

of the people on political Irish questions. By the articles of union the Protestant Church in Ireland was to be forever supported by the State. If Home Rule was granted before disendowment it would in all likelihood be an article of that measure that the Church should be maintained as it then existed. Better such a treaty broken by the Imperial rather than the Irish legislature. As far as the prosperity which undoubtedly then existed is concerned, it was entirely owing to the economic laws of demand and supply. It will be recollected that America was still suffering from the effects of her civil war, and Australia had not begun to be a potent factor in British commerce, and therefore Ireland as a food producing country was naturally prosperous, on account of the consequent high prices and ready markets at her door. But a continual increase in the rents took place during these years, and farmers bowed themselves down to pay rents which the keen competition of America and Australia rendered impossible a few years afterwards. I have referred to these facts in Irish economics because the prosperity then existing is used as a plea against further concessions.

Karl Grey admits that when in 1870 Mr. Gladstone attempted to carry his Land Act through, "the relations of the owners and occupiers of land in Ireland stood much in need of amendment." Previous to Mr. Gladstone's move in the matter the subject was often pressed on the Government by Irish members, and strangely enough Lord Clanricarde, father of the Exterminator, moved in the matter in the House of Lords, his motion being referred to a select committee, where it remained. The Land Law as it then stood under Lord Cardwell's Act of 1860 failed in defining the terms of contract and discouraging written leases. It discouraged the granting of leases for a term of years, and failed to provide sufficient provision for easily and cheaply settling disputes. Owing to these defects his Lordship assures us that "great injustice was occasionally done to tenants who had improved their land." In instituting a comparison between Irish and English leaseholders, he admits the oft-repeated fact that English landlords make most of the improvements, and adds: "Unfortunately in Ireland it is otherwise. These improvements have been effected by tenants only on an understanding of the vaguest kind, that they should be allowed to hold their land, without being called upon to pay higher rents, long enough to repay themselves. The agreement was almost always verbal, and the terms were apt to be forgotten before the time came when it gave the landlord a right to ask for a higher rent. There were too many cases in which landlords availed themselves of their legal right, in order unjustly to deprive the tenants holding land only from year to year of the fruits of their labour." For these defects his remedy is in accordance with Lord Clanricarde's Committee, viz., "To give to the owners and occupiers of land freedom to settle with each other as they might think fit the conditions on which it was to be held, but requiring that all arrangements of that kind should be made in writing, and should be recorded in such a manner as to make them always easy to be referred to." These arrangements were to be inexpensive. Leases were to be made cheaper, etc. In this recommendation the Irish farmer will see little improvement. It is, however, difficult to prove to an Englishman that, prior to the Plan of Campaign and the introduction of boycotting as a fine art, it was utterly impossible to have anything approaching a free contract with an Irish landlord. He fixed the rent at the utmost price possible, often impossible to be obtained, and if the tenant demurred to pay that, he had simply "to bundle and go." Here came in the direful effects of the hanging gales, which enable the landlord to rob the tenant before ejecting him. It not unusually happened that a tenant was two years in arrears without owing a penny. Thus if a tenant took up a lease in 1860 for 21 years, his first receipt would be dated for 1858, so too would the lease itself. The lease would expire in 1879, but the shrewd landlord would leave it run on till 1881. If he failed to come to terms with his landlord at the expiry of his lease in 1881, the landlord had a legal right to fix any rent he chose, and compel the tenant to pay it for those two years before he leaves, and as a general rule this rent has been fixed more on the tenant's ability to pay it, than on any other grounds of equity. Remember that he does not owe a single penny of this, and that the landlord in forcing payment is simply exercising a piece of tyranny unprecedented anywhere else. His home is not sacred as is that of the Christian under the Moslem rule in Turkey. No matter how severe the atrocities of Turkish pashas may be, the people in their homes were as safe from insult, as the English subject in a sanctuary during the Saxon, Norman, and Plantagenet periods; but for the Irish peasant no such fortunate refuge remains. Often, nay, generally, in the cold March mornings, hundreds, nay thousands, are sometimes turned adrift to perish by the roadside, or wind their way to the workhouse. It is needless to cite instances of this cruelty; readers of the TABLET are familiar enough with them. In support of my contention re the hanging gales, ample evidence will be found in Mr. Bence Jones' work, and also in Trevelyan's "Realities of Irish Life." But for a full exposure see T. P. O'Connor's "Parcell Movement," A. M. Sullivan's "New Ireland," and other works.

I will now pass over the remaining part of the chapter dealing with the Land Question, having already given a sufficient indication of his lordship's plan. It is unusually severe on Mr. Gladstone's Acts, which give a dual ownership to the soil, although he has admitted the right of the tenant to his own improvements.

