Collected Mitchel

‘Ireland is the poorer because no collection has yet been made of the articles of Charles Gavan Duffy, John Mitchel and others in the *Nation* newspaper.’—Arthur Griffith

Collected Mitchel

Writings and Speeches

This .pdf is not comprehensive and will be updated in the future as we archive more of Mitchel's writings. This is the first anthology of Mitchel's writings from the *Nation* and the *United Irishman*. Many articles and speeches in this volume were sourced from two biographies of Mitchel's life, William Dillon's two-part *The Life of John Mitchel*, 1888, and P. A. Sillard's edition of the same name in 1908.

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The English Government and the Irish Presbyterians

***The Nation*, 22 July, 1843.**

I observe that the English judges have at length, amidst their more important avocations, found time to deliver their judgment on the Presbyterian marriage question, and that judgment is *against* us. Doubtless, the House of Lords will, when *they* are quite at leisure, finally confirm the decision of the judges—but they must not be hurried. It is true that many a family in Ulster is at this moment uncertain whether they have been born in lawful wedlock or otherwise; and if otherwise, when it shall pleasure the legislature to pass an act, declaratory or enacting, to make their mothers honest women and themselves legitimate, or *quasi* legitimate. It is true also that, in the present unsettled state of the law, men are abandoning their wives and families; distrust and suspicion are taking up their abode in many a happy home; collateral relatives are greedily eyeing the possessions of those whose legitimacy is thus kept so long *sub judice*. All this may be so; but that august legislature of ours!—have they not the Canada wheat bill, the Bishop of Derry's limitation of actions bills, the apprehension of offenders bill, and so many other bills, to settle and pass? Even since this marriage question came into their court, what a mass of public business have they not disposed of? Have they not taken order, about the gates of Somnauth and Lord Ellenborough's proclamation?—have they not thanked Lord Ashburton for saving them from the Americans? Nay, have they not, by a might effort, with the single casting voice of a Lord Chancellor, thrown out the important dogs bill?

And shall we expect that we, obscure Presbyterians of Ulster, are to draw off their lordly attention from such weighty concerns, and fix them upon our petty family affairs?

Seriously—the Presbyterians are beginning to reflect upon this, and to ask themselves whether the reasonable wishes, the highest and dearest interests of so influential a body, *could* be so completely disregarded if our court of last resort were seated in Dublin, and were relived from the charge of legislating throughout the four quarters of the globe, and over all the degrees of latitude and longitude. But if it indeed be so, as some of the speakers in the General Assembly sitting in Belfast have plainly declared, that it is not merely neglect we have to complain of—if there be a settled purpose, on the part of the government and high church party, to crush Dissent and Presbyterianism altogether—then I would fain know on what support that government relies when Sir James Graham stands up in the House of Commons and announces their 'determination' to maintain the Legislative Union and the Irish church establishment. How long would they be able to maintain either one or the other if the Irish Presbyterians declared against them? Let the Presbyterian body throw their weight into the scale against those inviolable palladia of Sir James Graham's—already trembling in the balance—and neither church nor Union is worth one month's purchase. 'They are *determined*,' quoth he, to maintain the Legislative Union and the church establishment!—and what if we join now with our Catholic countrymen to say, '*we are determined* to have an end of them both.'

I believe this is not an improbable case. There is an agitation of the public mind in Ulster which is rapidly tending, nobody can doubt whither. Our thoughts are more and more recalled to the times when our fathers were not ashamed of the name of Irishmen, and even of *United Irishmen*. For all our devotedness to England since that sad time, we may now ask, *what has been our return?* Has our trade been fostered or even let alone? Have

our manufactures been encouraged or not discouraged? Has our religion been honoured, respected, or even exempted from contumely and insult? These questions require no answers.

It needed not this decision of the English judges to make *me* a Repealer. In 1798 my father was a United Irishman. I have been a Repealer since 1832; and my children shall be brought up in such principles that *whatever* form Irish nationality shall take in their day to resist English domination (if English domination survive till then), their place shall be on the side of their country. But I confess that I rejoice in every additional insult that is flung on Presbyterians by a British government. Let the present course of policy be persevered in a little longer, and Ulster will be as Irish as it was fifty years ago.

A Presbyterian Repealer.

The People's Food

***The Nation*, 25 October , 1845.**

The fatal disease that has attacked the Potato crop may at length be partly estimated, at least as to its extent; though what its ultimate effects may be remains a problem which time only can solve. It may now be stated with some appromixation to certainty that fully one-half of the crop, on which millions of our countrymen are half-starved every year, is this season totally destroyed, or in progress to destruction.

As to the *cause* of the rot, the most elaborate and satisfactory account we have yet seen is that given by the Commission of Agriculture of the Province of Groningen in their Report upon the disease affecting the Potato in the Netherlands, and read at a late meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland. They attribute it partly to the too rapid development of the plants this year, by reason of heat and moisture, and also in part to an unusual fog which covered the land on the twenty-first and twenty-second of July. We know not if such a fog were observed in this country at that time; but, indeed, an investigation of the exciting causes, though very important with a view to future precautions against the like, are of less present and pressing interest than the main questions, how far has the damage extended, and what practical remedies have been suggested and tried and found to answer, or otherwise.

The facts that may now be said to be ascertained are these: –

First.—There is not a county in Ireland in which the Potato-rot has not by this time appeared.

Second.—That in England and Scotland, in Holland and Belgium, and generally over the Continent of Europe, and in America—wherever, in short, potatoes are cultivated—the same disease has appeared to a greater or smaller extent.

Third.—That the disease is of the nature of putrefactive fermentation, accompanied by a *fungus*, or covering of parasitic cryptogamous plants; and that, therefore, the ordinary antiseptics—dryness and cold, salt, powdered lime, and chloride of lime, sprinkled over the potatoes when dug—are the first and most obvious method of preventing the spread of the distemper.

Fourth.—That early planted potatoes, which had finished their growth and arrived at maturity before the disease reached their neighbourhood, have been untouched by the rot, which seems to afford a kind of indication that the disease has by this time reached its limits, growth having now stopped even in the uninfected late potatoes.

Fifth.—That the sound parts of partially spoiled potatoes, the dark coloured portions being carefully removed, may be safely eaten; but that the black parts are very unwholesome, or even deadly.

Sixth.—That blackened potatoes, which are not quite rotten, may still be turned into wholesome food by making starch of them—a process which extracts the *fecula*, or farinaceous part of the tuber, and gets rid of the fibrous tissues.

A difference of opinion still exists as to the propriety of digging out potatoes so soon as the disease has appeared in the fields, or leaving them in the ground. The latter course is recommended by the Groningen Commission; yet some practical agriculturists in this country advise immediate digging. It seems, however, admitted that potatoes which are dug out, *if not very carefully binned*, with layers of very dry mould between them, had better been left in the ground.

We publish in another place extracts from various local papers, and suggestions of practical farmers, for which it is hardly necessary to entreat a careful perusal.

So much as to the mode of dealing with the potatoes themselves; but, with all the precautions that can be taken, and all the skill and science that can be applied, if it be really so that half the potato crop is lost, the serious question arises—how are the People to live until another crop is ready for use? and the not less-serious questions—how is that next crop to be produced? from what seed—on what ground?

As to the mode of securing wholesome seed, and on killing what infection may remain in the soil, we may surely expect sound practical instructions from the eminent agricultural chemists whom the Government have commissioned to investigate the subject scientifically. It may, however, we suppose, be for the present assumed that the most effectual enemy to the rot, in every shape, will be lime, in some one of its combinations. Whatever remains of the fungus may be in the ground, would certainly be destroyed by sprinkling or drenching the soil with chloride of lime; and that preparation, we apprehend, could be manufactured cheaply and abundantly enough to permit its general application.

Still the question remains as to the means of making the two ends of this season meet. From various parts of the country the letters of our correspondents give a gloomy enough picture of the popular feeling. One gentleman, writing of the county Meath, speaks of many 'families of the peasantry who have been working all the year round for their acre or half acre of conacre, and have, consequently, paid in advance, and the crop a failure.' And he says 'it is really heart-rending to hear them speak of the misery likely to ensue; if something be not done, and immediately, to allay their well-grounded fears, it is fearful to think what consequences may arise hereafter.'

Another, writing from a southern county, tells us plainly, 'it is high time for the leaders of the People to take this subject into consideration, and apply some *prompt* remedy. Our old motto of "Patience and Perseverance" will not do now, as no one can or will have patience to persevere in starving; and I have reason to know, from the way in which the People feel at present, that if those to whom they look for advice and relief do not promptly afford it, they will fight themselves; as, come what may, the People won't starve.'

We fully agree with this correspondent in his slender expectations of aid from 'the English Government, with their Commissioners and Chemists, who indulge in learned speculations on the cause of the calamity, while they leave us to feel its *effects*.' But, as to the landlords, we earnestly hope he makes an erroneous estimate of their disposition to alleviate the distresses of their poor tenants. He is inclined to believe 'that they would first, if they could, force their tenants to sell their corn to pay their rents and then go and spend it where they did before, and leave the people to manage, as best they might, during the famine which *must* ensue if the corn is removed from the country.'

Surely there are not many landlords who would take so heartless a view of the case. Yet, looking to the past conduct of many of them, what is there to expect?

One word to the landlords. Do they, or can they, expect that during the ensuing season their tenants who find it hard in ordinary years to pay their rent *and live*, will be able to meet them at the gale days as usual? Can they hope if the ordinary driving and grinding system be pursued in this cruel year, that agrarian outrage, even of a more combined and extensive character than we have yet seen, will not stalk, in blood and terror, over the land, leading to a general disorganisation of society and reign of terror which it is fearful to think of. Once for all, let some effective and simultaneous step be taken by the land proprietors of this island such

as may convince the terrified People that they are not watched over by enemies, and *set* by beasts of prey—or, Irish landlordism has reached its latter days, and will shortly be with the feudal system and other *effete* institutions, in its grave.

We have not touched upon this subject in relation to the exporting of food to foreign countries, which in other years is almost the only commerce of Ireland. Some Continental States, especially Belgium, have prohibited the carrying of grain, meal, or flour, out of the country; a course which, however objectionable under ordinary circumstances, and in point of abstract theory, yet may become sometimes absolutely necessary, when a calamity like the present occurs. Of this, however, we must not think. We have no domestic government or legislature to provide such a remedy; and, as for the English government, is not Ireland their store-farm? To prohibit themselves from importing food from hence would be like a man making a covenant with himself, in a season of scarcity, not to have recourse to his own barn. So long as this island is a 'foreigner's farm' *that* remedy is out of the question.

We earnestly invite our correspondents to give us all the local intelligence they can glean, and to send such suggestions as may be found useful in their respective districts.

The Detectives

***The Nation*, 8 November, 1845.**

What hideous rumours are these, which begin to affright the land, which are planting suspicion amongst neighbours, suspicion of each other and of the Government which ought to protect and not to ensnare them, which make men wear masks and breathe an atmosphere of lies, and look on each other with an evil eye. Over what pit-falls are we walking? While famine is scowling at our doors are there enemies watching our every footstep?

Read the letter we publish elsewhere from a person named FLINT, an ex-Inspector of Police, to the *Freeman's Journal*. He is a dismissed officer; and, so far, his information is suspicious. Yet, *if* it be true—and whether it be or not the People shall know—if such things, indeed, be—then dismissal is the test of an honest Policeman; then truth and honour cannot abide under those blue coats, far less under the uniform of their superiors, the Police Commissioners.

Think what are the charges made here. That a villain, named MULLINS, cherished and rewarded for his villainy, was in the year 1842 sent to the North of Ireland, *to make Ribbonmen*, that he took (in the discharge of this 'special duty') the Ribbon oaths, and induced others to take them (having previously sworn, as a Policeman, not to take the oath of any Secret Society)—that he afterwards prosecuted and transported his own Ribbonmen—that his absence in the North was concealed by an official lie, which was written in the order-book of his division—that when

he returned from his campaign he was rewarded in proportion to the criminals he had made and punished—that this, and similar 'special duty,' is constantly imposed on the Police, and that they are always rewarded in proportion to their success.

Horrible suspicions of this kind have been growing in the public mind. CARLETON's dreadful story of 'Rody the Rover,' has strengthened and extended them. The People are beginning to fear that the Irish Government is merely a machinery for their destruction; that for all the usual functions of a Government, this Castle-nuisance is altogether powerless; that it is unable or unwilling to take a single step for the prevention of famine—for the encouragement of manufacturers or providing fields for industry, and is only active in promoting, by high premiums and bounties, the horrible manufacture of crime!

Is this true? Will the Commissioners say whether all this 'special duty' system exists—whether it exists with their knowledge and sanction; and, if yea, then will the Irish Secretary speak out and tell us if *this* be really the business of his office?

In any case, through some channel or other, the People must know, ought to insist upon knowing the truth or the falsehood of these charges. From the Commissioners, from the secretary, we hardly expect any voluntary explanation. Possibly some Parliamentary enquiry may extract it from the Government; if not, some popular agency will surely drag it forth, perhaps too roughly, to the day-light.

Threats of Coercion

***The Nation*, 22 November, 1845.**

If the Government which afflicts this country appears to some apathetic on the vital question of providing food for a People threatened with starvation, or suffering them to purchase it for themselves—if no active measures be in contemplation to give employment upon the many public works that lie neglected, to develop the obvious and wide fields of industrial enterprise that lie untilled—still let no man say we have not an active and a vigilant Government. The commercial ports, indeed, may not be opened to admit food; but there is hot haste in the dock-yards, at the naval stations everything is being put in readiness. There may be no energy displayed in procuring labourers for public works; but there is great request for shipwrights and engineers at all Government arsenals. To feed hungry mouths there is no sort of hurry; but the Prime Minister has declared, by his amanuensis of the *Morning Herald*, that 'law must be vindicated and sedition crushed.'

Yes—once more the growl of England's dog of war begins to sound across the Irish sea. Their criminal prosecution against a nation of conspirators turned out (how could it else?) one of the signalest failures—their crafty policy of disunion and corruption, though apparently too successful for a time in producing irritation and division, has also fallen far short of the vital part at which it was aimed. The one, all-absorbing, all-combining question of Irish nationality—of home-legislation—of

REPEAL—is still the question of questions. Domestic Government is now, as ever, the one great want of seven millions of People.

And so the brutal throats of the enemy's thirst bloodhounds have opened to bay upon us again. Parliament, it seems, will meet a month before its usual time—not, we may be sure, with any object friendly to us—not to expedite our railway business; for that, according to their stupid rules, cannot be considered before a certain day—not to open the ports; a landlord legislature cannot brook *that*—no; but to consider whether the voice of Ireland may yet be safely choked and her hands pinioned, and her opening eyes quenched in blood.

Thus we interpret the language of Sir ROBERT PEEL in the columns of the *Morning Herald* and *Standard*, the latter of which announces to us, as its view of the advantages of Irish railways, that every part of Ireland will soon be 'within six hours of the garrison of Dublin.'

And be it so. If there be any one thing more than another now essential to the progress and speedy success of the cause of Ireland, it is external violence, or the insolent threat of such. Let war streamers once more throng our harbours—let the land again bristle with bayonets, and proclamations thunder from the Castle—let Insurrection Acts be hung over our heads and law-officers come forth in all their parchments; and in one week both friend and foe may measure what length of stride our cause has made since this time twelvemonth. It is good for us that the instinctive insolence of our enemies should sometimes recall us to our sober senses, and enable us to see how petty are the collateral disputes that have seemed to divide us, and how grand, how proud, how sacred is the Nationhood we have sworn to win for our country, and leave in the guardianship of our children.

Then welcome war-streamers, welcome Coercion Acts, and Castle Proclamations, and Queen's Bench Prosecutions—let troops, if they can be spared, be concentrated upon our shores from all the four winds;

another marked and distinct step in our national progress will have been made, and next year will see us nearer—nay, within grasp—of our mighty goal.

For actual measures of coercion, all Ireland laughs at that coward threat. The military uses (or abuses) of railways are tolerably well understood; but it might be useful to promulgate through the country, to be read by all Repeal Wardens in their parishes, a few short and easy rules, as to the mode of dealing with railways in case of any enemy daring to make a hostile use of them. The bold Hollanders once prevented their country from being overrun by French armies by laying it under water—they opened the embankments, and admitted the sea, and in one day those fertile plains, with all their waving corn, were a portion of the stormy German Ocean; and railways, though inconceivably valuable to any People as highways of commerce, yet were better dispensed for a time than allowed to become a means of transport for invading armies.

A hint on this subject may be thought enough; but we see no objection to speaking plainly; and, therefore, we give a few practical views, which may be improved as engineers turn their attention to the subject.

First, then, every railway station within five miles of Dublin could in one night be totally cut off from the interior country. To lift a mile of rail, to fill a perch or two of any cutting or tunnel, to break down a piece of an embankment, seem obvious and easy enough.

Second—The materials of railways, good hammered iron and wooden sleepers,—need we point out that such things may be of use in other *lines* than assisting locomotion.

Third—Troops upon their march by rail may be conveniently met with in divers places. HOFER, with his Tyroliens, could hardly desire a deadlier ambush than the brinks of a deep cutting upon a railway. Imagine a few hundred men lying in wait upon such a spot, with masses of rock and trunks of trees ready to roll down—and a train or two advancing with

a regiment of infantry, and the engine panting near and nearer, till the polished studs of brass on its front are distinguishable, and its name may nearly be read; 'Now, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!—now—.'

But 'tis a dream. No enemy will dare put us to realise these scenes. Yet, let all understand, what a railway may and what it may *not* do.

The Oregon—Ireland.

***The Nation*, 6 December, 1845.**

On the shores of the Pacific Ocean, six thousand miles from England, lies a vast, bare, untilled, and almost uninhabited country, ranged over by a few tribes of hunting Indians, and looking out upon a mighty ocean, whose waters are seldom disturbed by a ship's keel. No subjects of the English crown reside in it—no revenue is derived from it; and it is so distant and so ill-adapted for a commercial settlement as to offer few temptations to emigrants from these countries.

Ireland is within sight of the British shores, has eight millions of inhabitants, who pass for British subjects, is worth to Great Britain (under the present arrangement) in money and value, a great many millions by the year, is fertile in soil, and so situated upon the Atlantic high-way as to invite the commerce of all the world.

Again, the Oregon is at present, with respect to England, just as it stood thirty years ago. The Hudson's Bay fur-traders are driving their trade as usual; and, save some loud vaunting in which the journals of the United States have indulged, there is nothing to attract the special attention of our governors thither.

