

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

one occasion, the traveller met a very delightful old lady, Mrs. Simpson, a true "mother in Israel," widow of one of the early missionaries.

The Romanist Mission in Fiji has had large aid and encouragement from the French Government. Nevertheless, out of the 8,000 native population, it appears, 300 nominal adherents is the maximum which the Romanists themselves have ever claimed; 50 is said to be nearer the mark. The English missionaries, it must be borne in mind, were subjected to very oppressive regulations when the French Protectorate was established in 1843. At that time the people were all Christians, and still in the fervour of first love; but that love has sadly faded under French influence, and from the influx of "infidel, or, at the best, wholly indifferent foreigners." (See vol. ii. p. 192.)

Without further extract, we must take our leave of these extremely interesting volumes. To our notice, however, it must be added, that they are printed in large, clear type; there are several delightful illustrations, and the map is good.

ART. IV.—THE IRISH QUESTION.

THE pacification of Ireland is the great political problem of the day. In the conflict of opinion between rival parties it is not by any means an easy task to unravel that tangled web which hitherto has tried the temper of the coolest heads, and baffled the ingenuity of the profoundest thinkers of the age. During the last Session of Parliament the Irish Question occupied the closest and the most careful attention of both Houses of the Legislature, to the exclusion of almost every other topic of home or foreign policy. And yet, judging from the present state of things, we seem as far off as ever from solving the great national controversy as to the best mode of restoring peace, prosperity, and contentment to the Irish people.

It is hardly necessary to observe that there exists a great diversity of opinion as to the origin of the present embroglio. The concerns of Irish political life are so varied and entangled, and subject to such rapid and complicated changes, that even the most experienced statesmen cannot easily devise rules to legislate for them all. How much more troublesome, then, must it be for ordinary Englishmen clearly to comprehend a subject involved in such intricacy and confusion! There are some who attribute this unhappy state of things to political, and others to ecclesiastical, causes. Others, again, think that it

may be accounted for by an injudicious mixture of both. Much discord and ill-feeling, doubtless, have arisen from the violent impingement of these opposite and varying forces, but they cannot altogether account for the unseemly spectacle which Ireland at this moment presents to the eyes of the civilized world. There must be other disturbing forces of greater potency at work than any mere question of party politics, or the divergent administrations of religion. Some malign agency must be engaged in secretly sapping the foundations of Irish society. Some moral poison of more than ordinary virulence must be permeating the social life of the Irish people in order adequately to account for the transformation of their traditional geniality and warmth of heart into the wild, and reckless, and visionary schemes of anarchy, cruelty, and bloodshed. The evil passions of our fallen nature have been lashed into more than common force and fury, and they have exhibited themselves in some of their most vindictive and hateful colours. Assassination, under circumstances of unusual horror, has been systematically perpetrated, paralleled only by the history of the secret societies of the European Revolution.¹

There have been revolutions and rebellions of periodical occurrence in Ireland for centuries past, and, for the time being, they produced sufficiently serious complications. The efforts of industry were paralyzed, commercial enterprise and thrift were at a standstill, and the machinery of society was broken up. But those outbreaks were speedily suppressed by the strong arm of the law, after which the country relapsed into its normal condition of comparative repose, and the people resumed their usual occupations. That, however, is not the case at present. Previous disturbances in Ireland may be said to resemble an acute attack

¹ Disguise it as we may the Land League is a military armament, the members of which are mainly enrolled in the United States. Their arrangements are carried on with a devotedness and a determination which in a righteous cause would be worthy of a noble name. The rank and file of this army are being trained and drilled in the ranks of the National Guards of the different States in the Union. They are perfecting themselves in military discipline, such as "aiming drill" and the accurate use of the rifle. Artillery and torpedo warfare are not forgotten. The very standard of the national forces has been decided on—the tricolour, green, white, and yellow. (White is in the centre, bearing a golden sunburst, the yellow next the staff, and the green on the fly. Of course all this preparation and drilling are carried on under the strictest possible secrecy, and, presumably, without the knowledge of the American Government. But, that there is a large body of enthusiastic men, partly in Ireland, and partly in America, banded together with the view of creating civil war, is a fact concerning which there can be no dispute. The object of the organization is the complete political independence of Ireland, under a Republican form of Government, and the only policy which, it is believed, will attain that end, is force of arms.