In the concluding chapter after a weary reiteration of the previous contentions we at length come to the plan for the future government of Ireland. Before entering into the subject, however he enters fully into the subject private Bill Legislation, showing how defective, expensive, and unsatisfactory it is even in England, as well as in Ireland. To remedy this evil he proposed a buffer commission of judges to settle the details, and then submit the measure to Parliament. As far as Ireland is concerned, the first objection to this proposal is that the Irish people have no confidence whatever in the Irish judges, every one from the Lord Chancellor and Chief Justice down to the petty village J.P., are of the genus anti-Irish. That is the first and one of the most formidable Irish grievances and underlies most others. His measures for the future are:—

1. Suspending for a time the operation of representative government in that part of the United Kingdom, and entrusting its administration to some authority raised above party influences. The arguments by which this drastic measure is supported seems to me wholly unworthy of even a well-informed man much less a statesman. He admits that there is, "especially in the House of Commons, a great deficiency of knowledge as to the real wants of Ireland, and what is worse, a strong disposition to listen with favour to very crude and ill-considered schemes for its improvement." This ignorance he would remedy by depriving the House of Commons of the advantage of having accurate information from the Irish Members whose chief faults are that they occupy too much time in teaching them. As to obstruction his lordship forgets that it was the Tories who first reduced it to that of a fine art during the passing of the Church disestablishment and the Land Act, 1870. The alternative of suspension, he says, is concession of Home Rule. Suspension is impossible. Even if possible England would not hazard it. If Ireland deprived of her constitution by fraud were denied representation under the Union, it would be competent for the European powers to step in and compel England to surrender Ireland her full freedom as England and the other powers compelled Turkey to free the Balkan provinces for less cause. This is separation with a vengeance. As the alternative is Home Rule we may expect it sooner.

2. The Government of Ireland to be entrusted to a Lord-Lieutenant named in the act, for ten years during which time he cannot be removed except by the Crown in compliance to an address from both Houses of Parliament. (As far as Ireland is concerned a cap hung on a pole *a la Gessler* would be as efficacious as any Lord-Lieutenant we have had.)

3. The Lord-Lieutenant to have full power to carry on the executive government according to his own judgment, and to be solely responsible for his acts. But to report all his measures to her Majesty's Ministers, and to keep them fully informed as to his views and intentions so as to enable them to call his attention to whatever observations they might consider to be required.

4. The Lord-Lieutenant in Council to be empowered to make from time to time such orders, having the force of laws, as he may think fit. The drafts to be prepared by a committee of Privy Council and published a month beforehand.

5. Additional members of various opinions to be added to the Council.

6. The Lord-Lieutenant to nominate committees from this enlarged Council, such committees to deal in a quasi parliamentary manner with such subjects as may be relegated to them, giving their reasons and furnishing their reports and drafts. When these met the approval of the Lord-Lieutenant they were to be published in the *Dublin Gazette* and have the force of law.

7. An annual sum, equal to the average expenditure for the public service in Ireland during the last three or four years, should be placed by Parliament at the disposal of the Lord-Lieutenant for Irish purposes, regular statements properly audited to be laid before Parliament.

Such is the manner in which Earl Grey would govern Ireland. On first reading the proposals I felt naturally indignant; but on rereading them over carefully again, and taking into consideration that he is constantly harping on the two facts that the administration of Ireland is bad as bad could be; and that the legislation is worse owing to English party disputes and want of knowledge of Irish affairs; I have come to the conclusion that he is a Home Ruler in disguise, and that his proposals are on a par with Swift's modest proposal. A free explanation of his "Future Remedy" would show that Irish representation in the Imperial Parliament is useless because it cannot promote useful or prevent bad and useless legislation. In the next place we find him travestying the present Castle government by proposing to make the Lord-Lieutenant responsible to the Crown. At present he is in harmony with his Chief Secretary and officials, more despotic than Czar and Sultan put together. This ironical Remedy would place him on a level with other ordinary Governors. The third proposal is another caricature of the present arrangements by which halfour can imprison his opponents without consulting with his official head. The idea of reporting his measures to the Ministers and having them published in the *Dublin Gazette* is a beautiful satire on the secret doings of the Castle such as the midnight orders which consigned poor Mandeville to an early grave. He further hints that the English Ministry should be responsible for Irish government by forcing them to take cognisance of what is going on in Ireland. By the fourth, fifth, and sixth proposals he caricatures the working of the present irresponsible, unelected, Irish Parliament, or Privy Council, which occasionally sits in Dublin and makes orders which have the force of law, as far as they can enforce them. The proviso of calling on special members for the consideration of particular orders is very beautiful. For instance if Catholic priests were to be sent to gaol, there would be no need to summon Barry, Granard, O'Hagan, The O'Connor Don, or any other Catholic. The last proposal, however, contains the cream of the fun. Only just fancy the irresponsible Irish Government putting duly audited statements of account before even an English Parliament. The thing is ridiculous. If such a thing had been done the Castle system would be wrecked. It is true but bitter irony on the secret service system. Far easier for the Castle loafers to take their pay through a hole in the wall and give no account of how they got it or for what object.

We hear very much of Irish poverty its cause and its cure so with Earl Grey's views on the subject I will conclude this article:—"It has been often and truly said that the general poverty of the population has been at the bottom of Irish discontent, and that, if the people were better off, there would not be so much disaffection. And the real reason why the country is so poor has also been often pointed out; it is simply, that idleness, and industry have not been encouraged by security. No nation can hope to rise to wealth and prosperity except by industry and enterprise, which cannot flourish if those who devote their labour or money to the work of production have not complete security that they will be allowed to enjoy the