Ireland proclaims herself to be on the brink of a dreadful famine; her whole social frame is out of joint—she is crying aloud to that Legislature which has assumed the office of governing her, entreating that they would either actually *govern*, or admit their incapacity for it—that they would either perform the ordinary duties of a Legislature, or, once for all,

abdicate their —?[1]

Such seems to be the relative importance of Oregon and Ireland, and their relative claims at the present moment upon the attention of Government. Well, there have been frequent and lengthened Cabinet Councils held of late—more than usually earnest consultation amongst the QUEEN'S advisers; and Parliament, it is nearly certain, will meet some weeks earlier than was customary. And what is the subject of so much anxious deliberation?—the motive of summoning Parliament so hastily? Why, 'it is understood' that our relations with America—that the Oregon question, the Whig or Tory ministry question—*any* question, but the pressing, vital, terrible question, of Ireland—forms the subject discussion. Or if, amongst the rumours that transpire through the press, the name of Ireland occurs, as forming an item in the deliberations of our governors, it is with some dark hint like this—'The militia are to be embodied; through the counties of England they are to be called to arms, not by ballot, but by tuck of drum—and their destination is *Ireland*.'

Thus, amidst the urgent business of securing ports on the Pacific, of providing ships to bombard the American cities, and of out-manoeuvring Lord JOHN RUSSELL, the only Irish question seems to be—how can she be most effectually kept down? While the blessings of British civilization are being forced upon New Zealand, and India, and Oregon—while two cunning quacks are fighting out their claims to Downing-street—the *government* of Ireland seems likely to come at last to simple military occupation—to the court-martial, the gibbet, and the bayonet. So much of the 'glorious constitution' will be left us still.

But in the rapid progress which affairs are making to that consummation, we cannot but see hope for our country. The present machinery of Irish government is fast becoming, in the eyes of all parties,

1 *Transcriber's note*: Illegible—most likely 'stations'.

palpably inadequate to do its work. The question of Whig or Tory, so vital in England, seems to have lost its significancy here; Irish interests, as distinct from English, or even as *against* English, are assuming a tangible shape; and, while England is bent on gaining Oregon, or conquering New Zealand, Irishmen of all sections are beginning to perceive that they have a country to win at home—that a Government of Ireland has other problems to solve than what is the *minimum* of beggarly 'boons' that will content her, and of military and police that will keep her under.

Nay, from this Oregon question itself who fails to see a dawn of hope arising? Who can forget that the cause of Ireland has been, ere now, brought to issue on the American continent—that it was to *us*, as well as to General GATES, BURGOYNE surrendered his army at Saratoga—that WASHINGTON, at York-town, delivered over Lord CORNWALLIS and his troops, bound hand and foot to the Irish nation.

If there is to be a war between England and the United States, 'tis impossible for us to pretend sympathy with the former. We shall have allies, not enemies, on the banks of the Columbia; and distant and desolate as are those tracts beyond the Rocky Mountains, even there may arise the opportunity for demanding and regaining our place among the nations.

Review of Carlyle's '*Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*'

***The Nation*, 10 January, 1846.**

A book to be opened with reverence—to be read with earnest, deep attention—to be dissented from on no light grounds—and then only with reluctance and pain. The greatest writer, and profoundest philosopher, now living upon English soil, with eloquence, the like of which has not uttered itself in English speech since John Milton's time, deals in this book with the most glorious and terrible epoch of his country's history, and the divine (or diabolic) man, who is at last recognised, and will through all time be acknowledged, as the type of that heroic (or fanatic, or fanatico-heroic) age of England.

To English historic literature this is a precious accession; and the inhabitants of that country will do well to study it with what earnestness yet remains amongst them, in hope of curing to some extent that loathsome disease, half mealy-mouthed cant, and half sneering facetiousness, which is fast eating away the old heart of England. England uses not now the speech that Shakespeare spake, nor 'the faith and morals holds that Milton held;' nor yet any other assignable faith or morals, nor even any very significant speech.

> 'The age of the Puritans,' says this, their modern expositor and apostle, 'is not extinct only and gone away from us, but it is as if fallen beyond the capabilities of Memory herself; it is grown unintelligible, what we may call incredible. Its earnest purport awakens now no resonance in our frivolous hearts. We understand, not

> even in imagination, one of a thousand of us, what it ever could have meant. It seems delirious, delusive; the sound of it has become tedious as a tale of past stupidities. Not the body of heroic Puritanism only, which was bound to die, but the soul of it also, which was and should have been, and yet shall be immortal, has for the present passed away.'

And truly not without a solemn and awe-struck sense of the boldness of his enterprise, does our 'vehement friend,' as he names himself, venture upon the task of disentombing this old Puritanism, and presenting it and its stern preacher once more in visible shape before men's eyes. Hear him again:—

> 'Behold here the final evanescence of formed human things; they had form; but they are changing into sheer formlessness. Ancient human speech itself has sunk into unintelligible maundering. This is the collapse, the etiolation of human features into mouldy blank; dissolution; progress towards utter silence and disappearance; disastrous, ever-deepening Dusk of gods and men! Why has the living ventured thither down from the cheerful light across the Lethe-swamps and tartarean Phlegethons onwards to these baneful halls of Disand the Three-headed Dog? Some destiny drives him. It is his sins, I suppose—perhaps it is his love—strong as that of Orpheus for the lost Eurydice, and likely to have no better issue.'

Our impatient friend seems almost to despond; yet bravely he does venture down, and 'fronts Cerberus and Dis,' and not to no purpose; for in these old letters of his Highness Oliver, with the editor's own most eloquent (if somewhat sybilline) annotations—reverential as the exegetical commentary of some Adam Clarke or Scott, upon the Holy Scripture—he does, indeed, present to that frivolous English nation a true Epos of their most heroic age.

Or, these two volumes may be regarded as an elaborate answer to the important query—*should Cromwell have a statue?*—a statue, namely, amongst the kings of England, in their new Houses of Parliament. And viewing them thus, they do distinctly prove (to the mind of this present reviewer) that this *questio vexata* must be answered most emphatically in the negative. *No*; Cromwell ought *not* to have a statue—on the simple ground that such a juxta-position would introduce the kings of England into much higher society than they have any kind of title to aspire to; for, independent of his enmity to kings and kingships, overlooking the fact that this mission was to bind their kings in chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, Oliver Cromwell belongs to that higher rank of mankind of which a succession has been kept up in the world, and which, by God's providence, will never fail—a succession more august than any regal dynasty, when Tudor, Plantagenet, Bourbon, Brandenburgh, or Brunswick. Those men—namely, who have arisen from time to time to prove to all the earth that Manhood is greater than Heraldry—those men and their works stand as eternal mementos, or rather as charters and muniments of titles, of the indefeasible manhood of man; and constant reference to them shall prevent the Soul from being altogether smothered and choked out of the world by what our friend call 'Flunkeyism, Cant, Cloth-worship, or whatever ugly name it have.'

Measure the value and force of Cromwell, by the instruments he employed to govern withal—and consider what a distance there is between his Secretary of state and any functionary of that office since—what a distance! from John Milton down to Sir James Graham! Let the human imagination try if it can conceive that Melesigenes, in his Home-office, manipulating the folds of post letters—say the letters of Mazarin to a Frenchman in London—softening the seals, and adroitly re-folding, re-sealing, and delivering them, as if nothing had happened! Quite another kind of secretary was Cromwell's—quite other kind of officers, in general

than any 'illustrious person' of our day would employ; and we od not find that he had any Garter-King-at-Arms at all! To erect a statue to this man amongst the legitimate Edwards, and Henrys, and Georges of England, were a strange way of writing history in marble.

A precious accession, we say, is this book to *English* history; and looking at it, and at the hero of it, from the English side of the channel, our estimate of the whole matter were what we have ventured to intimate above; and we do heartily wish that Thomas Carlyle had not undertaken to 'elucidate' that portion of Cromwell's letters which relates to Ireland and his wars here. Why could he not have printed these letters without any exegetical commentary at all?—so would he have caped the grave charge of undertaking to instruct mankind upon matters of which he is (why not say it?) profoundly ignorant. He does not know the *facts* of Irish history—he has not read books upon the subject—has not formed to himself the faintest conception of the Irish war; so difficult is it for the English mind to admit the fact, which, however, is indisputable, that the Irish are one *nation*, and the English another, or to view Irish affairs by the light of that fact, and not otherwise.

Our vehement friend even admits his ignorance. 'The history of the Irish war,' he says, 'is, and for the present must continue, very dark and indecipherable to us.' Why must it continue? Oh, *noster* Thomas!—if thou wouldst only read books. And, again, he says—

> 'The history of it does not form itself into a picture, but remains only as a huge blot—an indiscriminate blackness, which the human memory cannot willingly charge itself with!'

If such be the state of our friend's information upon the subject, were it not better to be silent *on that point*, than to say *this*, for instance—

> '*November* 1st news came to London, to the re-assembled Parliament, that an Irish rebellion, already grown to be an Irish Massacre, had broken out. An Irish Catholic imitation of the late Scotch Presbyterian achievements in the way of "religious liberty"—one of the best models and one of the worst imitations ever seen in this world.'

Now, suppose we admit that the Scottish Covenant, by which they engaged themselves to *permit* no religious worship but their own, was an 'achievement in the way of religious liberty,' nothing could be further from, an imitation of it, successful or unsuccessful, than the war that broke out in Ulster in 1641. In that transaction 'religious liberty,' if an element at all, was a very inferior and secondary consideration. That Ulster war, in short, arose from a unanimous movement of the plundered Irish inhabitants who had been driven from their lands thirty years before, at the 'plantation' of Ulster, to repossess themselves of their own property, finding that they were at length strong enough to do it. And it was not a 'Rebellion,' but the renewal of a national war against the most outrageous tyranny and robbery that any country ever suffered. And as for the 'Massacre' all writers, who have with honesty and due information examined the facts, do admit and proclaim that the plan of the resumption was simply to drive the robbers away, and shed no blood, save what might be necessary, to overcome resistance to the business they had in hand, and which they felt they had an absolute right, at whatever risk of bloodshed, to effect. This was the 'Irish Rebellion grown to be an Irish Massacre.'

But, coming to the period of Cromwell's accursed invasion of Ireland, we find Mr. Carlyle saying, 'This [Cromwell's] is the first king's face poor Ireland ever saw—the first *friend's* face, little as it recognises him—poor Ireland!'

Here universal Ireland and Thomas Carlyle are at issue; and, once for all, we side with Ireland. We, being Irish, and not English, do hold to the opinion that Oliver Cromwell was strictly and literally a curse to this unfortunate country, inflicted upon us, doubtless, for our sins—that, instead of being, as our vehement friend preaches, a 'God's message,' his whole mission and teaching here were a genuine gospel of the Devil, and an authentic emanation from the Gehenna of Fire. By this we mean (omitting and discountenancing all 'inarticulate shrieking' over Cromwell's bloodthirstiness) that what he came to do here was impracticable—that his Puritan Evangel, however acceptable in England and Scotland, was to Ireland an abomination; because Ireland had a Faith antagonistic to it, incompatible with it, and strong enough to resist it, to conquer it; a Faith stronger than death; and, therefore, that all his slaughters and burnings—while he thought, possibly, that he was wielding the sword of the Lord and of Gideon—while he thought himself verily commissioned by Heaven, to slay Og, King of Bashan, and Sihon, King of the Amorites, and to smite the Amalekites, hip and thigh—were only so much driftless and brutal butchery; that, further, the *event* has proved this Puritan *avatar*, in Ireland, to have been no radiance from heaven, but a lurid glare from the bottomless pit—no God's truth, but a devil's *he*; because no good ever came of it:—Puritanism never throve here, and never will thrive, and of all that Cromwell Invasion the whole result has been bitter hatred (a deep and wide-spreading root of bitterness that may bear bloody fruit yet)—that, and a certain residuum of the robber army of Roundheads, whose descendants are named 'Cromwellians,' and have been ever since noted as the stupidest and most anti-Irish of the thick-headed, top-booted *squirearchy* of this country.

But Thomas Carlyle tells us that, by Cromwell and his Cromwellians, 'the truth was spoken to them, so as they had never before seen it since they were a nation;' and he believes that but for the 'Ever blessed Restoration'

Ireland would have soon become a very exemplary nation of crop-eared Roundheads, a perfect Puritan Little Zion and Paradise of 'Swaddling Poundtexts.' Only hear him:—

> 'Ireland, under this arrangement, would have grown up gradually into a sober, diligent, drab-coloured population—developing itself most probably in some form of Calvinistic Protestantism. For there was hereby a Protestant *Church* in Ireland, of the most irrefragable nature, preaching daily in all its actions and procedure a real gospel of veracity, of piety, of fair-dealing, and good order to all men; and certain other 'Protestant Churches of Ireland,' and unblessed real-imaginary entities, of which the human soul is getting weary, had of a surety never found footing there! But the Ever-blessed Restoration came upon us. All that arrangement was torn up by the roots, and Ireland was appointed to develop itself as we have seen. Not in the drab-coloured Puritan way—in what other way is still a terrible dubiety to itself and us.'

As to the *facts* of Cromwell's campaign in Ireland, the reader will not find in Mr. Carlyle's book, what is nevertheless a fact, that in Drogheda and Wexford, his hero not only 'put the garrison to death,' as he mildly phrases it, but butchered the townspeople, men, women, and children. It may be, in our sanguinary friend's opinion, quite immaterial whether he did so or not; but let the truth be told. In Drogheda, Clarendon tells us, 'he put every man that related to the garrison, and all the citizens, who were Irish, man, woman, and child, to the sword.'[2] *Philopater Irenaeus*, a contemporary history of that war, to which Sir James War gives a high character for veracity, says, 'Necnon universis Catholicis praesidiariis

2 Clarendon's History, vi, 395.

militibus, *et civibus ad quatuor ferè millia* miserum in modum trucidatis.'[3] All which, Cromwell informs us, in one of the letters published in this book, 'is a righteous judgement of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood,' alluding, in *his* ignorance, to what the English writers called the 'Massacre of 1641'—a transaction in which not one of all those murdered citizens had act or part—on the contrary, Drogheda was itself besieged by Sir Phelim O'Neill and his northern Irish; and if *he* had got admission, he would assuredly have murdered them seven years before Cromwell had the killing of them.

And at Wexford, he made, says Carte, nearly as great a slaughter as at Drogheda: 'Universis propè *vibus* trucidatis,' says the Philopater Irenaeus:—of whom two hundred women[4] were slain at the foot of a cross in the market-place, whither they had betaken themselves as to a sanctuary. This is the famous massacre of the women of Wexford, which we have seen denied repeatedly by an English newspaper (the *Standard*), the writer of whom tells us that Lingard is the only authority for the story; although MacGeohegan had stated it nearly a hundred years before, and the local tradition, no light authority, has told it with horror ever since. Indeed Cromwell himself, in his letter detailing the 'Mercy' of Wexford says:—

> 'When they were come into the Market-place, the enemy making a stiff resistance, our forces brake them; *and then put all to the sword that came in their way*.'

The tradition, and the Catholic historians do no more than ascertain the fact that of those who 'came in their way,' two hundred were women.

3 Phil, pren. 210.

4 *Deux cents femmes*. L'Abbe MacGeohegan, published, at Amsterdam, in 1763.

'Rose-water surgeons,' Mr. Carlyle admits, 'might have tried it otherwise.' We go further, and say that in all the annals of human warfare, there is nothing recorded more atrocious and detestable than this. However, the Commentator continues, speaking of Drogheda—

> 'To our Irish friends, we ought likewise to say that this garrison of Tredah consisted mostly of Englishmen. Perfectly certain this; and, therefore, let the "bloody hoof of the Saxon," &c., forbear to continue itself on that matter, at its peril. Idle blustering and untruth of every kind lead to the like terrible results in these days as they did in those.'

Does our blood-thirsty friend mean to threaten us with another Drogheda?

Well, it is certain, that Sir Arthur Aston, and probably most of his officers, were either English or Anglo-Irish—but the townsmen and their wives, and children, and the friars who 'were all,' says Cromwell, 'knocked on the head promiscuously, but two'—and the thousand persons (presumably of both sexes) who fled for refuge to the great church and were all slain there—what of these? Oh! *noster* Thomas! on that transaction 'the bloody hoof of the Saxon' must ever rest; the waters of the sea would not wash out that red track; no torrent of fiery hero-worshipping eloquence will burn it away. It stands there, and will stand, one of the grimmest items in the account that lies open between us and England, awaiting the day of settlement.

Thus far we, being Irish and not English, have deemed it right to indicate our view of Cromwell's relation to Ireland. Yet, we hardly blame our vehement hero-worshipping friend for misunderstanding our history. To an English mind this seems inevitable. Yet we do wish he had not written at all upon the Irish part of the business, but simply printed the letters, and let them speak for themselves. The English Cromwell he knows,

and can interpret, with seeing eye and understanding heart; Cromwell in Ireland, and the matters he had to deal with here, are a mystery to the historian, as they were to the hero. Ireland was to Cromwell a blind promiscuous shambles and place of sculls; to his enthusiastic editor it is merely a blackness and a blot.

We have said all we had to say upon this extraordinary book. No book we remember to have read has pained us so much; for, indeed, Thomas Carlyle has long been our venerated and beloved preceptor—at whose feet we have long studied and learned there several things that our 'guide, philosopher, and friend' never thought to teach us. Perhaps, the most remarkable thing about Carlyle's writings is their power of suggesting thoughts that the writer never contemplated; fructifying after a sort he never expected; so that amongst his most ardent admirers and constant students there are, probably, few who agree in his peculiar views.

The seed he has sown sometimes grows up a very strange plant in his eyes. For instance the most zealous Catholic layman of our acquaintance dates his conversion from Protestantism from the time that he earnestly studied Carlyle. Yet is Carlyle strongly anti-Catholic. The writer of these lines believes that he never would have been, as he is, a determined Repealer and Irish Nationalist, but for his reverent study of the same great writer. Yet Carlyle considers Repeal an insane dream, and Ireland (God forgive him!) a nation of very poor creatures.

This publication of documents, it seems, is only preliminary to a more regular history of Cromwell and his times. Will our anti-Irish friend re-consider the views of Irish affairs, and try to gain some insight into them, or failing that, will he let them alone, and leave our history altogether to some Irish pen?

Famine

***The Nation*, 14 February, 1846.**

Nearer, nearer, wears the day that will see fell hunger stalking, with plague in its train, over this devoted land. From almost every county in Ireland come reports of more and more urgent alarm and terror, as the earthed-up potatoes are uncovered and found masses of loathsome rottenness.

From Clare, from Galway, from Meath, we hear of calculations of how much of the people's food remains eatable, and how long it will last. In one district they reckon that there is enough sound food to sustain the population for a week—in others, perhaps a fortnight.

