of his own public services by the words, 'Get my son Tom a place in the Custom House and I don't care if New Zealand never had a constitution.' No constituent ever applies to us to get his son Tom a place in the Custom House. I cannot but feel my faith in the future of Ireland much strengthened, if it needed strengthening, when I see the change that has taken place, and see how even very ordinary and commonplace persons, from whom one might not expect over-much in the way of self-sacrifice, have been willing to forego so many chances of personal advantage for the mere sake of helping the national movement. I may say,

too, that the Irish members of Parliament stand aloof from the social influences of London, which used at one time to have such a softening and enervating effect on their political character. This isolation, for so I may call it, was distinctly the work of Mr. Parnell. It was not the way of O'Connell; it was not the way of Mr. Butt. O'Connell's relations of friendship with some of the Whigs of his day were often injurious to his influence over political movements; and similar relationships with English public men made Mr. Butt far too anxious to please, or at least not to displease the House of Commons. Five years ago I wrote an article in a London periodical in which I told my readers that a new chapter was opening in Irish political history when the Irish Parliamentary party had got a leader who did not care one straw for the friendship of a duke, and who would not go to dine at the house of a Cabinet Minister. This may seem to some of your readers a small matter; to those who know the history of Irish Parliamentary movements it is a greater matter; it is a part of that policy of independence which Mr. Parnell has come to carry out, and which is now tried in action for the first time."

THE "WORLD" ON MR. HEALY.

FROM a London "society" journal (says the *Nation*) no one could expect a favourable article on a Parnellite member of Parliament; yet with all its offensiveness the following article from the *World* on the hon. member for Monaghan will have a certain interest for Irish readers:—

The position occupied by Mr. Healy in the ranks of the Irish party, if less authoritative than that of Mr. Parnell, is just now more conspicuous and significant. Ostensibly a loyal follower of his titular chief, he is resolved to miss no chance of putting himself in evidence; and it is clear that he anticipates, probably at no great distance, the time when what Mr. Parnell has been, or is, he may be. Mr. Parnell is at present enjoying a repose, suitable to the season, in his beautiful Vale of Avoca. He nominates candidates for constituencies; he is possibly elaborating the plan of a coming campaign. But he ascends no platform, makes no speeches; and it might be almost inferred from his attitude—whether it be described as one of masterly inactivity or of unworthy supineness,—that he would not regret a withdrawal from active political life under cover of any chivalrous or decent pretext which could be found. Mr. Healy, on the other hand, is aggressively on the alert. He is the most industrious, indefatigable, unscrupulous, and gifted of Irishmen. In the course of a few years he has risen from the place of a small clerk on an Irish railway to that of a public personage. He is a contrast to many or most of his Parliamentary compatriots, not merely in his hard-headedness, his absolute indifference to English opinion, and his brutal frankness of tongue, but in the circumstance that he entered upon his present career without any of the educational advantages and opportunities which they have generally enjoyed. He was at none of the schools or colleges, which are as much open to the Irish peasantry as Glasgow and Edinburgh, St. Andrew's, and Aberdeen, are at the disposal of the Highland crofter's son. If he is inferior to several of his colleagues in the gift of oratory, he is their superior in the art of debate, and he enjoys an almost unrivalled capacity of exasperating the Prime Minister and making the life of Irish Secretaries unendurable. His own extraordinary power of will and application have enabled him to acquire two European languages, and to write English so pungent and vigorous that it at once secures him a livelihood from his pen and makes him a power as a publicist.

There was never a time when the reputation which Mr. Healy commands and the authority which he exercises were so suggestive—so ominous—and therefore worthy of such close attention as the present. Towards the close of the past session he insulted Mr. Trevelyan with such grossness as to cause that gentleman peremptorily to remind the House that though he had the misfortune to be Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, he was also an English gentleman. Mr. Healy himself was, of course, gratified at his success upon this occasion. The effect he produced was exactly that which he intended to produce, and it was less than nothing to him that Mr. Trevelyan accused him by implication of not being a gentleman at all. In the same way he will, we may be sure, have been acutely pleased at the outburst of reprobation which certain words of his uttered last week, have elicited. The only trumpet, he said, that could wake the English legislature to a sense of Irish grievances was the rattle of the blunderbus, and the best appeals to English justice were bullets and slugs. Everyone will admit that language of this sort is a direct appeal to violence and assassination. If Mr. Healy wished to revive the outrages on whose diminution Mr. Gladstone congratulated his hearers in Midlothian, he could not have employed expressions better calculated to produce such an effect. That his words were criminal in themselves, and are open to the interpretation of having had a criminal intent, is plain on the face of them. No action, however, in respect of them has yet been taken by the Government, and probably the official construction charitably placed upon them is that they do not exceed the legitimate limits of free speech. The Irish Nationalist Press has applauded them to the echo, and they have touched a sympathetic chord of admiration in the breast of the American Irish on the other side of the Atlantic. What next? we may well be tempted to ask. Will Mr. Healy be permitted and encouraged to outdo himself? Will other speakers be encouraged to outdo Healy? and, in this case, what will be the consequence? It is a matter, not of loose conjecture, but of positive knowledge and scientific demonstration, that, four years ago, Irish crime of all kinds, murder included, was exactly proportionate to the inflammatory harangues made in particular neighbourhoods. Where, as was then repeatedly shown, the orators of the Land League denounced English ascendancy, and threatened landlords with destruction, there mutilation and murder followed as surely as night succeeds the day. If, therefore, the argument by analogy is good for anything, one may be certain that Mr. Healy's hints—emphasised by the example of