of some form of eruptive fever, which, while it lasts, is very severe, but when it has worn itself out, unless, indeed, it should first of all wear out the man, gives the patient some chance of regaining his former vigour. The present social upheaval in the sister isle may be compared to a case of slow poisoning, adroitly carried on by clever and designing men, whose object is to undermine the strength and constitution of the sufferer, and leave him no hope of recovery, while the hand of secret treachery exerts its baleful influence upon him. The proper remedy is to neutralize the poison by the only appropriate antidote that can effectually resist it—viz., the expulsive influence of a stronger drug. What that drug should be is the point on which our political empirics so widely differ. One says that “force is no remedy,” although landlord after landlord has been mercilessly shot down, apparently for no other reason than because they had become obnoxious for not reducing their rent-rolls to the modest dimensions which the tenants might consider a satisfactory contract. It may be said that landlord-shooting is not a new institution in relation to agrarian outrages in that country. That is so, no doubt; but there is this very novel and somewhat startling feature in the case, that for the first time in the history of Ireland, it is not the landowner who receives, but the land-occupier who pays his rent, who is singled out for the deadliest persecution, or an untimely grave. And not only is vengeance wreaked upon man, but the innocent and inoffensive beast is subjected to horrible mutilations. There is something diabolically spiteful about such a mode of dealing with real or imaginary grievances. Even in the specially national recreation of Ireland—viz., fox-hunting—the people, who of all the inhabitants of any country on earth, are enthusiastically fond of sport, acting under the advice of mischievous malevolence, have “Boycotted” even the very dogs, so that hunting is absolutely interdicted under the present reign of terror. The result is that many men are thrown out of employment, in consequence of the breaking-up of hunting studs throughout the country. And this is what the Parnellites call patriotism!

There must be something in the background to account for this extraordinary change in the Irish character—something deeper and more insidious than any rivalry between Catholic and Protestant, Whig or Tory.

The tenants are only puppets in the hands of the real originators of this insurrectionary movement. Even the Romish hierarchy find it hard enough to maintain their ground in face of this organized communism against all law and religion. There has never been anything like it heretofore. The Irish peasant from time immemorial has been eulogized by poets and historians for the generosity of his character, the obliging cour-

tesy and the natural politeness of his demeanour. Every visitor to Ireland has borne willing testimony to the kindness and the tenderness of the Irish peasant's heart. What is it, then, that has now changed all this? What evil genius has gratified his vengeful ire by thus hardening the hearts and petrifying the feelings of the most amiable and generously-disposed people on the face of the earth? Whatever be the aim of the movement, the motive power is not of Irish origin. It is not the spontaneous ebullition of the peasantry. It is a foreign importation—a political movement from first to last.

We should carefully distinguish between the parties now contending for the total disruption of the social ties which hitherto have existed between landlord and tenant. The noisy agitators of whom we have heard so much are not the Irish people. The majority of the tenants would willingly pay their rents, were it not for the undue pressure brought to bear upon them by threats and coercion. Many have paid their rents, and have paid dearly for their honesty. Some have been shot, others horribly mutilated, and all threatened with equally severe penalties in the event of their daring to take any step without the permission of their new masters. "None shall buy or sell, save they who have the mark of the beast." That is what things have come to in Ireland. The truth is, that there exists a large class of disappointed men who have in recent and more remote times emigrated to various parts of the world, especially to America. These men, when leaving home, were bitterly incensed against England. They have kept up and cherished this old grudge in the land of their adoption. Believing that it was by English misrule that they were forced to quit the country of their birth, they have secretly nourished an undying hatred against Great Britain. They have been goaded on to folly and to madness by the freaks of a fertile imagination. A morbid appetite for revenge has taken possession of them. Brooding over their supposed grievances, they have permitted them to burn and rankle in their hearts till they can think of nothing but the separation of Ireland by any means, fair or foul, from the "intolerable tyranny" of the Saxon.