And the men of Clare may comfort themselves in the knowledge that some time in the course of the ensuing spring or summer perhaps one small fishing pier will be commenced upon their coast. Galway, we learn, is getting an additional military force; their port lies wide upon for the food to *go out*; and if no provisions are coming in, there is at least a war steamer in their harbour. Then as for Westmeath, a man was to be hanged there yesterday; if there is to be no adequate means of supplying them with food, they shall, at worst, have plenty of justice.

They are debating the question of free trade in parliament just now; and the state of the potato crop in Ireland furnishes orators on this side and on that with many plausible topics of discourse by which they may embarrass the Premier, or sustain his views, as the case may be. Meanwhile the Duke of NORFOLK prescribes curry-powder, and the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland assures the commercial world that there are absolutely none of *last year's* potatoes now remaining in store in that part of the 'united kingdom' committed to this government. Oh, Heaven! do these men *know* what potatoes are—what famishing men are? Have they any conception even yet that there may soon be certain millions of human beings in Ireland having nothing to eat; and that the problem will be, what to do with them? A problem which must be solved, and that right soon, or it will solve itself in some terrible manner?

Political Economy for Ireland

***The Nation*, 28 February, 1846.**

By the postscript to Mr. Butt's Preface, dated 31st January, 1846, we find that this publication was not undertaken with any reference to the discussions on protection which now occupy the English Legislature—that, in fact, the book was in type weeks before the declaration of the ministerial intentions.

But the subject of the Lectures is so apposite to those discussions, and, what is of more importance, that subject is treated with so especial a regard to Ireland, and particularly to *Irish famine*, that it is well worth while to examine what is put forward by such an authority.

The question of protection, or no protection, Mr. Butt insists, ought to be argued, like any other question of national policy, by estimating the advantages or disadvantages of it. There is no abstract right in the case. Commercial freedom has nothing in it one whit more sacred than personal freedom; yet the well-being of society requires various restrictions upon the latter. Protective duties are not necessarily an evil, any more than a protective police force. The question is, do the advantages preponderate?—is it worth while to submit to the restrictions by reason of any benefits which society reaps from it?

These questions, again, the author thinks, must be answered for each country—not upon any universal principles laid down by political economists, but with reference to the circumstances of that country, to the nature of its produce, to the amount and actual working of the duty.

Now, to come to Ireland. Our trade is exportation of provisions to England, and importation of manufactures from England. It has long been quite 'free;' but Ireland is one of the most fertile countries in the world, and her people are 'the worst fed, the worst clothed,' &c.

Here is a state of things which at least justifies the inquiry, whether any legislative interference would help to cure it; and Mr. Butt grapples with the question boldly, and we think conclusively. Legislative measures to force Irish manufactures into existence, or rather to revive them, being out of the question, so long as our laws are made by those *who eat the food that is taken away from us*; Mr. Butt recommends, as the next best thing, that a voluntary *preference* should be given to articles of home manufacture by those who have money to spend—even although, for a time, the rich might have to put up with worse hats, coarser cloth, inferior carriages, &c.

He recommends this, not as a benevolent sentimentalist, but strictly as a political economist. He insists that, in a country situated like Ireland, such a preference (such *protection*, if we had a legislature) would increase the national wealth, and eventually enrich all classes of the community; and his reasoning is shortly as follows.

The whole revenue of Ireland is derived from the cultivation of the soil; it is out of the agricultural produce (which we shall call *bread*) that all our people, rich and poor, derive their subsistence, as well as their luxuries. The wealth of a rich man is only his control over so much of this *bread* (to eat it, to send it across the sea, to burn or destroy it,) as his yearly income represents. If he employ artizans of his own country to minister to his luxury and taste, the persons so employed receive some of that *bread* as wages—it is eaten in Ireland; but national wealth consists not in what a country *produces*, but what it *uses*; and every pound paid for a foreign manufacture takes twenty shillings' worth of bread out of the mouths of the people here, and gives it to be eaten by foreigners. The

withdrawal of bread to pay for foreign luxuries has precisely the same effect on the national wealth of Ireland as if the owner burned it, or, by a miraculously enlarged appetite, devoured it all.

And it is not true, as the Political Economists tell us, that if we export bread we get *value* in return. A diamond of one thousand pounds' price—a thousand pounds' worth of London jewellery—is *not* value *to this nation* for a thousand pounds' worth of corn. But what has the nation to do with it? (asks some disciple of Mill and MacCulloch) does not the man who sends away the corn get value, or what he thinks to be value—and is it not his affair? Why interfere with the natural course of trade, by which we send away our surplus produce, and take the produce of other countries in return? Consider the blessings of commerce, &c.

This opens the whole question. And we cordially approve of Mr. Butt's answer to it, which we give in his own words:—

> 'But it is said that this exportation is the disposal of our surplus produce, and, as such, is an advantage to the country. To this argument, gentlemen, there is but one answer which, in the present circumstances of our country, any man ought to give. *I know of no surplus produce until all our own people are fed*. The surplus produce of a country is that which it has to spare after supplying the necessary wants of all its own people. I use the words with deliberation, and with a deep and solemn sense of their import. The surplus produce of a country is that which remains for the rich to spend upon luxuries, after provision is made for supplying the necessities of all.'

The lecturer does not place the duty of supplying these necessities upon an eleemosynary ground; it is not that we ought to relieve the destitute, or are bound by humanity to succour the afflicted. But hear him again:—

'I do not hesitate, then, to say, that to the contemplation of the Christian moralist or economist, there can be no such thing as a surplus produce, until the wants of all classes in the country are supplied. The surplus produce—I will add, the disposable labour of a country—is that which, after providing for the wants—and I include in the wants, the reasonable comforts of all who are willing to give to society their labour—society may permit to be directed to the luxuries or the vanities of the rich. This is that portion of the income of the community which we have to spend upon matters of ornament, of taste, or of caprice. But the first care in the direction of the resources of the country, should be that all may be fed. The poor have their rights as well as the rich. Every man in this country is born a member of a great and powerful society; and we never hesitate to act towards him on the supposition that his being so born gives that society rights to be enforced against him. Equally true is it that he has a birthright by being born a member of society. One pennyworth of property he may not inherit; his parents may not leave him one foot of the earth on which he may freely walk — one chattel article that the conventional laws of society may permit him to call his own. All that he sees may be appropriated to others' use; but yet, as a member of our community, born by God's ordinance subject to its laws, and owing, independently of any choice of his own, an allegiance to its authority, he has a birthright as sacred and as indefeasible as the right by which the sovereign inherits the crown, the peer his privilege, or the lord of broad acres his estate. In the words of the greatest of political philosophers, he has "a right to all that society, with all its combinations of skill and capital can do in his favour." In the words of one greater than man — the words in which is recorded the primeval sentence of our race — a sentence which contains at once the hard lot of the labouring man, and the great charter of his rights — a charter prior to the authority of states or the rights of property, he has a right "IN THE SWEAT OF HIS BROW TO EAT BREAD."'

But he not only recognises the *right* of the people to be fed, and that comfortably, but as an economist he recommends, in order to secure to the people the benefit of that right, *the employment of native artizans*—the encouragement of home manufacture by voluntary preference, (or in a new order of things by legislative protection,) even although the rich would thereby be compelled to put up with an inferior article for a time.

In short, Mr. Butt's argument is precisely that of Dean Swift in the 'Drapier's Letters,' and of Bishop Berkeley in 'The Querist.' He despises and tramples under foot the modern doctrine of political economy, 'the proposition so often and so confidently laid down, that it must always be the interest of a country to buy its goods at the cheapest market, and sell them at the dearest, without reference to the question whether either market be the foreign or the home.'

This proposition is simply *not true*. The 'interests' of those who have money to spend in outlandish luxuries is *not* the interest of the country; and the cheapening of British or other foreign manufactures does not compensate for the removal of all the Christian food of the island to pay for them.

But as to the commercial relation between this country and England, the lecturer goes still further. Throughout he treats Ireland as one nation, and England as another; and the payment of so vast a rental to absentee proprietors living in England, he calls a 'subsidy'—an annual payment of so many millions which Ireland has to pay out of her national wealth *to another nation*; and, inasmuch as the vast export of corn is made in order to pay these rents, that corn, every grain of it, is as absolutely lost to this country as if it were thrown back into the sea. It goes away, and *nothing* comes back; the bread is eaten in England; the price of it is spent in England; and the advantage of this sort of 'commerce' is thus described by the sometime professor of Trinity College. It is well worth reading in itself, and also because of the quarter from which it comes:—

'No mistake could be greater, than to *argue from the mere fact of a country having a large export trade*, that it is therefore in a prosperous condition. In every case the mere fact of exportation is in its own nature an evil — it is the act by which the country parts with its wealth. It may, or it may not lead to greater wealth coming into the country in return, according to the circumstances under which it is sent away, but the advantage is in the returns; the act of exportation is, in itself, and without reference to its resulting importation, a loss. No mistake could be greater than to pause in the inquiry upon the simple fact, that we find a nation sending away its substance, and this is all an export trade can evidence. An island of slaves toiling under the lash, for the benefit of task-masters in another country, and retaining nothing for themselves but what the regulations of the driver allows them, would have their harbours filled with the vessels that were to carry away, to other countries, the products of their toil. Had the land of Goshen been separated from Egypt, by the sea, the children of Israel, according to this theory, would have carried on a very thriving export trade in the products of the brick-kiln, when they were bound to supply a certain quantity to their task-masters. Innumerable instances might be adduced of the absurdity of such reasoning. A country bound to pay a subsidy to a foreign state, would be most prosperously affected by such subsidy, if this argument be true. We have already seen, in the very case of Ireland an instance of its utter untruth. A large portion of the provisions that are annually exported from Ireland, is sent abroad, in the direct shape of a subsidy, to pay the rent of absentee landlords — as a debt, it is true, which by the rights of property we owe, and must justly pay — but with just as little advantage to the country from the act of exportation, as, in the case we have supposed, the Israelites would have derived from the exportation of their bricks.'

We are pleased to find that Mr. Butt does justice to the commercial views of our illustrious countryman, Bishop Berkeley, contained in 'The

Querist,' a work now universally ridiculed by those who call themselves political economists; but as we profess to be, like Mr. Butt, considerably behind our age on these points, we shall quote one or two of the good Bishop's questions, and supply them with answers such as we apprehend Swift, Berkeley, Doyle, and Butt, would give them:—

'Whether trade be not then on a right footing, when foreign commodities are imported in exchange for domestic superfluities?' *Yes*.
'Whether the quantities of beef, butter, wool, and leather, exported from this country, can be reckoned the superfluities of this country, when there are so many natives naked and famished?' *No*.
'Whether she would not be a very vile matron, and justly thought either mad or foolish, that should give away the necessaries of life from her naked and famished children, in exchange for pearls to stick in her hair, and sweetmeats to please her own palate?' *Surely*. A very vile matron; and the children and neighbours ought to take the purse from her, to allowance her, and, if necessary, to tie her up that she should not go abroad.
'Whether a nation be not a family?' *Yes*; but sometimes a family in which there are many step-children, and in which the mother is no better than she ought to be.
'Whether there be a people that so contrive to be impoverished by their trade, and whether we are not that people?' *Yes*; for the present we are that most unfortunate, most long-suffering, and most infatuated people.

One more extract from the Lectures:—

'I have stated to you that which is not, perhaps, strictly a portion of Political Economy — my own views of the labourer's right. I believe that social system to be the best, that country to be the most prosperous—I care not whether you call it the most wealthy or not — in which this right is the most

fully recognised. And all that I have said of the necessity and the possibility of counteracting, by some agency, the monopolizing power of wealth, is not confined to this or any other country. I believe this question to be the most important of all that relate to our modern social system. It is a question that concerns the rich as well as the poor. Sooner or later it will force itself upon the attention of those that are at ease, and be heard in the palaces of the proud. The inequalities of property we must have; but it is open to us to control the effects of these inequalities, so far as they affect the means of existence of any portion of our people. That one man should monopolize the labour of hundreds is an evil; but an evil inseparable from our present state of existence, and compensated for by the principle to which I have called your attention: but that one man should sweep from the surface of the land, upon which is located a starving population, the food that might give sustenance to hundreds — this is an evil which is not necessary to be borne — a form of the monopoly of wealth which brings with it no compensation. I will not say that it is a tyranny for which no right of property gives to the nation a warrant; but, I repeat, the right of the labouring man to earn his bread was a right that was chartered to our race before an acre of ground over the wide surface of the globe was claimed as property by man; and I am bold to repeat, that interference there must be, there ought to be, with the workings of that economic process by which matters so result that there are men in the land willing to work who cannot earn bread.'

We wish that we could quote the whole book. There is not one word of it in which we do not most heartily concur; but we are fully sensible that, in the hasty observations here offered, justice is by no means done to the close reasoning and impressive eloquence of these Lectures.

Several considerations cannot fail to arise out of the matters here treated, and the views taken of them by Mr. Butt. The habitual dearth of food in Ireland is on the verge of being aggravated to famine. The

wretched root that feeds our poor people is rotting off the face of the earth, and the Minister proposes to give us *more free trade*. The corn that grows on our own soil is leaving us daily, because those who produced it have no money to buy it, and keep it at home for their own food; and Sir Robert Peel says to us:—'Behold the fertile plains of Pomerania, the great Mississippi valley; they shall be your granaries and your magazines; Russia shall send you her wheat, and America her maize. Are not your ports open? Shall not the two hemispheres conspire to feed you, and pour their golden grain into your lap?'

We shall not pursue the topics suggested here. Enough that we have shown pretty clearly that whatever Ireland wants, it is *not* 'Free Trade.'

Here are the last words of the Book:—

> 'When I ask of you to look upon our country's unimproved resources, her unexplored treasures, her unemployed population, and still uncultivated fields, may I not, in the words of that illustrious philosopher, so many of whose questions I have quoted for you to day, pray of you seriously to reflect upon one more a problem, for which the century which has elapsed since it was proposed has, alas! found no solution?
> 'What hinders us Irish from exerting ourselves, using our hands and brains, doing something or other, man, woman, and child, like the other inhabitants of God's earth?'

Now, we think there is a solution to this question, and one which most of Mr. Butt's readers, if not himself, will feel no scruple in applying.

‘English Rule.’

***The Nation*, 7 March, 1846.**

Is England henceforth to rule Ireland by the laws or by the bayonet? This is a question which will soon press for an answer; and we only anticipate events in answering it here, and now—*By neither*.

Ireland hates English law, is disaffected towards English government, suspects, abhors the legislature which enacts those laws, the officers who administer them, and the military garrison which alone maintains them. Every day makes this breach wider—it will not close, *and it ought not*.

Then comes the other, the *last* alternative—the bayonet; and undoubtedly by a strong military occupation and stringent insurrection acts, a kind of *quasi* government may be carried on here for a time, provided a sufficient number of troops can be spared from the Eastern wars now raging, and the Western wars that threaten to break out. Gaols and halters, artillery and hangmen, may ‘pacificate’ for a little while—yet is the end coming.

There is a newspaper published in London called the *Examiner*, one of their ‘Liberal’ papers (to use a word by which one of the English factions designates itself). The number of that paper published on Saturday last contains an article remonstrating with their Government against the new Coercion Bill which it has proposed; and, after showing the hardship of transporting a farmer for overstaying sunset at his market, or for taking refuge in a public-house at nightfall lest he be found straying, this English journalist thus continues:—

> 'Can any one suppose a mode of rendering *English rule* more obnoxious, not merely to the lower, but to the middle class of Irish?'

The humane intercessor of the *Examiner* is plainly unconscious of the cool insolence of this language. The man means well: he says to his Government, 'Let us not trample these poor devils of Irish altogether down into the earth—let our yoke be somewhat easier, our burden only a little lighter upon them—let us not break utterly the bruised reed—'tis cruel, unmanly—all the world will cry shame upon us.' His idea is one of contemptuous compassion: his reasoning is the preamble of 'Martin's Act'—whereas it is expedient that the inferior animals should not be wantonly tortured.

We desire to know whether it is tolerable that we should remain subject to a country in which our very friends and advocates can use an argument like this. Even while they plead for us, they quietly take for granted the impossibility of a union upon equal terms between the two countries—coolly assume that the one is, and must remain, *under* the other—that the problem to be solved is not how Ireland is to be made a partaker in what they call their 'British Constitution,' but how 'English rule' is to be made endurable to her.

This very unconsciousness of the enormity involved in such an assumption, makes it the more enormous. If we found it in the columns of the *Times*, or *Chronicle*, or *Herald*, we should interpret it as the studied taunt of an enemy. Here it betrays a settled, deep-seated, and most heartfelt contempt.

Be it so. They have reason to despise us. For ages our antipathy to this same 'English rule' has been apparent—our writhing under it is continual and convulsive; yet here we are with the yoke about our necks to this day, galling and stinging as ever. We loathe their dominion, and we submit to

it. Outrage is followed by insult, and insult by robbery and bloodshed and *we*—why, we

> 'Must, like a whore, unpack our heart with words,
> And fall a-cursing!'

If we pursue this theme, we may say that which we ought not to say, at least for the present. But let us calmly examine what chance England has of perpetuating her rule here by the means which she appears likely to employ.

The Irish people, always half starved, are expecting absolute Famine day by day; they know that they are doomed to months of a weed-diet next summer—that 'hungry Ruin has them in the wind'—and they ascribe it, *unanimously*, not so much to the wrath of Heaven as to the greedy and cruel policy of England. Be it right or wrong, such is their feeling. They believe that the seasons as they roll are but ministers of English rapacity—that their starving children cannot sit down to their scanty meal but they see the harpy-claw of *England* in their dish. They behold their own wretched food melting in rottenness off the face of the earth; and they see heavy-laden ships, freighted with the yellow corn their own hands have sown and reaped, spreading all sail *for England*: they see it, and with every grain of that corn goes a heavy curse.

Here is one phase of Irish feeling that bodes ill for 'English Rule.'

Again—the people believe, no matter whether truly or falsely, that if they should escape the Hunger and the Fever, their lives are not safe from judges and juries. They do not look upon the law of the land as a terror to evil-doers and a praise to those who do well—they scowl on it as an engine of foreign rule, ill-omened harbingers of doom: they have a belief, universal throughout all Ireland, that while 'the judges' are in any county the sun never shines there. In short, Ireland is disaffected, and

every year, every day, adds to that disaffection and to the causes of it. We see no chance of the universal discontent being mitigated or changed; on the contrary, it grows fiercer and more reckless every day. We dislike the laws, we distrust the law-makers; we pray to Heaven to guard us from the law administrators.

