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IRELAND AND HER LEADERS

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November 29 was spent in Dublin, the 30th at Belfast and en route to that city from Dublin. Dublin is a very substantial looking city and much more ancient in appearance than Belfast, the latter reminding one more of an enterprising American city. We did not have a chance to visit any of the industries of Dublin, and only a linen factory and a shipyard in Belfast, but as the linen factory, the York Street Linen Mills, was one of the largest in Ireland, and the shipyard, Harland & Wolff's, the largest in the world, they gave some idea of the industrial possibilities of the island.

The lord mayor of Belfast, Sir Daniel Dixon, gave us a history of the municipal undertakings and extended to us every possible courtesy. To one accustomed to the farms of the Mississippi and the Missouri valleys, the little farms of Ireland seemed contracted indeed, but what they lack in size, they make up in thoroughness of cultivation. Not a foot seemed to be wasted. At Birmingham I saw some Kerry cows, which I can best describe as pony cattle, that they told me were being bred in Ireland in preference to the larger breeds; they are certainly more in keeping with the size of the farms. The farm houses were not large, but from the railroad train they looked neat and well kept.

My visit to Ireland was too brief to enable me to look into the condition of the tenants in the various parts of the island, but by the courtesy of the lord mayor of Dublin, Mr. Timothy Harrington, and Mr. John Dillon, both members of parliament, I met a number of the prominent representatives of Ireland in national politics. A luncheon at the Mansion House was attended by some 75 of the Irish leaders, including Archbishop Walsh, William Redmond, John Dillon, Michael Davitt, William Field, Patrick O'Brien, several members of the city council, ex-Mayor Valentine Dillon, High Sheriff Thomas Powers, and Drs. McArdle and others, and other persons distinguished in various walks of life.

The dinner at Mr. Dillon's gave me a chance to meet Mr. Bailey of the new land commission and Mr. Finucane, lately connected with the Indian department, and to become better acquainted with the more prominent of the Irish leaders whose names have become familiar to American readers, and whom I met at luncheon.

Archbishop Walsh is one of the best known and most beloved of the Irish clergy, and he endeared himself to the friends of bimetallism throughout the world by the pamphlet which he wrote some years ago setting forth the effect of the gold standard upon the Irish tenant farmer. It was a genuine pleasure to make his personal acquaintance. It may be added, in passing, that the tenants of Ireland will be more than ever interested in a stable dollar when they have secured title to their lands and assumed the payments which extend over more than sixty years. Any increase in the value of the dollar would increase the burden of these payments by lessening the price which they would obtain for the products of the soil.

Mr. John Redmond is the leader of the Irish party in parliament, and having visited the United States, is known to many of our people. He has

the appearance of a well-to-do lawyer, is quick to catch a point, ready of speech and immensely popular with his people. He has the reputation of being one of the most forcible of the Irish orators, and I regret that I had no opportunity of hearing him speak.

Mr. Dillon is a tall man, probably six feet one, with a scholarly face and wears a beard. His long experience in parliament, his thorough knowledge of the issues of the last quarter of a century, and his fidelity to the interests of the people of his land have given him a deservedly high place among the great Irishmen of the present generation.

Mr. Michael Davitt has also had a conspicuous career, but is not now in parliament, having resigned as a protest against the Boer war. He is the oldest of the group and shows in his countenance the fighting qualities that have made his name known throughout the world. He is not a diplomat—he has not learned the language of the court. He is not a compromiser, but a combatant, and his blows have been telling ones.

The lord mayor of Dublin, Mr. Timothy Harrington, has been honored with a third election as lord mayor, a position first held by Daniel O'Connell, but he is always at Westminster whenever there is an important vote in parliament. He is a typical Irishman, good-natured, full of humor, well informed and a natural politician.

At a dinner given a few days later at the National Liberal club in London by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, I met several other Irish members, among them Mr. William Redmond, brother of the leader of the Irish party, and himself a man of great ability and long parliamentary experience, and James Devlin, one of the most brilliant of the orators of the younger generation. The oldest person at the O'Connor dinner was Mr. O'Brien, the last Irishman who enjoyed the distinction of being sentenced to be hung, drawn and quartered. The host, Mr. O'Connor, while he represents a Liverpool constituency and is not, therefore, technically speaking, a member of the Irish party, is one of the most prominent and influential of the Irishmen in the house of commons. He has lectured in the United States as well as in Europe, and is now editor of two weekly papers of large circulation. He showed his friendliness toward America and his appreciation of our country's resources by taking unto himself an American wife—a beautiful Texan.

At Glasgow I met another member of parliament, Mr. William McKillup, who, though a citizen of Glasgow, represents an Irish district and takes an active interest in everything that affects the Emerald Isle.

Mr. Harrington and Mr. Redmond took me to the Dublin cemetery and we visited the graves of O'Connell and Parnell. The tomb of Ireland's great agitator is under a massive pile of granite made to represent an old Irish tower. No monument has yet been erected to Parnell. The memory of the two dead statesmen and the presence of the living leaders recalled the struggle to which so many of Ireland's sons have devoted their lives, and it was a matter of extreme gratification to find that substantial progress is being made.

It is true that home rule has not yet been secured, but the contest for home rule has fo-

cusled attention upon the industrial and political condition of Erin, and a number of remedial measures have been adopted. First, the tenant was given title to his improvements and then the amount of the rent was judicially determined. More recently the authorities have been building cottages for the rural laborers. Over 15,000 of these cottages have been already erected and arrangements are being made for some 19,000 more. These are much more comfortable than the former dwellings, and much safer from a sanitary point of view. The recent land purchase act, which went into effect on November 1, seems likely to exert a very great influence upon the condition of the people. According to its terms the government is to buy the land of the landlord and sell it to the tenants. As the government can borrow money at a lower rate than the ordinary borrower, it is able to give the tenant much better terms than he gets from his present landlord, and at the same time purchase the land of the landlord at a price that is equitable. The landlords are showing a disposition to comply with the spirit of the law, although some of them are attempting to get a larger price for their land than it was worth prior to the passage of the law. The purpose of the law is to remove from politics the landlord question, which has been a delicate one to deal with. Most of the larger estates were given to the ancestors of the present holders and many of the owners live in England and collect their rents through a local agent. The new law makes the government the landlord and the tenant, by paying a certain annual sum for 63 years, becomes the owner of the fee. He has the privilege of paying all or any part, at any time, and can dispose of his interest. The settlement which is now being effected, not only removes the friction which has existed between the tenant and the landlord, but puts the tenant in a position where he can appeal to the government with reasonable certainty of redress in case unforeseen circumstances make life a lot harder than at present anticipated. The assurance that he will become the owner of the fee will give to the Irish farmer an ambition that has heretofore been wanting, for he will be able to save without fear of an increase in the rent. Not only is the land question in process of settlement, but there have been at the same time other improvements which make for the permanent progress of the race. There is a constant increase in educational facilities, and a large number of co-operative banks have been established. Agricultural societies have been formed for the improvement of crops and stock, and the trend is distinctly upward. The Irish leaders have not obtained all that they labored for—there is much to be secured before their work is complete, but when the history of Ireland is written, the leaders now living will be able to regard with justifiable pride the results of their devotion and sacrifice, and their names will be added to the long list of Irish patriots and statesmen.

In Dublin I paid my respects to Lord Dudley, lieutenant governor of Ireland, whose residence, the Viceregal Lodge, is in Phoenix Park, and found him so genial and affable a host that I am led to hope that in his administration of the executive branch of the government he will make the same