There is, however, another feeling besides this professional patriotism. Greed enters largely into the revolution. Human nature in its fallen state is impregnated largely with covetousness. The tenants would much rather pay no rent at all. That is a point of honour which would give them no trouble of conscience. The times are greatly changed. They now hunt and kill game, in utter defiance of all law, over the property of the landlords. The cry is, "We shall pay no rent till Parnell and Co. are released." How do we know that if they were released the tenants would not then say, "We will now pay no rent till

Mr. Parnell and his associates receive compensation for their imprisonment?" And, thus, there would be always some reason or other alleged by the tenants to keep the landlords out of their money.¹

The present attitude of the Irish "dead-lock" seems to be a plain and living demonstration that it is impossible either for a nation or for an individual to do wrong and not to suffer for it. Ministry after Ministry, to secure the Irish vote, and to tide over pressing political complications, have again and again adopted a policy ostensibly of peace-offering to Ireland, but, in reality, an abandonment of the good sense and genius of the British Constitution. It is the recorded saying of William Pitt, "I have no fear of England: she will stand till the day of judgment." Edmund Burke replied, "What, I fear, is the day of no judgment." From Burke's point of view the present lawlessness in Ireland possesses an importance far beyond any local interest. "*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*" The pulling down of every bulwark against the inroads of popular revolution displays such a want of judgment that it is not quite so easy to accept the final decision of Mr. Pitt. Since his day there have been changes which, possibly, he never could have anticipated, and, in face of which, if he were now alive, he might not venture so confidently to dogmatize.

At this moment there are two great influences at work for the mastery in Ireland. There can be no doubt that as the struggle advances the people are becoming more and more demoralized—more disloyal, and more defiant. One or other of these contending parties is bound to win. The burning question of the hour is, which of them is it to be? The stake for which this revolutionary game is being played is neither more nor less than the possession of Ireland. When stripped of all circumlocution that is the real issue. One party claims—ay, and it has enforced its claims—to publish its own laws on the irresponsible authority of a secret committee. It issues its decrees of outlawry against landlords, who, in consequence of such enactments,

¹ The Irish Communists are doing everything in their power, whether intentionally or not, to pauperize the peasantry, by driving away the employers of labour. But what of that? The funds are coming in from America, and *that*, after all, is the main point. While the unfortunate peasant is dragging on a miserable existence owing to the want of employment, and the absence of a wholesome circulation of capital, arising from the senseless raid against landlords, the revolutionists who have escaped imprisonment are living "in clover," and, like the mistletoe, are fair and flourishing, while the tree on which it grows looks dreary and desolate. At present, in order to prevent the outbreak of civil war, a military force of upwards of fifty thousand troops are in permanent occupation. To this has to be added the Royal Irish Constabulary—a force consisting of the finest body of men in the world.