But there is more yet. Hunger and hardship lead to crime—crime trifling in amount considering the desperate provocation, murders far less frightful than the terrible scenes of blood—those murders most foul, base, and unnatural, that we read of in the English papers; but still there is crime, and for the gnawing misery and oppression which produce that crime, Irishmen expect no relief from 'English Rule.' They count English Government as a potent ally of tyrannical landlords; to them, English Government personifies itself in the dragoons who ride them down—in the adverse jury-box—in the *detecting*, hard-swearing policeman. The plagues of their country, and enemies of their lives, they believe to be jails, juries, and policemen; and behold! those who deal out English Rule from the Imperial Parliament promise them more jails, more juries, more trials, and military patrols and detectives without number. We have put the case strongly, but not more strongly than the state of this country warrants. What is to be the issue of it we cannot well foresee; but of one thing we are very sure—Ireland will never, under any circumstance, be otherwise than disaffected towards 'English Rule;' paltry 'boons' will not conciliate this people to it—no forest of bayonets will make them love it—no 'concessions' that a British Minister would dare to propose will alter the feeling in the least, and coercion will only make it more bitter and deadly. The Irish people are tame and patient enough—too tame and too patient; but an Insurrection Act is not the way to 'pacificate' them—it cannot pacificate them—it will not—it ought not—and, (we speak plainly,) *it shall not!*

Beware of the Whigs

***The Nation*, 30 May, 1846.**

Do you recollect, men of Ireland, how often and how long you have fought the battles of a beggarly British faction, when you thought you were fighting for your freedom?

Do you remember, when the agitation of Repeal commenced under the auspices of your great leader, the struggles you made to return men of the people, from the people, *with* the people, to Parliament? Do you forget that these men were thorough, out-and-out Repealers?

Do you remember, upon the last accession of the Whigs to power, how the agitation of Repeal languished—how much of the energy and devotion that had characterised the national party merged in an attachment to the measures of the Whigs—and how the brave, homely, honest men you had first returned as your representatives, were forced to give way to aristocrats, fine gentlemen, Whiglings, place-hunters, patronage-mongers, and advocates of the moderate, the servile, and the genteel?

You know not how soon you may be called upon again to send men to Parliament. Shall they be of the right sort—shall they be men of *one* idea—men of the Repeal—men of *one* soul—the soul of Ireland—men of *one* act—how soonest and best to do *your* work; or shall they be men of moderate measures—men of compromises, expedients, instalments—men of the 'beloved' NORMANBY, or the 'amiable' MORPETH—men of jobs, scheming, and humbug—Lords of the Treasury, or Vice-Presidents

of the Board of Trade—men representing you exactly so far as it will serve themselves?

Whoever they may be, dear friends and countrymen, pray consider *your own* interests in this election; pray, remember that you have fought *other people's* battles long enough; have the courage now to fight *your own*. Send men to Parliament to do *your* business or keep them out to do *their* own. Fine gentlemen are not required; large fortune, high station, are not what *you* want; you do not want gentlemen ready to take office, or dispense the offal of patronage for their country's good; you do not want Englishmen to represent you. Lawyers, who are looking to be made Judges, and looking at nothing else, will never do *your* business; take care, then, that you are not besotted enough to do *theirs*.

But, above all, beware of the Whigs. The Tory is an open enemy—a determined opponent; as long as Tories are in power, your antagonists stand confessed; the Whigs, on the contrary, with equal hatred, join duplicity and cowardice. In your contests with British factions the difference between Tory and Whig is, that with the Tory you have a fair stand-up fight, while the Whig lures you into an ambuscade, and, when he has got you at his mercy, calls in the Tory to help him to give you a thrashing.

By keeping out the Whigs you have all the advantages derivable from a party against you, but out of office, in opposition to another party against you, *in* office. The Whigs, for example, will probably try to damage the Coercion Bill, though, we need not tell you, they introduced and maintained a Coercion Bill of their own, *and would again*; still, as long as they are out of office we may hope something from their spite—for a hungry Whig is the most spiteful animal in nature.

But by helping the Whigs to power, you have Whigs and Tories all on one side, and all against *your* country. The Tories are rich, powerful, and comparatively careless of office; the Whigs are in the main needy,

miserable, and greedy of a job; the Tories will gladly relinquish to the Whigs the doing of this dirty work, and the Whigs are delighted at the prospect of having this work to do.

Friends and countrymen, you are either liars, slaves, and cowards, or you MEAN Repeal; if you mean Repeal, you cannot elect *one Whig* to the ensuing Parliament, without convincing the world that you are agitating under false pretences, and that Repeal is with you a pretence, a *swindle*—that you *don't believe it*.

What a pretty figure any Repeal constituency will cut which elects a Whig, a sham-Repealer, or a Precursor, having the power to send an out-and-out, thorough-going, man of the Repeal!

What shame, what sorrow to the honest men of Ireland—what joy to the trucklers, sham-Repealers, dealers in humbug—what a warning to brave men, who, like the man lately in jail for you,[5] may hereafter prepare their hearts to suffer for *your* country!

We warn you in time—we caution you *now* to select men of YOUR choice, tried and approved, but not blindly trusted in. Look out your men in time; let them be *intensely* Irish; put to them pointedly what you want them to do, and pledge them to do it; let them be hard-working men, and if they don't talk much, it is no great matter—perhaps they may think the more.

Don't select a puppy or a jackanapes—plain men, of honest, homely habits, should be your choice; but one thing they *must* be—out-and-out REPEALERS, at CONCILIATION HALL, and everywhere else.

The Whigs will come out with a sprat on their hook to catch you—Municipal Reform may be the name of the sprat, or Extension of the

5 William Smith O'Brien, Pro-Repeal Member of Parliament for Limerick. Would later emerge as one of the leading figures of the 1848 Young Ireland Rebellion.

Franchise, or something that means nothing; the appropriation clause was the last sprat; you bit then—*don't* bite now.

Perhaps the sprat put on to hook you may be some Liberal lawyers to be made judges. We admit the value of Liberal judges—we grant the importance of having as many judges as possible with the confidence of the people; but judges, whether Liberal or not, must judge according to law; and Repeal is of much more moment than the interests of any lawyer, be he who he may.

More damage will be done to your sacred cause, to which you have pledged your word of honour, by the election of *one* Whig to *misrepresent* a Repeal constituency, than all the good you can derive from advancing the interests or fulfilling the ambition of any lawyer, or any other man, who is ready to go as far as he can to do your business, *provided only he be allowed to stop exactly when he has done his own*.

When did Repeal show most nobly, most strongly, before the eyes of men and nations?

Precisely when it showed most manfully, most uncompromisingly, most sternly.

When did Repeal look least respectable—least formidable?

Precisely when it mixed itself up with Whiggery.

You have had fair warning—we have counselled you in good time. Don't attempt to shuffle off *your* responsibility.

Repeal, men of Ireland, rests with *you*.

Let Repeal constituencies look not to themselves, their affections, their predilections in the election of representatives—BUT TO THEIR PLEDGES, THEIR COUNTRY, AND THEIR SACRED HONOUR.

Speech on the Peace Resolutions

Quoted in the report of the famous Conciliation Hall walkout in the *Freeman's Journal*, 29 July, 1846.[6]

My Lord Mayor, I really do not know whether it is admissible that I should make some remarks upon the very long indictment which Mr. John O'Connell has exhibited against Mr. Duffy and the *Nation*. He has said distinctly that there must be no explanations, and that everything he has chosen to attribute to the *Nation* must be taken with his interpretation and not otherwise. But, my lord, I have sufficient confidence in an assembly of my countrymen to feel assured that they will hear explanations. I don't believe that an assembly of Irishmen will howl down any man unheard.

JOHN O'CONNELL—Irishmen will never howl down any man unheard—that never has been done in this Hall—we give a fair hearing to all who have a right to be heard. Have I protested against explanations? No, but that men cannot, as members of this association, be allowed to put forward dangerous doctrines, and then attempt to make explanations which leave their declarations merely as they were.

(Some consternation in the Hall erupts as a result of cheers given to Mitchel's speech. Hubert Maguire claimed that Thomas Devin

6 *Cartlann*: Some of the interruptions have been removed or summarized so as to not ruin the flow of the speech.

Reilly, in particular, 'commenced cheering most annoyingly and unmeaningly, although Maguire himself is told that he was "misbehaving... most grossly."' Following this interruption, Mitchel proceeds.)

My lord, I presume that I misunderstood Mr. J. O'Connell when I understood him to say there must be no explanations, and so I shall go on with what I have to say. On the day when these 'moral force' resolutions, which have given rise to so much discussion, were introduced, and after we had on all sides stated our opinions on the subject, Mr. O'Connell closed the debate by fervently hoping that we were done with that subject for ever. I really did hope so too.

Nobody in this hall professes to dissent from the rules of the association, or to disown the basis on which it is founded; for the basis of this society is not by any means the ethical doctrine that force and violence, save in defence, are immoral and criminal; but it is the practical declaration that we, for our parts and for the attainment of our purposes, disclaim the use of force, having a safer and surer policy. That is the true basis of this confederacy, and if any member desires to assure himself of it, let him look to the public rules, which hang up framed and glazed in every passage of this building. To those rules we have all assented; on those rules no man would have raised any question, and on the subject of physical force, I, for one, will not go a hairsbreath beyond them.

From the speeches which were made yesterday against 'Young Ireland,' and from some of those which will be assuredly made to-day, any listener would conclude that there are some Repealers who have proposed to the association that it should instantly declare war against the Queen of England, or who have at all events advised the Irish people to prepare for war—or at the very least, who have expressed doubt and distrust of the most peaceable agitation which we have met here to carry on, and

intimated an opinion that Repeal will not be obtained at last without fighting for it. Of course not one of all these suppositions would be true. Of course the gentlemen who spoke yesterday, and the gentlemen who will speak to-day, know that well. They know that nobody here advocates or contemplates any change of the peaceful policy of this body.

But it is quite in vain that we have all repeatedly protested against such an assumption—it is in vain that we ask some proof of it—in vain that we now disavow it. They persist in fastening upon us an advocacy of what they call 'physical force' whether we will or not. This disavowal of mine, which I make publicly now for the third time, will certainly not take out of the mouth of a single orator to-day one taunt against the 'war party,' one witty saying against the blood-thirsty young gentlemen whom they choose to call 'Young Ireland.' But, my lord, the discussion of this day seems to me still more needless, and unaccountable than those of yesterday, and the two last meetings. We are now debating, not about our practical policy, nor even about our abstract principle, but we are absolutely discussing the conduct of a gentleman not now a member of the society at all, who, it seems, three years ago, thought Mr. O'Connell and other speakers intimated some intention of in some undefined contingency resorting to arms to obtain the independence of Ireland or repel a hostile attack, and who candidly avows that he was at that time willing to co-operate in those warlike proceedings if great emergencies should arise. And what have we to do with all that? Neither Mr. Duffy, nor anybody else who was connected with the *Nation* in 1843, is now, I believe a member of the association; and even if he were, I should not much wonder, nor very heavily censure him or others at a time when the patriot orator was kindling this island from the centre to the sea with the fire of nationality, when he was pouring forth from every hill-top to myriads of excited listeners that fiery eloquence that might breathe spirit

into the dullest clod of earth—eloquence that could almost create a soul under the ribs of death.

When he reminded his hearers that they were taller and stronger than Englishmen, and hinted at successive meetings that he had then and there at his disposal a force larger than the three armies of Waterloo—I cannot censure those who may have believed, in the simplicity of their hearts, that he did mean to create in the people a vague idea that they might, after all, have to fight for their liberties. It is not easy to blame a man who confesses that he, for his part, thought when Mr. O'Connell spoke of being ready to die for his country, he meant to suggest the notion of war in some shape—that when he spoke of a 'battle line' he meant a line of battle and nothing else.

Indeed this impression does not seem to have been confined to Mr. Duffy. At a dinner to Mr. O'Connell, in 1843, Father Maguire is reported to have said, 'Let the English government only give us six months to prepare ourselves, and then—God defend the right!' At a Repeal meeting in Castlebar, no longer ago than October last, the Rev. Mr. Hughes, in presence of O'Connell and the Archbishop of Tuam, answered for all the clergy of his diocese that they were ready, should it be put upon them, 'to discharge every office from that of a general to that of a corporal or drill-sergeant, in carrying out this great and glorious object,' viz.—Repeal. I have no doubt that Father Maguire meant six months to prepare arguments and statistics. Mr. Hughes, unquestionably, when he said a general, meant a pacificator, and contemplated only constitutional corporals and moral drill-sergeants.

(John O'Connell rises to order to object to Mitchel allegedly 'attacking Catholic priests' by Mitchel's insinuation that the priests in question were implicitly promoting physical force. Mitchel attempts to continue, but consternation once again erupts in the

Hall. Thomas Steele, a supporter of the Resolutions, nonetheless interjects by stating Mitchel has a right to speak like everyone else. With order eventually restored by a stern warning for the parties to cease disrupting the meeting from the Chairman, Mitchel continues.)

I am glad, I say, my lord mayor that the honourable member for Kilkenny has given me the opportunity of explaining or withdrawing my intention of insulting the Catholic clergymen.

I meant no sneer or disrespect to those clergymen. I cited the words only to shew that speakers at that period did sometimes use language liable to a warlike interpretation, and that it was not very strange if an impression prevailed, as I know it did, that the association might possibly, some time or other, become an army, wardens become officers, and pacificators turn out belligerents.

I shall now turn to the charges against Mr. Duffy and the *Nation*—and I may premise that I am in no way bound to defend the *Nation*, or anything that it said or thought at that period. However I shall offer a few observations on those charges, as Mr. Duffy cannot personally defend himself. Mr. O'Connell charges the *Nation* with calling the monster meetings of 1843 the vulgar gatherings of faction. Why the words of Mr. Duffy are that those meetings had a meaning beyond the vulgar gatherings of faction—in fact, that they were not the vulgar gatherings of faction. He says, to America and France those meetings had a meaning beyond the vulgar gatherings of faction, and that to 'us,' to him, also, they had such a meaning.

Again the honourable member for Kilkenny speaks of Mr. Duffy's allusion to M. Ledru Rollin and the offers of assistance which he notoriously made to O'Connell, and seems to rest upon it an assumption that the writers of the *Nation* were at that period in communication privately

with Frenchmen to procure military aid? Is this fair? Mr. Duffy himself has explained that he alluded to the public notorious transaction and nothing else—to the offers which we all know were made to O'Connell, and by him promptly rejected.

But then the *Nation* says such offers came not merely through Ledru Rollin but 'through many a surer source.' What source was this? Why, as I understand it, Mr. Duffy meant the French press. Everybody who read French papers in '43 knows that a strong sympathy was expressed in them for our movement here, and especially in the *National*, if your lordship recollects, there was not only strong sympathy but a habitual assumption that the movement was, or would eventually be, a military one. Now that I think is the fair construction of Mr. Duffy's phrase, 'many a surer source'—that is the construction he gives it himself, and I think common candour would accept his own construction unless at absolute variance with his words.

On the subject of the probability which existed in 1843 that the people of Ireland might actually be compelled to rely on force I may read what Mr. John O'Connell himself said yesterday. It seems he also thought it likely, and is ready to define the very case in which it ought to have been resorted to. Here are his words:—

> 'I will tell you the case in which we could consider physical force advisable—not only inevitable, but advisable, for I don't hesitate to say advisable. The same case as in 1843—the same as was alluded to by my father when he uttered the Mallow defiance and the Lismore declaration, and when he mentioned at Mullaghmast, in parliament, and in the press (for the government then had a press, though it turned against them afterwards). They threatened coercive measures, attacks upon our liberties. Now, if, after the state prosecution, the association was put down, as they said would be done, the collection of the Repeal rent put a stop to, and public meetings

> prevented—if, as my father said, the constitution was taken from under our feet, and that we had no resource but to fall into the abyss of violence and physical force, we should only oppose force to force.
>
> So long as a rag of the constitution held together, and a plank of the constitution remained our feet, we would avoid an appeal to arms; but the moment the safeguards of the constitution were taken from us, and that we were attacked, we would grasp the sword, and throw ourselves into the midst of our opponents.'

So it appears that others as well as Mr. Duffy had an idea that we might have come to fighting in '43.

Mr O'Connell also alluded to that article in the *Nation* commonly called the *Railway* article. Mr. Duffy is really in a hard situation. He is scarcely acquitted in the Court of Queen's Bench until he is had up before the Lord Mayor to answer the same charge. I really wish Mr. Holmes were here to defend him.

But as he is not here I may say this. If Mr. O'Connell would take the trouble of reading that article he would perceive that it was written solely on the supposition that military coercion was to be resorted to and that the writer of it never thought of instructing people to tear up railways, save in case of a desperate defensive war. He says indeed the jury disagreed, so that he cannot pronounce Mr. Duffy guilty for that article; let him not forget that in the same Court of Queen's Bench a jury unanimously convicted him and his father of sedition and conspiracy, yet instead of pronouncing him guilty on that account, I at once pronounce him innocent.

I will not follow Mr. O'Connell in his remarks on the affidavit made by the Repeal traversers, to the effect that they were not guilty of the crime imputed to them. That crime was conspiracy to excite civil war, &c. Now it is plain that Mr. Duffy could safely swear he never entered into any conspiracy with (for instance) the hon. member for Kilkenny

to excite civil war; but I shall dwell no longer on that point—it is quite unnecessary.

Mr. O'Connell, however, has occupied a great deal of time reading passages from his father's speeches in '43 to prove, what everybody admits, that Mr. O'Connell did not at that time, contemplate arms or physical force as the means of repealing the Union. What is the use of proving this? Mr. Duffy himself admits that if three years ago he even surmised differently he has altogether changed his mind—that it was a delusion—that he has thoroughly awakened from it, and is sorry he ever entertained it. There can be no need to prove what we all admit.

We all know that O'Connell did not then, does not now, contemplate any other than peaceful means to attain the independence of Ireland.

Well, it remains to notice the singular accusation that the *Nation* has quoted a saying of Danton. I shall read the passage, and you will see what force there is in this charge:—

> "'Wonderful," quoth Bacon, "is the case of boldness in civil business. What first? Boldness. What second and third? Boldness!"
>
> "What needs there to conquer?" shouted Danton, "audacity, still audacity, and always audacity!"'

The saying was originally Lord Bacon's—there is no objection to the *Nation* quoting it from him—but when the very same words are quoted from Danton (who himself quoted them from Lord Bacon), it is made matter of accusation. The bare mention of Danton's name, it seems, is not to be endured.

I shall not go through any more of these charges, but shall only add that in the year 1843, when all these dangerous articles were published, the gentleman who was the principal contributor to the *Nation* was one whose name has not been hitherto mentioned in this hall without respect

and applause. I mention his name now with the deepest reverence and grief—the name of Thomas Davis.

I think the recollection of that man and his services might induce a more charitable construction of the policy he adopted and approved of, especially when the survivors of those who conducted the *Nation* in '43 avow so marked a change in their policy.

Now, surely, Sir, we have had enough of this physical force argument. I fear that to prolong it would only subject our proceedings to ridicule. We shall appear as anxiously occupied in guarding ourselves from every possible misconstruction and conceivable danger on all sides, as to leave little leisure for doing the work that we have undertaken to do. This association once acknowledged a higher mission than merely to take care of itself; and if it were to become a mere valetudinarian society, constantly or mostly employed in preserving its own nervous existence, it would be very unlikely to effect its great task. This unfortunate discussion, too, is especially absurd, because it is plain to all the world that the real source of all our dissensions in this hall is not physical force, nor any apprehension of such. That there are two parties here is to some extent unhappily true, but that is not their main point of difference, and nobody in his senses believes it is. There must be no mistake about this. There are certain members, my lord, who have within the last few weeks been urging a more determined opposition than others to the new Whig government, who have been censured for their violent aversion to any connexion, active or passive, with an English faction—who have sought to keep the national tone as high, and the flag of Repeal flying as boldly since the secession of Lord John Russell to power as before.

Those men have loudly demanded that Whig officials should not be permitted to represent Repealers—they believe that the people of this island want national independence, and are determined to have it, and nothing short of it. They believe that any ameliorations that may come

from England will come grudgingly and by compulsion, and at best will be trifling and superficial; and they are unwilling that the Irish nation should be allowed to fix their minds upon such paltry reforms as they are like to obtain, and attach themselves once more to an English party. They are unwilling that Ireland should for one moment seem to acquiesce in the monstrous usurpation by which a foreign people assumes to govern it.

For holding these opinions strongly, and strongly expressing them, they have met with a good deal of ridicule and abuse in this hall. They have been charged—a monstrous accusation—with being 'young gentlemen;' and week after week have been drawn into loud argument in their own defence, and then accused of 'dissension.'

Now, I apprehend it is to these real and substantial grounds of difference that the public will look for the true origin of the dissensions, and not to the chimers of 'physical force,' and the public will be perfectly right. Nobody is in the least afraid of physical force, but there are some of us mortally afraid of Whiggery. I will not say that the new resolutions about abhorring physical force—resolutions going beyond what was ever adopted by the association before, even in dangerous times; I will not say these new resolutions were framed for the purpose of provoking opposition from men whose opinions were notoriously opposed to them; but I say it is a remarkable fact, that the very 'young gentlemen' who have been giving so much trouble by their anti-Whig ideas, are precisely the same who thought it their duty to protest against those now unheard of Quakerly resolutions.

And it is another remarkable fact that the original rules of the association, the original basis of it, wherein we all agree, should suddenly at this juncture be found insufficient; and that now, now when all is peace and conciliation, when corruption, not oppression or violence, is the thing to be guarded against, it should appear necessary to propound and

require us all to subscribe to a more stringent and absolute condemnation of war and bloodshed than ever before were thought of.

MR. STEELE.—We solemnly deny it. We solemnly deny that the resolutions are more stringent now than they were before.

All I can say is, that I must draw a distinction between the well-known old rules of the association and the new resolutions. I concur in the old rules—I stand upon the old rules; but I do not concur in the new resolutions. My lord, I repeat the real complaint against us is that we cannot endure any tampering with these Whigs with their paltry boons and shabby conciliations, and treacherous 'open questions.'

(*Cries of name, name.*)

I have made no charge against anyone, and I shall not name.

JOHN O'CONNELL.—Before Mr. Mitchel proceeds I call on him to name. He has made a serious imputation upon somebody or other that they are for tampering with the Whigs—a charge, in fact, of committing treason against the country. He ought to name the person he accuses.

I will explain what I mean by tampering with the Whigs; I will say at once that I mean the system which I have heard advocated in this hall, of keeping Repeal an 'open question' with the Whigs, and on this subject I must refer to what Mr. John O'Connell said yesterday. He taunted gentlemen with inconsistency for blaming Lord Ebrington's proscription of Repealers, and now again blaming Lord John Russell because he leaves Repeal an open question. Now, my lord, I do blame Lord Ebrington, that when he purported to be governing this country on a principle of

equality he proscribed any section of the people on account of their political opinion; but I do not blame Lord John Russell. He is perfectly right. I blame not him, but the Repealers, for making it an open question. Let it be an open question with the Whigs if you like; with us it ought to be very close, indeed.

I blame not the ministry for offering places—but I do blame the Repealer who accepts one. It is their principle that the country may be governed under the present system, and it is their duty to act accordingly, dealing impartially with all classes of the people; but then it is our aim to prevent their governing the country at all. It is our business to make that government not only a difficulty, but an impossibility to them; and therefore in my opinion no Repealer ought to give them aid in any official capacity.

In short, I do not understand this system of an open question, except as a kind of compact by which Repealers, still calling themselves by that name, may be admitted to situations and places under government; and I do not see how active agitation to throw off a foreign government is compatible with holding comfortable places under that foreign government.

Do you think the men who have been begging one day at the gate of an English minister will come down here the next day to help you to get rid of English ministers altogether?

If some of the legal gentlemen now in this box accept commissionerships and assistant-barristerships from Lord John Russell, will they be so eloquent afterwards in this hall, denouncing English tyranny and English rapacity? For me, I entered this association with the strong conviction that it was to be made, an instrument for wresting the government of Ireland out of the hands of Englishmen, whether Whig or Tory, and not a coadjutor of any of them perpetuating the provincial degradation of my country.

To be sure it is now intimated to me and others pretty broadly that we can leave this association. Truly we have that alternative; but for my own part, I am not yet willing to adopt it, and I will tell you why. If I consulted my own ease and convenience I should certainly absent myself from these meetings. I derive no benefit, and latterly but little pleasure from my attendance. I receive none of your money my friends.

It would be no personal sacrifice to me to wash my hands of the affair altogether. But I entered it with a serious determination to do what in me lay, to help what I fondly believed might become a great national movement for the liberation of Ireland; and a man who is in earnest in anything he sets about, is not easily driven from his purpose by discouragement or disgust. Besides (and I hope it will not be deemed presumptuous to says so), I am one of the Saxon Irishmen of the North.

And you want that race of Irishmen in your ranks more than any others; you cannot well afford to drive even one away from you, however humble and uninfluential. And let me tell you, friends, this is our country as well as yours.

You need not expect to free it from the mighty power of England by yourselves—you are not able to do it. Drive the Ulster Protestants away from your movement by needless tests, and you perpetuate the degradation both of yourselves and them. Keep them at a distance from you—make yourselves subservient to the old and well-known English policy of ruling Ireland always by one party or the other—and England will keep her heel upon both your necks for ever.

Slaves, and sons of slaves, you will perpetuate nothing but slavery and shame from generation to generation. Must it indeed be so? I am unwilling to leave this great confederacy until I shall see how you will answer that question, if it be determined upon to drive me and my friends out, of course we must retire. None of us dreams of carrying on a policy opposed to O'Connell in what I will call his own association; but, if we are so

forced to retire—if you shall decide that we may no longer act in this association, holding our own honest opinions on all matters collateral; bound to nothing but to work for Repeal—if you so decide, I, for one, shall deeply regret it, but it will not prevent me from still labouring, in whatever field may still remain upon to me, for the liberty and welfare of my native land.

Next Year's Famine

***The Nation*, 13 March, 1847.**

One paragraph from a letter of Mr. FITZPATRICK, Parish Priest of Skibbereen, published in the *Freeman* of yesterday, includes within it the whole history of Ireland for the year 1847, and, by anticipation, of the two or three years following:—

> 'The ground continues unsown and uncultivated. *There is a mutual distrust between the landlord and the tenant*. The landlord is in dread, if he gives seed to his tenant, that the tenant will consume the crop and not pay him his rent; and the tenant is in dread that, if he himself sows seed, the landlord will pounce on the crop as soon as it is cut. Thus there is a mutual distrust; and, therefore, the ground *remains uncultivated*. The landlord would wish, if possible, *to get up his ground*, and the unfortunate tenant is anxious to stick to it as long as he can. A good many, however, are giving it up, and preparing for America; and these are the substantial farmers, who have still a little means left.'

We take this extract only because it states, in the most condensed form what is now occurring in every county in Ireland. A gentleman travelling, from Borris-in-Ossory to Kilkenny, on one of these glorious spring days, counts at both sides of the road, in a distance of twenty-four miles, '*nine men and four ploughs*' occupied in the fields; but sees multitude of wan

labourers 'beyond the power of computation by a mail-car passenger,' labouring to destroy the road he was travelling upon. (*Mail* of Wednesday.)

'The land,' says the *Mayo Constitution*, 'is one vast waste; a soul is not to be seen working on the holdings of the poor farmers throughout the county; and those who have had the prudence to plough or dig the ground, are *in fear* of throwing in the seed.'

Into every seaport in Ireland are now thronging thousands of farmers, with their families, who have chosen to leave their lands untilled and unsown, to sell horses and stock, and turn all into money, *to go to America*, carrying off both the money and the industry that created it, and leaving a more helpless mass of misery and despair behind them.

And the doomed wretches, who can neither leave their country, nor live in it,—when grubbed up weeds will no longer sustain them, when the agonies of hunger are over, and all the bitterness of death is long past and gone, patiently make themselves at home with death—take their last look at the sun and the blasted earth, and then 'build themselves up in their cabins, that they may die with their children, and not be seen by passers-by.' And thrice and four times blessed are they who have already perished thus, instead of being kept half alive, upon stinted rations and charity soup, to die more surely, more hideously, next year.

Consider what agencies are at work to ensure next year's famine. First, a mutual distrust between landlord and tenant—the tenant afraid to put in seed lest the landlord pounce on the produce—the landlord afraid, lest the famishing tenant should devour it; and so between them they take care there shall be no produce at all. Then the landlord 'wishing to get up his ground,' and the tenant 'anxious to stick to it as long as he can,' and neither tilling it. Again, those who were both able and willing to put in a crop, leaving their farms desolate, and flying to a distant land, where they will not have to fight with bailiffs for the food their own hands have raised.—And, the month of March wearing fast away, bright and dry,

giving promise of genial seed time and plenteous harvest, if *men* could but do their part. What can come of this but Famine, and Plague and Death?

Once the noble island of Sicily was the granary of Rome, and was administered as a province of the Roman empire, under a Praetor (so the Lord Lieutenant was called), whose duty was to see that Sicily sent her tribute of corn, and wine, and oil, punctually to her masters' gates. For many generations this process went on; but the end came; the richest island in the world began to be desolated by a perennial famine; and at last the eyes of CICERO saw it thus:—

> 'Those very fields and hills, which I had once seen in all their verdant pride and beauty, look now squalid and forsaken, and appear as if mourning for the absence of the husbandman. The fields of Herbita, of Enna, of Marguntium, of Machara, of Assorium, of Agyra, are mostly deserted; and we looked in vain for the owners of so many fertile jugera of land. The vast fields around Aetna,—once the best cultivated, and those of Leontini, the pride of corn countries which, when sown, seemed to defy scarcity, have become so degenerated and wasted, that we in vain looked for Sicily in the most fertile part of Sicily.'

So it fared with Sicily; but miserable Ireland has not only the steady drain of her produce to contend with; her own people are also glaring on one another with fear and suspicion, almost ready to tear one another to pieces for the beggarly crumbs that fall from her masters' table. If Sicily became a wilderness, Ireland seems about to turn into a Golgotha.

The landlords are 'wishing to get up the lands!' Let the landlords beware. Let them not press to a decision, sooner than they can help, the momentous questions that lie unsolved between them and the occupier—that might have lain unsolved for many a day if the Famine had not yet

visited us. Men are on all sides beginning to ask to whom, after all, this land belongs; whether the 'rights of property' appertain only to property *in rents*; whether a royal patent can confer the power of awarding life or death at the patentee's pleasure; whether the tillers of the soil are to go on for ever borrowing or hiring land, instead of owning it. If these things be driven to an issue, there will be consequences and corollaries terrible enough.

The course taken by the landed gentry of Ireland, since their famous Rotunda meeting, has been watched anxiously, and by us, at least, in no unfriendly spirit. We hailed their 'Irish Party' as the beginning (which it might and ought to have been) of a grand national movement. Its resolution calling for legislative compensation for tenants' improvements, indicated, we did hope, that there were men amongst them who felt the exigencies of the time, and owned, at least, the instinct of self-preservation. And what has this Irish Party done? What is it doing *now*? Now, when the abyss is yawning for them and for their country? Oh, Heaven! moving clauses in Poor Law Bills, the omission of clauses in Drainage Bills—discussing whether 'improvements' shall include tile-yards and flax-mills—stipulating for small rating divisions, for plenty of *ex-officio* guardians! Have they considered whether 'improvements' include grave-yards? Have they satisfied themselves that there will be anybody left to *pay* the rates, in large divisions or in small? Are they deaf and blind to the fact that the peasantry, the people, the masses, the great *rent*-paying machine itself, is falling fast into disorder and ruin?

Adder-deaf, we fear, and stone-blind, and, if so, then doomed to destruction irretrievable, signal, and unpitied. Social order, the gradations of society, the relations of class with class—these are not to be lightly disturbed; to preserve them unbroken any good man would make many a sacrifice. *But the existence of a Nation is more precious still*.

The Famine Year

***The Nation*, 19 June 1847.**

Preface from the appendix of *Jail Journal*:

In June, 1847, Mitchel sat down to write for the Nation a review of 'Irish Guide Books' and out of the memories they awakened was begotten by the existent horror of the Famine—this, the most beautiful and terrible article that has ever come from the pen of an Irish journalist. In it the John Mitchel of 1848 has his birth.

Again, the great sun stands high at noon above the greenest island that lies within its ken on all the broad zodiac road he travels, and his glory, 'like God's own head,' will soon blaze forth from the solstitial tower. Once more, also—even in this June month of the rueful year—the trees have clothed themselves in their wonted pomp of leafy umbrage, and the warm air is trembling with the music of ten thousand singing-birds, and the great all-nourishing earth has arrayed herself in robes of glorious green—the greener for all the dead she has laid to rest within her bosom.

What! Alive and so bold, O Earth!
    Art thou not over bold?
What! Leapest thou forth as of old,
    In the light of thy morning mirth?

Why, we thought that the end of the world was at hand; we never looked to see a bright, genial summer, a bright, rigorous winter again. To one who has been pent up for months, labouring with brain and heart in the panic-stricken city, haunted by the shadow of death, and has heard from afar the low, wailing moan of his patient, perishing brothers borne in upon every gale, black visions of the night well come swarming; to his dulled eye a pall might visibly spread itself over the empyrean, to his weary ear the cope of Heaven might ring from pole to pole with a muffled peal of Doom. Can such swinkt labourer believe that days will ever be wholesome any more, or nights ambrosial as they were wont to be?—for is not the sun in sick eclipse and like to die, and hangs there not upon the corner of the moon a vaporous drop profound, shedding plague and blight and the blackness of darkness over all the world?

Not so, heavy-laden labourer in the seed-field of time. Sow diligently what grain thou hast to sow, nothing doubting; for indeed, there shall be hereafter, as of old, genial showers and ripening suns, and harvests shall whiten, and there shall verily be living men to reap them, be it with sword or sickle. The sun is not yet turned into darkness, nor the moon into blood; neither is the abomination of desolation spoken of by Jeremy the Prophet yet altogether come to pass. Heaven and earth grow not old, as thou and thy plans and projects and speculations all will most assuredly do. Here have you been gnawing your heart all winter about the 'state of the country,' about a Railway Bill, about small rating districts, or about large; casting about for means to maintain your own paltry position; or else, perhaps, devising schemes, poor devil! for the regeneration of your country, and dreaming that in your own peculiar committee, clique, confederacy, caucus, council, conclave, or cabal, lay Ireland's last and only hope!—until you are nearly past hope yourself—until foul shadows are creeping over your light of life, and insanity is knocking at your parietal bone. Apparently you will be driven to this alternative—to commit

suicide, or else, with a desperate rush, to fly into the country, leaving the spirits of evil and the whole rout of hell at the first running stream.

We advise the latter course; all the powers of nature enforce and conjure to it; every blushing evening woos thee westward; every blue morning sends its Favonian airs to search thee out in thy study and fan thy cheek, and tell thee over what soft, whispering woods; what bank of breathing field flowers; what heathery hills fragrant with bog myrtle and all the flora of the moors: what tracks of corn and waving meadows they have wandered before they came to mix with the foul city atmosphere, dim with coal smoke and the breath of multitudinous scoundreldom. On such blue morning, to us, lying wistfully dreaming with eyes wide open, rises many a vision of scenes that we know to be at this moment enacting themselves in far-off lonely glens we wot of. Ah! there is a green nook, high up amidst the foldings of certain granite mountains, forty leagues off and more, and there is gurgling through it, murmuring and flashing in the sun, a little stream clear as crystal—the mystic song of it, the gushing freshness of it, are even now streaming cool through our adust and too cineritious brain; and, clearly as if present in the body, we seek the grey rock that hangs over one of its shallow pools, where the sun rays are broken by the dancing water into a network of tremulous golden light upon the pure sand that forms its basin; and close by, with quivering leaves and slender stem of silver, waves a solitary birch-tree; and the mountains stand solemn around, and by the heather-bells that are breaking from their sheaths everywhere under your steps, you know that soon a mantle of richest imperial purple will be spread over their mighty shoulders and envelop them to the very feet. Lie down upon the emerald sward that banks this little pool, and gaze and listen. Through one gorge that breaks the mountain pass to the right hand, you see a vast cultivated plain, with trees and fields and whitened houses, stretching away into the purple distance, studded here and there with lakes that gleam like

mirrors of polished silver. Look to the left, through another deep valley, and—lo! the blue Western Sea! And aloft over all, over land and sea, over plain and mountain, rock and river, go slowly floating the broad shadows of clouds, rising slowly from the south, borne in the lap of the soft, south wind, slowly climbing the blue dome by the meridian line, crossing the path of the sun, nimbus after nimbus, cirrus and cumulus, and every other cloud after his cloud, each flinging his mighty shadow on the passes, and then majestically melting off northward. What battalions and broad-winged hosts of clouds are these! Here have we lain but two hours, and there have been continually looming upward from behind the wind, continually sailing downward beyond the northern horizon, such wondrous drifts and piled up mountain of vapour as would shed another Noachian deluge and quench the stars if the floodgates were once let loose and the windows of heaven opened, yet this fragrant, soft-blowing southern gale bears them up bravely on its invisible pinions and softly winnows them on their destined way. They have a mission; they are going to build themselves up, somewhere over the Hebrides, into a huge, many-towered Cumulostratus; and to-morrow or the day after will come down in thunder and storm and hissing sheets of grey rain, sweeping the Sound of Mull with their trailing skirt, and making the billows of Corrievrechan seethe and roar around his cliffs and caves. Ben Cruachan, with his head wrapped in thick night, will send down Awe River in raging spate, in a tumult of tawny foam, and Morven shall echo through all his groaning woods.