are compelled to leave the country in order to escape the persecution of their own tenants. The lives of peaceful citizens are endangered, and the rights of private property are wholly ignored. The other party in the contest is the representative and accredited authority of the constitutional law of England. Already the Queen's Government has summarily dealt with the leaders of the revolution by committing them to prison, and yet the disorder and lawlessness continue unabated. The "suspects" who are incarcerated for sowing the seeds of sedition among the people are specially privileged. Their followers, in open defiance of all authority, kill game on the property of the obnoxious landlords, and then forward it to the various prisons where the rebel leaders are confined. The Freedom of the City of Dublin has been conferred on Messrs. Parnell and Dillon, and her Majesty's Government were coolly requested to allow these gentlemen to be temporarily liberated, in order that the Corporation might convey to them the expression of their admiration for their stubborn and successful resistance to the law of the realm. Whatever be the issue of the present conflict of opinion between these rival parties, it is evident that, for the time being, we are confronted with the fact that there are two governments in Ireland. Mistaken leniency has bought about this anomaly; and unless the majesty of the law be vindicated, and the authority of the Queen upheld, the present confusion will become worse confounded. It is just as true in the great family of nations, as in that of individual households, that firmness is true kindness. Alternate laxity and undue severity is the worst possible mode of ruling any people, particularly the Irish. The most authoritative of all law-givers enjoined that men should render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and it is the bounden duty of every well-organized Government, not only for the sake of its own dignity, but for the protection and defence of the people committed to their charge, to see that the law shall be maintained at all hazard, and at any cost. As society is at present constituted law is Cæsar. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that its supremacy should be upheld by the Government firmly planting its foot upon the revolutionary movement, and not relaxing its hold until it has completely stamped it out. The rebel leaders in Ireland are guilty of the same crime of which John Pym (better known as "King Pym"), accused the Earl of Strafford when he said, that he endeavoured "by his words, actions, and counsels to subvert the fundamental laws of England and Ireland, and to introduce an arbitrary and tyrannical government."¹

¹ This is the very offence of which Mr. Parnell and his followers are now guilty. Let it be supposed that the anarchists should succeed in

No man in his senses can suppose that England will ever allow Ireland to govern herself as an independent nation. It would be hardly possible to conceive any greater act of injustice than that Ireland should be left to her own self-government. Before a month could elapse the so-called patriots would quarrel among themselves, and the last state of that island would be worse than the first. It might be for the benefit of both countries if Ireland were permitted to transact special business relating to local exigencies. A National Synod might hold its sittings in Dublin with great advantage, but beyond that form of special legislation, it is difficult to see what possible benefit could result from a repeal of the Union.

In the meantime there exists very serious distress among the landlords, and all others, ladies especially, who derive their incomes from annuities or mortgages. It is clear enough that "*ex nihilo nihil fit.*" If the rent is not paid, all persons depending for their subsistence from such a source are necessarily embarrassed. The Lord Mayor's fund is a move in the right direction, and the sympathy of England in such a crisis will exercise a very favourable influence in the settlement of the Irish Question.

In estimating the condition of Ireland, we should never leave out of our calculation the northern province of Ulster. The working classes are there; and intelligence, activity, and industry are there also. These men are of Scotch descent. In religion, dialect, and habits of thrift they resemble the provident and hardy people of North Britain, from whence they originally came. A comparison between Tyrone and Tipperary would be immeasurably in favour of the former. The question which naturally suggests itself is, Whence does this difference arise? The answer is, From the same influences that have contributed to the prosperity of Scotland. Let the same causes operate in

keeping the upper hand—for that they have it now does not admit of a second opinion—what would be the condition of Ireland? If we go back sixty years—say to the year 1821—what was the state of things at that period? Great Britain, with its population of fourteen millions, returned a revenue of fifty millions sterling. Ireland, with exactly seven millions, produced barely five millions. How is this disproportion to be accounted for? It was not from any fault of the soil, for Nature has been almost lavish in that respect. It was, at that time, generally attributed to the want of capital, and without capital the population was without employment, and the exchequer without its revenue. But, what are the revolutionists now doing in Ireland? They are driving away capitalists who are already in the country, and they are preventing others from entering it. Therefore, on the mere ground of political economy it behoves the Government to terminate as speedily as possible the present loss to the nation at large, for if things continue much longer in the present ruinous condition, nothing can prevent national bankruptcy so far as Ireland is concerned.

Munster and Connaught, and we should have similar results. All the Land Acts that could ever be devised by the ingenuity of man would avail but little towards national prosperity so long as the habits of the people continue unchanged. If the peasantry were to be made a present of the land, they would derive little or no advantage from the possession of it, unless they underwent a complete transformation in their habits. At present, things are bad as bad can be. The country is in a state of civil war, without actual hostilities in the field. The Queen's writs are only so much waste paper. The jury system has collapsed, and the administration of justice has consequently become a mere farce. The judges, who are superior to party prejudices, have openly admitted that the law courts have become a complete failure. Law and order exist in name only. The country is almost entirely at the mercy of the rebels, and they commit with impunity acts of lawlessness and plunder.¹

So far from matters being mended by a policy of concession, it seems that they are becoming worse and worse every day. It must, however, be admitted that Mr. Forster is doing his very utmost "to right the ship," but things have gone too far for anything but the most stringent measures.

The so-called messages of peace in the past have utterly failed to conciliate the people. To ward off civil war in 1829 the Catholic Emancipation Bill was granted. The endowment by the State of the Romish College of Maynooth was intended as a further concession. Year after year some additional favour was bestowed on the irrepressible agitators, until the grand climax of the Disestablishment of the Irish Church was at last reached. This was to have ushered in the dawn of a new era. The "Upas tree," as an eminent statesman termed the Protestant Church, was to be uprooted, in order to quiet the Irish malcontents. "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" said another poli-

¹ The following is a specimen extracted from the *Derry Telegraph* of the 9th of January:—

"A people's hunt, which has been established under the name of the National Hunting Association, was held on Saturday near Maryborough. Over one hundred horsemen collected, and, accompanied by dogs bearing on their collars such names as 'Buckshot,' 'Revolver,' 'Dynamite,' 'Rackrent,' &c., destroyed an immense quantity of game.

"While a number of gentlemen were hunting near Cashel, co. Tipperary, on Saturday, a farmer on whose lands they were going stopped them, and refused to allow them to proceed. The gentlemen requested that the dogs might be allowed to cross the land, while they themselves would keep to the roads. This the farmer also refused to permit, threatening to shoot the dogs if they went on his land. The hunt had to be abandoned in consequence."

This is only one instance out of many in which the arm of the law is powerless against the lawbreakers.

tician of the same school. They have tried their plan, and with what result the present anarchy sufficiently declares. It seems to be one of those righteous reactions of retributive Providence that the men who were instrumental in sowing the seed should now have the opportunity of reaping the harvest.

G. W. WELDON.

ART. V.—THROUGH SIBERIA.

Through Siberia. By HENRY LANSDELL. With Illustrations and Maps. In Two Volumes. London: Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington. 1882.

THIS book is a traveller's story, enriched from the writings of others. Mr. Lansdell journeyed "through Siberia" in the year 1879. Setting out from London on April 30, he left Vladivostock for Hakodate, Sept. 30, and arrived in San Francisco on Oct. 27. During his stay in San Francisco an American bishop said to him: "I hope, sir, you will give us your experience, for Siberia is a country of which we know so little." On his return to London, however, instead of confining himself to an account of his personal adventures, he chose—wisely, we think—to describe the country as a whole, supplementing his own experiences with information derived from published writings and private sources. The result is a work of no small value, highly interesting, and full of information. Appearing at the same time as "The Voyage of the *Vega*," in which is described the northern coast of the country, "Through Siberia" will be welcomed, not only by the "general readers," to whom an ably-written book of travel is always acceptable, but by those who can appreciate carefully compiled statistics of the social science cast, geographical intelligence, and an unprejudiced statement in regard to matters much debated in religious circles.

"My speciality in Siberia," says Mr. Lansdell, "was the visitation of its prisons and penal institutions, considered, however, not so much from an economic or administrative as from a philanthropic and religious point of view. Much has been written concerning them that is very unsatisfactory. One author published 'My Exile in Siberia' who never went there. 'Escapes' and 'Revelations' of Siberia have been written by others who were banished only a few days' journey beyond the Urals; whereas an exile condemned to the mines would say that it is only east of the Baikal that the severest forms of exile life begin." According to Mr. Lansdell, "none who have