But one cannot be everywhere at once. We are not now among the Western Isles, buffeting a summer storm in the Sound of Mull; but here in this green nook, among our own Irish granite mountains, at our feet the clear, poppling water, over our head the birch leaves quivering in the warm June air; and the far-off sea smooth and blue as a burnished sapphire. Let the cloud-hosts go and fulfil their destiny; and let us, with open eye and

ear and soul, gaze and listen. Not only are mysterious splendours around us, but mysterious song gushes forth above us and beneath us. In this little brook alone what a scale of notes! from where the first faint tinkle of it is heard far up as it gushes from the heart of the mountain, down through countless cascades and pools and gurgling rapids, swelling and growing till it passes our grassy couch and goes on its murmuring way singing to the sea; but it is only one of the instruments. Hark! the eloquent wind that comes sighing up the valley and whispering with the wavering fern! And at intervals comes from above or beneath, you know not which, the sullen croak of a solitary raven, without whose hoarse bass you never find nature's mountain symphony complete; and we defy you to say why the obscene fowl sits there and croaks upon his grey stone for half a day, unless it is that nature puts him in requisition to make up her orchestra, as the evil beast ought to be proud to do. And hark again! the loud hum of innumerable insects, first begotten of the Sun, that flit among the green heather stalks and sing all their summer life through—and then, if you listen beyond all that, you hear, faintly at first as the weird murmur in a wreathed shell, but swelling till it almost overwhelms all the other sounds, the mighty voice of the distant sea. For it is a peculiarity ever of this earth-music that you can separate every tone of it, untwist every strand of its linked sweetness, and listen to that and dwell upon it by itself. You may shut your senses to all save that far-off ocean murmur until it fills your ear as with the roar and rush of ten thousand tempests, and you can hear the strong billows charging against every beaked promontory from pole to pole; or you may listen to the multitudinous insect hum till it booms painfully upon your ear-drum, and you know that here is the mighty hymn or spiritual song of life, as it surges ever upward from the abyss; louder, louder, it booms into your brain—oh, heaven! it is the ground-tone of that thunder-song wherein the earth goes singing in her orbit among the stars. Yes, such and so grand are the separate parts of this harmony; but blend them all and

consider what a diapason! Cathedral organs of all stops, and instruments of thousand strings, and add extra additional keys to your pianofortes, and sweetest silver flutes, and the voices of men and of angels; all these, look you, all these, and the prima donnas of all sublunary operas, and the thrills of a hundred Swedish Nightingales, have not the compass nor the flexibility, nor the pathos, nor the loudness, nor the sweetness required for the execution of this wondrous symphony among the hills.

> Loud as from numbers without number, sweet,
> As of blest voices uttering joy.

Loud and high as the hallelujahs of choiring angels—yet, withal, what a trance of *Silence?* Here in this mountain dell, all the while we lie, breathes around such a solemn overpowering stillness, that the rustle of an unfolding heath-bell, too near breaks it offensively; and if you linger *near* enough—by heaven! you can hear the throb of your own pulse. For, indeed, the divine silence is also a potent instrument of that eternal harmony, and bears melodious part.

'Such concord is in heaven!' Yea, and on the earth, too, if only we—we who call ourselves the beauty of the world and paragon of animals—did not mar it. Out of a man's heart proceedeth evil thoughts; out of his mouth come revilings and bitterness and evil-speaking. In us, and not elsewhere, lies the fatal note that jars all the harmonies of the universe, and makes them like sweet bells jangled out of tune. Who will show us a way to escape from ourselves and from one another? Even, you, reader, whom we have invited up into this mountain, we begin to abhor you in our soul; you are transfigured before us; your eyes are become as the eyes of an evil demon, and now we know that this gushing stream of living water could not in a life-time wash away the iniquity from the chambers of thine heart; the arch-chemist sun could not burn it out of thee. For

know, reader, thou hast a devil; it were better thy mother had not borne thee; and almost we are impelled to murder thee where thou liest.

'Poor human nature! Poor human nature!' So men are accustomed to cry out when there is talk of any meanness or weakness committed, especially by themselves; and they seem to make no doubt that if we could only get rid of our poor human nature we should get on much more happily. Yet human nature is not the worst element that enters into our composition—there is also a large diabolical ingredient—also, if we would admit it, a vast mixture of the brute, especially the donkey nature—and then, also, on the other hand, some irradiation of the godlike, and by that only is mankind redeemed.

For the sake whereof we forgive thee, comrade, and will forbear to do thee a mischief upon the present occasion. But note well how the very thought of all these discords has silenced, or made inaudible to us, all these choral songs of earth and sky. We listen, but there is silence—mere common silence; it is no use crying *Encore!* either the performers are dumb or we are stone deaf. Moreover, as evening comes on, the grass and heath grow somewhat damp, and one may get cold in his human nature. Rise, then, and we shall show you the way through the mountain to seaward, where we shall come down upon a little cluster of seven or eight cabins, in one of which cabins, two summers ago, we supped sumptuously on potatoes and salt with the decent man who lives there, and the black-eyed woman of the house and five small children. We had a hearty welcome though the fare was poor; and as we toasted our potatoes in the *greeshaugh*, our ears drank in the honey-sweet tones of the well-beloved Gaelic. If it were only to hear, though you did not understand, mothers and children talking together in their own blessed Irish, you ought to betake you to the mountains every summer. The sound of it is venerable, majestic, almost sacred. You hear in it the tramp of the clans, the judgment of the Brehons, the song of bards. There is no name for 'modern enlightenment' in Irish,

no word corresponding with the 'masses,' or with 'reproductive labour'; in short, the 'nineteenth century' would not know itself, could not express itself in Irish. For the which, let all men bless the brave old tongue, and pray that it may never fall silent by the hills and streams of holy Ireland—never until long after the great nineteenth century of centuries, with its 'enlightenment' and its 'paupers,' shall be classed in its true category the darkest of all the Dark Ages.

As we come down towards the roots of the mountain, you may feel, loading the evening air, the heavy balm of hawthorn blossoms; here are whole thickets of white-mantled hawthorn, every mystic tree (save us all from fairy thrall!) smothered with snow-white and showing like branching coral in the South Pacific. And be it remembered that never in Ireland, since the last of her chiefs sailed away from her, did that fairy tree burst into such luxuriant beauty and fragrance as this very year. The evening, too, is delicious; the golden sun has deepened into crimson, over the sleeping sea, as we draw near the hospitable cottages; almost you might dream that you beheld a vision of the Connacht of the thirteenth century; for that—

> The clime, indeed, is a clime to praise,
> The clime is Erin's, the green and bland;
> And this is the time—these be the days—
> Of Cathal Mor of the Wine-Red Hand—

Cathal Mor, in whose days both land and sea were fruitful, and the yeanlings of the flocks were doubled, and the horses champed yellow wheat in the mangers.

But why do we not see the smoke curling from those lowly chimneys? And surely we ought by this time to scent the well-known aroma of the turf-fires. But what (may Heaven be about us this night)—what reeking

breath of hell is this oppressing the air, heavier and more loathsome than the smell of death rising from the fresh carnage of a battlefield. Oh, misery! had we forgotten that this was the *Famine Year?* And we are here in the midst of those thousand Golgothas that border our island with a ring of death from Cork Harbour all round to Lough Foyle. There is no need of inquiries here—no need of words; the history of this little society is plain before us. Yet we go forward, though with sick hearts and swimming eyes, to examine the Place of Skulls nearer. There is a horrible silence; grass grows before the doors; we fear to look into any door, though they are all open or off the hinges; for we fear to see yellow chapless skeletons grinning there; but our footfalls rouse two lean dogs, that run from us with doleful howling, and we know by the felon-gleam in the wolfish eyes how they have lived after their masters died. We walk amidst the houses of the dead, and out at the other side of the cluster, and there is not one where we dare to enter. We stop before the threshold of our host of two years ago, put our head, with eyes shut, inside the door-jamb, and say, with shaking voice, 'God save all here!'—No answer—ghastly silence, and a mouldy stench, as from the mouth of burial-vaults. Ah! they are dead! they are dead! the strong man and the fair, dark-eyed woman and the little ones, with their liquid Gaelic accents that melted into music for us two years ago; they shrunk and withered together until their voices dwindled to a rueful gibbering, and they hardly knew one another's faces; but their horrid eyes scowled on each other with a cannibal glare. We know the whole story—the father was on a 'public work,' and earned the sixth part of what would have maintained his family, which was not always paid him; but still it kept them half alive for three months, and so instead of dying in December they died in March. And the agonies of those three months who can tell?—the poor wife wasting and weeping over her stricken children; the heavy-laden weary man, with black night thickening around him—thickening within him—feeling his own arm

shrink and his step totter with the cruel hunger that gnaws away his life, and knowing too surely that all this will soon be over. And he has grown a rogue, too, on those public works; with roguery and lying about him, roguery and lying above him, he has begun to say in his heart that there is no God; from a poor but honest farmer he has sunk down into a swindling, sturdy beggar; for him there is nothing firm or stable; the pillars of the world are rocking around him; 'the sun to him is dark and silent, as the moon when she deserts the night.' Even ferocity or thirst for vengeance he can never feel again; for the very blood of him is starved into a thin, chill serum, and if you prick him he will not bleed. Now he can totter forth no longer, and he stays at home to die. But his darling wife is dear to him no longer; alas! and alas! there is a dull, stupid malice in their looks: they forget that they had five children, all dead weeks ago, and flung coffinless into shallow graves—nay, in the frenzy of their despair they would rend one another for the last morsel in that house of doom; and at last, in misty dreams of drivelling idiocy, they die utter strangers.

Oh! Pity and Terror! what a tragedy is here—deeper, darker than any bloody tragedy ever enacted under the sun, with all its dripping daggers and sceptred palls. Who will compare the fate of men burned at the stake, or cut down in battle—men with high hearts and the pride of life in their veins, and an eye to look up to heaven, or to defy the slayer to his face—who will compare it with *this?*

. . . . .

No shelter here to-night, then: and here we are far on in the night, still gazing on the hideous ruin. O Batho! a man might gaze and think on such a scene, till curses breed about his heart of hearts, and the *hysterica passio* swells in his throat.

But we have twelve miles to walk along the coast before we reach our inn; so come along with us and we will tell you as we walk together in the shadows of the night.

To the Surplus Population of Ireland

***The Nation*, 21 August, 1847.**

My surplus brethren,

Most of you are not aware of the very gross nature of the mistake which, it can be proved, was committed by Divine Providence in bringing you and me (say two millions of us Irishmen) into the world. There may be, indeed, a general feeling amongst you that you have little business here; but, not having studied the writings of the learned so much as you ought to have done, you cannot scientifically know, you cannot argumentatively demonstrate, how the account exactly stands,—how many *more than enough* have been born alive into this island, how one may know then, and what ought to be done with them by the lucky fellows who are *not* surplus.

Now, my worthy superfluous friends, I have had the advantage of perusing books on the noble science of 'political economy'—a science in which *we* are all vitally interested;—and I hope to prove to you that the old saying 'God never sends mouths but he sends meat to feed them'—is a popular fallacy, and has long since been exploded by the most esteemed writers 'of the day,' as not only false, but seditious, if not blasphemous. It is not, I confess, a mere desire to diffuse useful knowledge that prompts me:—I want to rise out of the surplus into the 'legitimate' class—the word, *legitimate!*—I want to become enfranchised of the air, the earth, and the sunshine;—and I know that if I can prove to *you* that you *are*

surplus—can make you feel that you are intruding, and are bound in common honesty to take yourselves out of the way—I know, if I can do this service for my legitimate brethren, they will not only allow my name to be put upon Nature's relief-books, but will acknowledge me to be one of the greatest benefactors of the human race.

As for you, my unnecessary friends, I trust you will listen to reason, and be open to conviction.

In the first place, then, you will, of course, admit that the choicest blessings and noblest aims of mankind are *Commerce* and *Money*—a free and enlightened Commerce, whereby the products of the earth and of human industry are universally exchanged, circulated, ventilated, and kept travelling, by rail, by steam, by wind and water, over the globe,—to the end that large capitals may be accumulated, and savage nations may be civilised and enlightened.

Another principle which I must require you to admit (for unless plain axioms be acknowledged, there is no use in reasoning with you at all,) is *this*—In an agricultural country, like Ireland, *the larger the farms*, *the better*. For the larger the farms, there is the greater economy of labour; the more can be done by horse-work and steam, and there is the larger produce at the less expense:—and, of course, the more produce there will be to circulate and set a-travelling, by rail, steam, wind, and water, the more dividends, the more freights,—in short, the more *Commerce* and *Money*.

If you still hesitate to admit the axiom that *the larger farms can be made the better*, suffer me to put the matter before you in another light. If Ireland were divided into ten-acre, fifteen-acre, and twenty-acre farms—every man living with his family on the produce of his own land and labour—there would be very little need of Money at all; and as for our Commerce it would be as good as annihilated. It is true the land would then produce more food than it produces now, but not more in proportion to the

expense of cultivation, and there would not be so much 'surplus produce' for Commerce—which is the main point. It is true *you* might in that case all find room to live, and even to rear families in comfort;—but then the food you raised, you would wantonly devour; Capital would be never the better for you; Commerce would languish; Ships might be burned or hauled up high and dry;—and *then*, who would civilise the East? How would the Chinese get ameliorated? How—but I will not pursue this argument further; I will not believe that you are such barbarians as to wish for the decline of civilisation,—such Atheists as to put yourselves in the way of the spread of English Commercial Christianity.

But after all, some of you will say (for I know your surplus selfishness), 'After all, were it not better for a country to have hundreds of thousands of warm homesteads, and well-tilled farms, with hundreds of thousands of families living in peace on the produce of their own industry, and blessing the Giver of all Good,—even though there should not be so much to spare for Commerce, than to have great tracts of country tilled by horses and steam with the fewest labourers possible, and to see millions of human beings, after being cast out like weeds, wandering over the country under the name of *surplus*, or *paupers*, hungry, houseless, and desperate, a burden to themselves and to the world?' Thus undoubtedly some of you will argue.

But the fallacy of this reasoning is easily shown; and it consists in your forgetting my very first axiom—*The great end and aim of Man is Commerce and Money*. It is not to make the greatest possible number of independent citizens and 'happy families,' that society and government have been constituted; it is to promote Commerce and facilitate the accumulation of Capital. Never forget this.

Well, then, I take it as sufficiently proved that the larger farms in Ireland are, *the better*—from which it follows that holdings ought to be consolidated, villages ought to be ploughed over, and those persons whose

labour cannot be *utilised* ought to be cleared off. These form the 'Surplus Population' of Ireland, whom I have now the honour to address.

You may be surprised to hear of a country having, at one and the same time, a 'surplus produce' and a 'surplus population'—too much food for its people, and too many people for its food. Your surprise arises from ignorance of the great principles of political economy. *All produce that can be spared for export is*, in the technical language of that science, 'surplus;' and all people who cannot get profitable employment are also 'surplus.' By 'profitable employment' science means not what is profitable to the persons engaged in it, with reference to their own comfort and independence, but what is conductive to the great object of enlightened society, Capital and Commerce. If you think of this for a little, you will easily understand how it may even come to pass that the more surplus there is of food, the more there is of people too; the more people you have to spare, the more food you have to spare; so that in Ireland at this day nearly one half, both of the produce and of the people, is *surplus*.

'Then let the surplus people eat the surplus food,' *I know* some of you will say this. Ah! my friends, I know your seditious hearts;—I have even said the like myself when I was as you are now, a daring conspirator against life and property. But I have now better thoughts and better hopes. Oh! my surplus brethren, beware of sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion! Would you invade the constitution? Would you—superfluous knaves that you are—upturn society from its roots? Would you, merely to prevent being hunted to death yourselves, disorganise civilised and commercial society?

No, no. The surplus produce must go away in ships as usual, and will furnish funds, 'under the blessing of Heaven,' as General D'AGUILAR says, to materially ameliorate Eastern nations; and then comes the question—*What is to be done with you?*

This is a question which some of the most enlightened philanthropists of 'the day' are anxiously striving to solve. And it would do your hearts good to hear the conciliatory way they speak of you. You are not too many, they allege, *in the abstract*; they will not say but that Ireland, under happier circumstances, *if her resources were once developed*, could sustain eight millions very well, or, for that matter, twenty millions, or any number you like;—but then in the *concrete*, and in the mean time, you are sadly in the way;—it is for your own good ultimately that you should be thinned and cleared just now. So they speak of you; and then you would be flattered if you but knew the variety of plans they have devised to better your condition, all in some distant quarter of the globe. One gentleman knows a tract of land in South Australia, and also a district in Africa, where you could be very happy;—that is Colonel TORRENS (now one of your legislators). Another suggests that two millions of you should be sent to Canada; and he offers you the consolations of religion there;—that is Mr. GODLEY (not yet a legislator). And a third has taken pains to show you that you are not suited to this country,—that you are exotics here, and would feel yourselves much more at home in the back-woods of America; that is Mr. MURRAY, the intelligent banker, who says that a man whose time is not Money, has no business in a civilised country.

But, unnecessary Irishmen!—I speak to you with the candour of a friend,—whatever be the favourite scheme of each of these philanthropists, they all heartily wish you at the Devil. Any of the schemes would cost money; the spirit of the age is against putting you to death in cold blood; and in short you are the 'greatest difficulty' of every statesman who undertakes to govern the country.

Now, my dear surplus brethren, I have a simple, a sublime, a patriotic project to suggest. It must be plain to you that you *are* surplus, and must somehow be got rid of. Do not wait ingloriously for the famine to sweep you off—if you must die, die gloriously; serve your country by your death,

and shed around your names the halo of a patriot's fame. Go; choose out in all the island two million trees, and thereupon *go and hang yourselves*.

I remain your true friend, and (as I hope I may now subscribe myself),

AN EX-MEMBER OF THE 'SURPLUS POPULATION.'

More Alms for the 'Destitute Irish'

***The Nation*, 16 October, 1847.**

Cordially, eagerly, thankfully we agree with the English *Times* in this one respect—*there ought to be no alms for Ireland*.

It *is* an impudent proposal, and ought to be rejected with scorn and contumely. We are sick of this eternal begging. If but one voice in Ireland should be raised against it, that voice shall be ours. To-morrow, to-morrow, over broad England, Scotland, and Wales, the people who devour our substance from year to year, are to offer up their canting thanksgivings for our 'abundant harvest,' and to fling us certain crumbs and crusts of it for charity. Now, if any church-going Englishman will hearken to us; if we may be supposed in any degree to speak for our countrymen, we put up our petition *thus*—Keep your alms, ye canting robbers,—button your pockets upon the Irish plunder that is in them,—and let the begging box pass on. Neither as *loans* nor as *alms* will we take that which is our own. We spit upon the benevolence that robs us of a pound, and flings back a penny *in charity*. Contribute now if you will—these will be your thanks!

But who has craved this charity? Why, the Queen of England, and her Privy Council, and two officers of her Government, named TREVELYAN and BURGOYNE! No Irishman that we know of has begged alms from England. They have met, indeed, in many places, and declared that, to get over this winter, Ireland will need, and is entitled to demand, aid in money *from the Treasury*—the Treasury of what is still called the 'United Kingdom,' on which, say they, we have just claims,—claims to a greater

amount than we are likely to get satisfied. From every corner of the island has gone forth the demand—Give us our own, and keep your charity!

But the English insist on our remaining beggars. Charitable souls that they are, they like better to give us charity than let us earn our bread. And consider the time when this talk of almsgiving begins:—our 'abundant harvest,' for which they are to think GOD to-morrow, is still here; and there has been talk of keeping it here. So they say to one another—'Go to; let us promise them charity and church subscriptions—they are a nation of beggars—they would rather have alms than honest earnings—let us talk of *alms*, and they will send us the bread from their tables, the cattle from their pastures, the coats from their backs.'

We charge the 'Government,' we charge the Cabinet Council at Osborne-house, with this base plot. We tell our countrymen that a man named TREVELYAN, a Treasury Clerk—the man who advised and administered the Labour-Rate Act,—that this TREVELYAN has been sent to Ireland that he, an Englishman, may send over from this side the channel a petition to the charitable in England. We are to be made to beg, whether will or no. The Queen begs for us; the Archbishop of Canterbury begs for us; and they actually send a man to Ireland that a veritable *Irish* begging-petition may not be a-wanting.

From Salt-Hill Hotel, at Kingstown, this piteous cry goes forth to England. 'In justice,' TREVELYAN says, 'to those who have appointed a general collection in the Churches on the 17th, and still more in pity to the unhappy people in the western districts of Ireland,' he implores his countrymen to have mercy; and gets his letter published in the London papers (along with another from Sir JOHN BURGOYNE) to stimulate the charity of those good and well-fed Christians who will enjoy the luxury of benevolence to-morrow.

We repudiate this TREVELYAN and his begging letter. We entreat our countrymen to read the account we give in another page of the rate at

which Irish wealth is floating from our shores upon every tide. *Twenty steamers* go from Ireland to England *every day* laden with the choicest of wheat and oats, beef and butter, to feed the alms-giving English.

Let us not hear of the 'benevolence of individual Englishmen.' *Who* are the people who keep the Parliament that robs us? Individual Englishmen. Who hire the Government that slays us? Individual Englishmen. Who thrive and fatten on our famine and death? Individual Englishmen. Who read the *Times*, and all the other papers that abuse us six times a week? Why, individual Englishmen. When these individual Englishmen say to their Government and their Parliament, 'Take your fangs from the Irish throat, your claws off the Irish dish; plunder and murder Irishmen no more'—then we can afford to applaud them, but not till then.

Once more, then, we scorn, we repulse, we curse, all English alms and only wish these sentiments of ours could reach before noon to-morrow every sanctimonious thanksgiver in England, Scotland, Wales, and Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Letter to James Fintan Lalor

This letter was published in the *Irishman* of February, 1850, some six weeks after Lalor's death. Mitchel was then on board the Neptune off the Cape of Good Hope.

8 Ontario Terrace, Rathmines,
4th January, 1848.

MY DEAR SIR,—For a month back I have been contemplating a letter to you, and have postponed it without any assignable reason. In fact and truth, I am ashamed to be forced to admit, that on the only question we ever differed about I was wholly wrong. Last summer the time had come for giving up the humbug of 'conciliating classes' winning over landlords to nationality and the rest of it. Practically, last summer, I was unable for want of means to aid your schemes more than I did—I mean my own individual effort—but I ought to have urged the proper course upon our precious Council and Confederation, and, if needful, broken them up on that question.

There is no use now in regretting what I have done amiss hitherto; but I will tell you what has at last brought me to the right way of thinking. The Irish Council, in which I really had some hope, and with which I worked conscientiously, trying to bring out what good I thought was in them, turned out a mere fraud and delusion. When the subject of tenant-right was broached, they shunned it like poison, and the great aggregate of the 'peers and commoners,' after dwindling down by degrees, as we

came into the heart of the subject, at last came to the voting and division in a meeting of forty persons, among whom were not five landlords. I then made up my mind that all the symptoms of landlord nationality we had heard so much about were merely a screw applied to the English government. And when the coercion bill was introduced, and hailed with an atrocious howl of exultation by all the 'better class,' and when nationality faded instantly thereupon from all their meetings, and all their organs at the press, I perceived the old alliance was struck once more, farther than ever, and this bill to disarm the people, and enable landlords to eject and distrain in peace and safety, was merely the first fruit of a new alliance between our ancient enemies, on the basis of the *statis quo*.

Then I was for saying so plainly in the *Nation*, and giving the people such advice as suited them in the circumstances—but I found that as I became more revolutionary, Duffy became more constitutional and safe, and insisted on preaching organisation, education and so forth, with a view to some constitutional and parliamentary proceeding, at some future day; and he, being Editor of the *Nation*, and this being the only occasion on which vital difference arose between us, I closed the connexion at once, and have not written a line for a month or more.

The *Nation*, I fear, has fallen into the merest old-womanly drivelling and snivelling, and the people are without a friend at the press.

In truth I fear it is but a lost people. I see nowhere any gleam of spirit, or spark of vitality in it. It is a people that will pay to the last—pay away its all to those demands—coin its very heart's blood to pay withal. Yet it is not, I say to be abandoned in despair. So long as any true Irishman has a tongue, or pen, hand, heart or brain, there is a duty and necessity on him, for the awakening and salvation of this country.

What are you going or about to do? I have been urged greatly by my own relatives within the last month to betake myself quietly to my profession—that of an attorney—in which I had, and yet might have,

good prospects; but I have chosen to put myself in the way of trying a fall with the enemy, on some ground or other. And so, as the most feasible thing for me, I am looking out for an opportunity of getting hold of some organ at the press. I was in Cork last week making enquiries about the *Southern Reporter*, which is for sale, and I think it is not improbable that it may be in my hands within a month; but if not some other will.

I should mention that Reilly broke off all connexion with the *Nation* at the same time I did, and for the same reasons. He is to go with me and help me wherever I go; so that I have no doubt we shall be able to gather an audience.

As for the Confederation, it seems likely soon to go smash upon the very same rock that broke up the *Nation*, and I have determined to change its milk-and-water course, or else to destroy it as a nuisance.

Father K. wrote to me some time ago that you had retired from interference with public affairs quite disheartened. I hope it is not so. The outlook before us is certainly dismal and black, but in any kind of storm or earthquake, there is hope. Anything that may awaken up the apathetic somnambulism in which the people walk. If not in 'organisation' then in disorganisation—if not in the dawning of solar day, then in the shooting upward of internal fire, there may be help. It is better to reduce the island to a cinder than let it rot into an obscure quagmire, peopled with reptiles.

Pray write me a line and tell me what you think of all those matters.

Very truly yours,
JOHN MITCHEL.

Letter to Charles Gavan Duffy

8 Ontario Terrace, Rathmines,
7th Jan, 1848.

DEAR DUFFY,—If the public has any curiosity (of which I have seen no symptom) to know why I renounced connexion with the *Nation*—or if you desire, on your own account, that a statement of my reasons and motives should appear—I will make the statement shortly, and you can do as you please with it.

Our differences of opinion, as you well know, are not a matter of yesterday. For some months past, I have found myself precluded from speaking to the public through the *Nation*, with that full freedom and boldness which I had formerly used, by objections and remonstrances from you, to the effect, that what I wrote was 'seditious' or 'impolitic.' This kind of restriction, slight and casual at first, became gradually more constant and annoying; and that, while the times demanded, in my opinion, more and more unmitigated plain speaking, as to the actual relation of Ireland towards the English government, and the real designs of that Government against the lives and properties of Irishmen.

The failure of the 'Irish Council,' the hurried calling together of the English Parliament, the bill for disarming the Irish people, and the horrid delight with which that bill was hailed by the landlords of this country—these things rapidly brought our differences to an issue. The effect wrought upon *me* by all the events I saw passing, was a thorough conviction that Irish landlords had finally taken their side *against* the

people, and *for* the foreign enemy—that all the symptoms of landlord 'nationality,' which had deluded us into the 'Irish Council,' and kept us so long vainly wooing the aristocracy into the ranks of their countrymen, were a deliberate fraud—were, in fact, a demonstration intended to act upon English—and that the disarming bill was the first fruit of a new and more strict alliance between traitors at home and foes abroad.

I desired to say all this to the people plainly. I desired to point out to them that this infamous bill, falsely entitled—'for the Prevention of Crime,' was merely an engine to crush TENANT RIGHT, and all other popular right, and to enable the landlords to eject, distrain, and exterminate in peace and security. I desired to preach to them, that every farmer in Ireland has a right to his land in perpetuity (let 'Law' say as it will)—that no landlord who denies that right ought to receive any rent—that Tenant-Right, however, though the universal right of all Irish farmers, never had been, and never would be recognised or secured by English law—that there was and will be no other way of establishing and securing that right, except, as in Ulster, by successful intimidation, that is to say, by the determined public opinion of *armed men*—that, *therefore*, the power calling itself a 'Government,' which called on the people of Ireland to deliver up their arms, under any pretext, must be the mortal enemy of that people, their rights, their liberties, and their lives. I desired to warn my countrymen accordingly, that if they should carry their guns to the police stations, when ordered by Lord Clarendon, they would be putting weapons into the hands of their deadly foes, and committing virtual suicide. I desired to preach to them that the country is actually in a state of war—a war of 'property' against poverty—a war of 'law' against life; and that their safety lay, not in trusting to any laws or legislation of the enemies' Parliament, but solely in their determination to stand upon their own individual rights, defend those to the last, and sell their lives and lands as dear as they could.

I desired also to show that the new Poor Law, enacted under pretence of relieving the destitute, was really intended, and is calculated to increase and deepen the pauperism of the country—to break down the farmers, as well as the landlords, by degrees, and uproot them gradually from the soil, so as to make the lands of Ireland pass (unencumbered by excessive population) into the hands of English capitalists, and under the more absolute sway of English government. In short, I wished to make them recognise in the Poor Law, what it really is—an elaborate machinery for making final conquest of Ireland by 'law.' I therefore urged, from the first, that this law ought to be resisted and defeated—that Guardians ought not to act under it, but in defiance of it—that Rate payers ought to offer steady and deliberate passive resistance to it—and that every district ought to organize some voluntary mode of relieving its own poor; and for this purpose, as well as to stop the traffic with England, that the people should determine to suffer no grain or cattle to leave the country.

With reference to the future direction which should be given to the energies of the country, and of the Irish Confederation, I desired, in the first place, once for all, to turn men's mind away from the English Parliament, and from parliamentary and constitutional agitation of all kinds. I have made up my mind, inasmuch as the mass of the people have no franchises, and are not likely to get any; and inasmuch as the constituencies, being very small, very poor, and growing smaller and poorer continually, are so easily gained over by corruption and bribery; and inasmuch as any combination of the 'gentry' with the people is now and henceforth impossible—that, for all these reasons, any organization for parliamentary or constitutional action, would be merely throwing away time and strength, and ensuring our own perpetual defeat. Therefore, I desired that the *Nation* and the Confederation should rather employ themselves in promulgating sound instruction upon military affairs—upon the natural lines of defence which make the island so strong, and the

method of making these available—upon the construction and defence of field-works, and especially upon the use of proper arms—not with a view to any immediate insurrection, but in order that the stupid 'legal and constitutional' shouting, voting, and 'agitating' that have made our country an abomination to the whole earth, should be changed into a deliberate study of the theory and practice of guerrilla warfare; and that the true and only method of regenerating Ireland, might, in course of time, recommend itself to a nation so long abused and deluded by 'legal' humbug.

These are my doctrines—and these are what I wished to enforce in the *Nation*. I knew that it would be 'illegal' to do so. I knew that it would subject you, as proprietor of that paper, to prosecutions for 'sedition,' &c. I knew, besides, that your own views did not at all agree with mine; and I could not assuredly expect you to incur legal risks for the sake of promulgating another man's opinions. Therefore, when I found—which I did during the progress of the Coercion bill—that no one journal could possibly represent two sets of opinions so very incompatible as yours and mine; and when you informed me that the columns of the *Nation* should no longer be open even to such a modified and subdued exposition of my doctrines as they had heretofore been, I at once removed all difficulty, by ending the connexion which had subsisted between us more than two years.

I have not entered into any details of the difficulties and disagreements that preceded this final step; but I cannot avoid mentioning the circumstance that, during the last week of my connexion with the *Nation*, you felt it necessary to suppress a portion of my speech delivered by me in the Irish Confederation, which you considered seditious and impolitic. I do not impugn your motives for this; but, if there had been no other reason urging me to the course I have taken, this alone would have been enough to make me resolve on never writing another line in the *Nation*. I

am bound to add, that I did not discover the fact of this suppression until the next morning after I had closed my connexion with the *Nation*; so that it did not actually influence me, though it fully justifies me in what I have done.

In this letter, you will observe that I have not attempted to describe or characterise your opinions. I leave that to yourself. You have the *Nation* at your command, and have had *five* opportunities of expounding your own policy since I had one. It is enough to say, that the present policy of the *Nation* does not suit *me*. If you publish this, I hope there will be no possibility of any future misrepresentations and vague rumours about the causes of our differences, such as you say are current.

I remain, faithfully yours,
JOHN MITCHEL.

Speech to the Irish Confederation

Speech given 4 February, 1848.
Published in *The Nation*, 12 February, 1848.

(Mr. Mitchel then rose to reply, and was received with great applause. He said the patience of the meeting was admirable, but it was time to take some step towards bringing this long debate to a close.)

With so much of the eloquence, weight, and influence of the Confederation against me on this question, I begin almost to fear that I must be wrong.

Why, after the speeches I have heard to-night, I hardly know my fundamental rules when I saw them; after the solemn charges of breaking faith, I really feared that I must have some time or other been making professions of a balmy, moral-force kind, though when or where I can not remember.

One thing is agreeable to learn, that most of the gentlemen who spoke to-night are quite favourable to my views about a national armament except in the matter of time. This is not the time, they say, to recommend the use of arms. At some remote period in past history, or in the case of some distant nation, arms may have been proper, or even necessary, or they may become so at some future time, but not just now or here.

Now, I am reminded curiously of an eloquent speech spoken by my friend Mr. O'Gorman a few months ago in this very room, when we entertained the captain of an American ship.

Standing between these two pillars there, Mr. O'Gorman said we Irish had had too much drinking of toasts and making of speeches; 'but if you would know,' he continued, 'how nations win freedom, ask Captain Clarke.'

Oh! but then they tell us the Americans said nothing about war till they actually declared war; they did not vaunt, they did not threaten; the first intimation England had of their intention was conveyed in the deadly volleys of their musketry; well, and how did they prepare for this? Was it by education and conciliation? Why, sir, it was by steady, long-continued and assiduous rifle-practice.

They made not many speeches, but they fired perpetually at targets; and so, in the very first collision, they smashed the red-coats, horse, foot, and artillery.

All I say is, do not turn away the Irish people from that necessary preparation, and teach them to rely on something else.

Now, there is one charge brought against me, I mean that of attempting to use the Confederate organization to propagate my own views, on which I have not one word to say in defence. I plead guilty to that charge; I have used the organization for that purpose, and for no other; and to show you how deeply I have sinned in that respect let me read you some alarming sentiments expressed by me in two lectures delivered four months ago in the Swift Club, on the Land Tenures of Europe.

In those lectures, after giving an account of our Irish cheap-ejectment statutes, I continue as follows:

> 'It needs but this record of exterminating legislation, and the parallel series of "arms acts" which accompanied it, to satisfy all men, that on this soil, the people and the persons called "government" are deadly enemies; so that by the first law of nature it lies upon the "government" to be on its guard against

the people—and upon the people to take means of saving themselves from the government.'

And again, speaking of tenant-right, I say:

'After all that has been said and written about this "tenant-right," the plain fact remains, that it was created at first, and is sustained now, by force and intimidation. What we call "law" in this country is entirely against it; and the power which guarantees it is that called "midnight legislation," which (though somewhat blind and savage occasionally in its executive department) is, after all, the only impartial and national government Ireland knows.'

In the conclusion of the second lecture you will find this passage:—

'I have imperfectly, but I trust faithfully, described the ways of country life in various other lands, and shown how the condition of an Irish farmer differs from them all, and I think you will agree with me that it is a matter of some importance to make these things well understood in Ireland just at the beginning of this winter—not merely as a matter of useful knowledge or curious inquiry into men and manners, but with direct reference to the deliberate attempt now made by our enemies—that is, by the British government—to complete the conquest of Ireland in the degradation, pauperisation, and destruction of her people—an attempt which I firmly believe will be signally successful, or else finally defeated, within a year and a day.

'It is now, now especially, that we are bound to learn how the "rights of property" and the rights of labour are generally understood and acted on by other nations of the globe. We have no government to protect us—no Hardenberg to do us justice. It is by standing on our *rights*, each man of us upon his own rights, as a man and citizen, that we can present a living

barrier, six millions strong—we are six millions still—against the further progress of legislative conquest and extermination.'

. . . . .

'The Prussian state and people fell at Jena; *our* Jena was the famine of 1847. Twenty thousand Prussians fell at Jena. Twenty times twenty thousand Irishmen, with all their women and children, were ignominiously slain this year by hunger and plague. Within one year after the carnage of Jena most extensive land reforms were commenced to raise up the fallen nation anew; for the government of Prussia was *not* the enemy of Prussia. But, my friends, we hear of no land reform for Ireland. Neither shall we, I firmly believe, unless the survivors of the people take the affair into their own hands.'

Here now are the very same doctrines which have alarmed and shocked you all in my letter of a few days ago. Here they are, as broad and strong four months ago. And when those lectures appeared in print, you may suppose our Council took instant alarm, and prepared resolutions to repudiate me. No; they did nothing of the kind. Well, then, you must conclude they at least gravely rebuked me in the Council, and warned me not to say such things again. No; not that either. But I will tell you what they did; they unanimously voted that those lectures should be printed in their name as one of the Confederate educational tracts.

And I have here in my hand a proof of them from the printer; and I find that two thousand copies of them will be ready for distribution to-morrow.

And as I have no interest in the sale, I feel at liberty to recommend these lectures to the attentive perusal of all the farmers and labourers in Ireland, for whose use, no doubt, our Council has printed them in this cheap form.

In short, sir, if I have now broken the fundamental rules, I have also been breaking them systematically, openly, and with the sanction of the Council, ever since I drew them up, twelve months ago.

Most of the arguments advanced to-night I have no need to controvert. Generally speaking, they are arguments against the declaration of immediate war on the Queen of England—against leading out a starving peasantry to be mown down in the open field by the regular troops. None of these things, as of course you are aware, I have recommended.

But, even if I had, there are far worse things going on around us than bloodshed. Mr. Dillon has a great horror of local insurrections—perhaps he prefers local starvations—local desolation and pauperism, local exterminations.

Sir, I hold that the most disastrous insurrections were not half so horrible as any of these things; I hold that it is a more hideous national calamity for ten men to be cast out to die of hunger, like dogs in the ditches, than for ten thousand to be hewn to pieces, fighting like men and Christians in defence of their rights.

But beware, says Mr. McGee, beware of exasperating class against class; once disturb the ethereal calm—the sweet confidence and affection that reigns between classes in Ireland, and you know not where it may end. I answer, Skibbereen! Bantry! Schull! Westport! I point to the exterminations, the murders, the hangings, the coercion act!

But, sir, with this part of the argument I have done. Mr. Dillon, however, has put it to me that I ought to withdraw my amendment, in order to put what he considers the true issue before you—namely, an insurrectionary policy, or a parliamentary one. I will tell you why I do not; because I deny the competency of this meeting to settle upon either the one or the other, without full notice to all the Confederates in Ireland. And now I will complain of our Council in this matter. There has been for weeks in preparation a report purporting to fix an

exclusive policy for the Confederation, a copy of which I insisted should be sent to all town and country Clubs in England and Ireland, and to all Confederates with whom the secretary corresponds—and I was led to believe this would have been done before attempting to get the vote of a public meeting on so important a measure. But after weeks spent in the discussion of that document, at the very last hour it is withdrawn, and the very same thing is attempted to be done by another document—namely, by these resolutions. My reason then for putting my amendment in this simply negative form, is that I do not desire to thrust my opinion on the Confederation at present. I deny the right of either party to do so, and I only want to preserve the freedom of speech and action within our rules which we have hitherto enjoyed.

And now, I say, adopt these resolutions and you seal the fate of the Confederation; you make it merely one of the long series of moral-force agitating associations that have plagued Ireland for forty years. Adopt these, and all the world will see that you have thrown the people over board to conciliate the gentry.

If you pass these resolutions you may as well write on your walls, at one side 'Patience and Perseverance,' and at the other, 'The man who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy.' And so you may count upon a seven years' course of organising, agitating, and speechifying; and at the end of that time you can begin again, and try another seven years. The thing will last your time, and dying in a good old age you will leave to your children a noble legacy of Confederate cards.

Letter to the Irish Confederation

To the acting secretary,
Irish Confederation.

8 Ontario Terrace,
Rathmines.
7th February, 1848.

Dear Sir,—The resolutions adopted by the meeting of Dublin Confederates on Friday last virtually exclude me from all participation in the working of the Irish Confederation. I, therefore, resign my place on the Council, and my office as Inspector of Clubs for the province of Ulster.

The first of those resolutions recites our fundamental rule, pledging us to use, for the liberation of Ireland, all political, social, and moral influences within our reach; the second announces 'that the *only* hope of the liberation of this country lies in a movement in which all classes of Irishmen shall be fairly represented, and by which the interests of none shall be endangered'—which I believe pledges you now to use only those political and social influences which are *not* within your reach.

The third declares the Irish Confederation 'entertains a confident hope' of a combination of classes in Ireland against English dominion:—but I do not entertain a confident hope, or any hope at all, of that result.

The fourth forbids the expression of sentiments 'calculated to repel or alarm any section of our fellow-countrymen'—but I will belong to no society where I cannot express sentiments in favour of absolute Tenant-

Right, and where I cannot recommend the only known method of establishing that right, namely, *armed opinion*; and this always 'repels and alarms' that section of our fellow-countrymen called the 'gentry.'

The fifth disclaims all intention of involving the country in civil war, or of 'invading the just rights of any section of its people' (by which I understand the rights called by landlord 'rights of property'); but I desire to free the country, although in that process it should be involved in civil war, and although the said 'rights of property' should be invaded or even destroyed—a thing which I consider highly probable.

The sixth condemns resistance to the payment of rents and rates in all cases; but I mean to recommend such resistance in certain cases, as one of the 'political, moral, and social influences' whereby this island is to be freed from British rule, from slavery and debasement of mind and body, and from ultimate extinction as a nation.

The seventh, referring to the Coercion Act, asserts the right to use arms 'for legitimate purposes,' and at the same time condemns the 'perpetration of crimes;' thus implying that the Act in question is intended and calculated for the prevention of crime, and, consequently, acknowledging, on the part of the Confederation, that the Act is a *bona fide* measure for the good government of this country; but I hold that Act to be the result of a conspiracy between the enemies of the people, in order to thin the population by famine and slaughter; I hold the ostensible object of it, namely, the 'prevention of crime and outrage,' to be a false pretext, and its real object to be the same for which robbers have always disarmed their victims.

The eighth declares it to be a fatal misdirection of the public mind to divert it from constitutional action; but I hold that we have no constitution in Ireland; that it is a fatal misdirection of the public mind to assert we have; and that 'constitutional action' is a worn-out humbug.

The ninth asserts, for the first time, that the 'force of opinion' mentioned in our fundamental rules, means the force of opinion *exercised in constitutional operations* (which is not true), and 'that no means of a contrary character can be recommended or promoted through the Confederation,' which would debar the Confederation from all those means which I think applicable or adequate, and render its whole organisation worse than useless.

The tenth, while it 'emphatically disavows' all the principles which I hold, repudiates any right to control *private opinions;* but as I do not mean to keep my opinions private, I shall not be able to avail myself of that liberal proviso.

Until these resolutions, therefore, shall be all set aside, and the act of Friday evening entirely undone, I can take no part in the conduct of the Confederation. I deny, indeed, as I denied in the public meeting, the competency of the Dublin members to modify or alter the constitution of the whole body, or to put an arbitrary interpretation upon its rules, and that without even giving notice to any of the Clubs or country members of their intention so to do. But I do not insist upon this point. I shall not demand a repetition of our late discussion in the Clubs, nor seek to keep the people any longer engaged in a bye-battle about 'policy;' still less do I wish to lead a secession and set up another fragment of a party pretending to point out the people's path to liberty.

On the other hand, I do not choose to attend your meetings in order to thwart, or neutralize, or bring into contempt, all your legal and constitutional proceedings. I find myself in a minority, and am content to assume that the exposition of policy, solemnly adopted after three days' discussion in Dublin, will be ratified by the Confederates at large. But I believe it is a miserable mistake. I believe the original free constitution of the Confederation still remains in force, and that public opinion will

soon compel the council to reverse the act of imbecile despotism, which they consummated on Friday night.

Relying upon this confident expectation, upon the thorough honesty and worth of most of my late political associates, and, more than all, upon the manly spirit of independence and fair play, which gave life to our Confederacy at first, and is the life and soul of it still, I am unwilling to renounce connexion for ever with the only genuine National organisation in the country. Paralysed as the Irish Confederation is at present, mesmerised by the landlord influence, and bewildered by constitutional law, it is still the only body in Ireland that is making, or thinks it is making any single honest effort to rid the island of English dominion. I, therefore, only withdraw from active interference in the proceedings of the Confederation; and so soon as it shall be once more open to all repealers of the Union (be they physical-force revolutionists, aristocrats, democrats, Chartists, Orangemen, Whigs, or Thugs), I will be found in your ranks again.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,
JOHN MITCHEL.

Prospectus of the *United Irishman*

***United Irishman*, 12 February 1848.**

The projectors of the *United Irishman* believe that the world is weary of Old Ireland, and also of Young Ireland—that the day for both these noisy factions is past and gone—that Old and Young alike have grown superannuated and obsolete together. They believe that the public ear is thirsting to hear some Voice, bolder, more intelligible, more independent of parties, policies, and cliques, than any it has heard for a long while. They believe that Ireland really and truly *wants* to be freed from English dominion. They know not how many or how few will listen to their voice. They have no party prepared to halloo at their backs; and have no trust save in the power of Truth and the immortal beauty of Freedom. He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

The principles on which the *United Irishman* will be conducted are shortly these:—

1st. That the Irish people have a just and indefeasible right to this Island, and to all the moral and material wealth and resources thereof, to possess and govern the same for their own use, maintenance, comfort, and honour, as a distinct Sovereign State.

2nd. That it is in their power, and it is also their manifest duty to make good and exercise that right.

3rd. That the life of one peasant is as precious as the life of one nobleman or gentleman.

4th. That the property of the farmers and labourers of Ireland is as sacred as the property of all the noblemen and gentlemen in Ireland, and is also immeasurably more valuable.

5th. That the custom called 'Tenant Right,' which prevails partially in the North of Ireland, is a just and salutary custom both for North and South:—that it ought to be extended and secured in Ulster, and adopted and enforced, by common consent, in the other three provinces of the Island.

6th. That every man in Ireland who shall hereafter pay taxes for the support of the State, shall have a just right to an equal voice with every other man in the government of that State, and the outlay of those taxes.

7th. That no man at present has any 'legal' rights, or claim to the protection of any law, and that all 'legal and constitutional agitation' in Ireland is a delusion.

8th. That every free man, and every man who desires to become free, ought to have arms, and to practise the use of them.

9th. That no combination of classes in Ireland is desirable, just, or possible, save on the terms of the rights of the industrious classes being acknowledged and secured.

10th. That no good thing can come from the English Parliament, or the English Government.

To enforce and apply these principles—to make Irishmen thoroughly understand them, lay them up in their hearts, and practise them in their lives—will be the sole and constant study of the conductors of the *United Irishman*.

Letter to Lord Clarendon

***United Irishman*, 12 February 1848.**

TO THE RIGHT HON.
The Earl of Clarendon,
Englishman; calling himself
HER MAJESTY'S LORD LIEUTENANT GENERAL AND GENERAL GOVERNOR OF IRELAND.

MY LORD, To you, as the official representative of foreign dominion in our enslaved island, I mean to address a few plain words upon the aim and design of this new journal, *THE UNITED IRISHMAN*: with which your Lordship and your Lordship's masters and servants are to have more to do than may be agreeable either to you or to me.

These words shall be so very plain, that even if your Lordship vouchsafe to read them, I count upon your being unable (because you are a Whig and a diplomatist) to understand them in their simple meaning. I am going to mystify 'the Government' and the lawyers by telling the naked truth, whereof they are all hereby to take notice.

Simply, the, *THE UNITED IRISHMAN* newspaper has been undertaken by men who see that the sway of your nation here is drawing near its latter day—who know that all its splendid apparatus of glittering soldiers and conciliating statesmen, all its obscure and obscene lower world of placemen, place-beggars, place-jobbers, spies, special jurors, informers, and suborners—that is all a weak imposture, an ugly night-

mare lying on the breast of our sick state—that it is made up of prestige, and maintained by 'striking terror,' and needs but charm of Truth, a few true words spoken, a few bold deeds done—and the whole hideous brood will vanish like foul fiends at cock-crow.

Yes, indeed; these men believe full surely that they, even they, young men, undistinguished men, without arms in their hands, money in their purse, or a party at their back, are more than a match for the British Government in Ireland; can abolish the prestige and that præternatural terror (shadows which shake men's souls more than the substance of ten thousand soldiers); and can then, almost without an effort, grasp the monster by the throat and drag him, strangled, forth from his enchanted 'Castle.'

I am now, in order the better to confound your politics, going to give you a true account of the means we intend to use, and of the rules, signs, and pass-words of our new United Irish Society Lodge A. 1.—They are so simple that you will never believe them.

An exact half-century has passed away since the last Holy War waged in this island, to sweep it clear of the English name and nation. And we differ from the illustrious conspirators of Ninety-Eight, not in principle—no, not an iota—but as I shall presently shew you, materially as to the mode of action. Theirs was a secret conspiracy,—ours is a public one. They had not learned the charm of open, honest, outspoken resistance to oppression: and through their secret organization you wrought their ruin;—we defy you, and all the informers and detectives that British corruption ever bred. No espionage can tell you more than we will proclaim once a week on the house-tops.

If you desire to have a Castle detective employed about *THE UNITED IRISHMAN* Office in Trinity-street I shall make no objection, provided the man be sober and honest. If Sir GEORGE GREY or Sir WILLIAM SOMERVILLE would like to read our correspondence, we make him

welcome for the present,—only let the letters be forwarded without losing a post. So that you see we get rid of the whole crew of informers at once.

Now as to our positive action—Your Lordship, I believe, has read the Prospectus of our journal—in fact, I know you have:—Well, we count upon a great circulation for this weekly sheet of ours, amongst the industrious classes both in town and country all Ireland over; and we do really intend to preach and enforce the various principles there set down, to follow the same to all their consequences, and to point out in plain language the directest means of putting them into practice. Just take our third axiom, that the *Life of a peasant is as scared as the Life of a nobleman*—why it seems a truism, and yet it is denied and set at nought by all your 'laws,' as you call them. But consider what follows from that truth; consider all its practical bearings, and how, if once apprehended and laid to heart by the people, it is likely to be realized; think of the collateral questions involved—'if there be a surplus, who are the surplus?'—'the hard-working or the idle?'—'surplus once ascertained, how to be got rid of?' and the like; and then imagine how these questions are likely to find solution amongst 'an excitable peasantry.' Yet they are fair and legitimate questions, nay, pressing, life-or-death questions: and we mean in the columns of this *UNITED IRISHMAN* to argue, discuss, illustrate, and, if possible, determine them.

We will do the like by the other maxims in our Prospectus:— That legal and constitutional agitation in Ireland is a delusion:— That every man (except a born slave, who aspires only to beget slaves and die a slave,) ought to have ARMS and to practise the use of them:—

I shall not insult your Lordship's excellent understanding by pointing out to you all the manifest consequences that follow from these plain truths. But the people are not so acute—they need to have every one of these matters elucidated for them one by one, and set in all possible points of view; for indeed they are a simple and credulous people, and have had

much base teaching. They have been taught, for instance, that 'patience and perseverance' in rags and starvation is a virtue—that to eat the food they sow and reap is a crime, and that 'the man who commits a crime [this sort of crime] gives strength to the enemy. They were not taught by these bad teachers to avoid real crimes, lying, boasting, cringing, rearing up their children as beggars, taking their children's bread and giving it unto dogs. None of all this they learned yet; but please God they shall.

It is against the 'law' it seems, to preach all this; and your Lordship and the 'law-officers,' I have heard say, will overwhelm me with an indictment—and indeed I am told the worthy Chief Justice, at Clonmel lately, (where he was 'striking terror' into Tipperary), on seeing the programme of this paper, did roll his eyes like a carnivorous ogre, and then and there christened it the Queen's Bench Gazette; never doubting that he would make a meal of it one day in his den at Inn's-quay.

Yes, of course you will prosecute before long; in self-defence, I hope, you must;—that you will bid the sheriff to bid Mr. PONDER (that, I think, is the gentleman's name) not to pack the jury. A high-minded English nobleman, a conciliatory and ameliorative nobleman, so gracious at Lord Mayor's feasts, so condescending at Antient Concerts, so blandly benignant at reunions of literary persons,—surely such a nobleman as this will not play with loaded dice, or with marked cards, to juggle away an accused man's liberty or life. No, I feel that I have only to mention the circumstance in order to make you hasten to arrange this point with the worthy sheriff.

But lest there should be any mistake, I will tell you what I shall do—there shall be no secrets from you. I intend, then, to pay special regard to the jury lists, to excite public attention continually to the jury arrangements of this city; and, above all, to publish a series of interesting lectures on 'the office and duty of jurors,' more especially in cases of sedition, where the 'law' is at one side, and the liberty of their country at the other.

I need say no more. You must now perceive that this same anticipated prosecution is one of the chief weapons wherewith we mean to storm and sack the enchanted Castle. For be it known to you, that in such a case you shall either publicly, boldly, notoriously, pack a jury, or else see the accused rebel walk a free man out of the Court of Queen's Bench—which will be a victory only less than the rout of your Lordship's redcoats in the open field. And think you that in case of such a victory, I will not repeat the blow? and again repeat it,—until all the world shall see that England's law dose not govern this nation?

But you will pack? You will bravely defy threats and bullying, and insolent public opinion, and do your duty? You will have up *THE UNITED IRISHMAN* before twelve of your Lordship's *lion-and-unicorn* tradesmen who are privileged to supply some minor matters for the viceregal establishment? Will you do this, and carry your conviction with a high hand? I think you will, nay, I think you must, if you and your nation mean to go on making even a show of governing here.

Well, then, I will have other men ready to take up my testimony—ready and willing. Oh, Porsena CLARENDON! to thrust their hands into the blazing fire until it be extinguished. But you will ask for additional 'powers?' You will resort to courts-martial, and triangles, and free quarters? Well, that, at last, will be the end of 'constitutional agitation,' and Irishmen will then find themselves front to front with their enemies, and feel that there is no help in franchises, in votings, in spoutings, in shoutings, and toasts drank with enthusiasm—nor in any thing in this world save the extensor and contractor muscles of their right arms, in these and in the goodness of God above. To that issue the 'condition of Ireland question' must be brought.

I trust you are now aware of all our open secret. In plain English, my Lord Earl, the deep and irreconcilable disaffection of this people to all British laws, lawgivers, and law-administrators shall find a voice. That

holy Hatred of foreign dominion which nerved our noble predecessors fifty years ago, for the dungeon, the field, or the gallows, (though of late years it has worn a vile nisiprius gown and snivelled somewhat in courts of law and on spouting platforms), still lives, thank God! and glows as fierce and hot as ever. To educate that holy Hatred, to make it known itself, and avow itself, and at last fill itself full, I hereby devote the columns of the *UNITED IRISHMAN*,

And I have the honour to be, &c., &c.
JOHN MITCHEL,
12, Trinity-street,
12th February, 1848.

The Enemy's Parliament: Farmers Beware!

***United Irishman*, 12 February, 1848.**

Our readers will find but a small space in this journal devoted to the general proceedings of the British Parliament. Whatsoever specially threatens Ireland indeed we shall duly chronicle, not with a view of promoting 'good measures,' or deprecating bad ones—for their 'measures' are *all* necessarily bad, and it is not by 'deprecating' they are to be met, but quite otherwise—we shall attend to these machinations with the one sole object of putting the Irish people—*all* the people—each class and segment of the people, as they are successively in danger of robbery and outrage—on their guard against their unsleeping, unrelenting enemies, the ministers and legislators of Great Britain.

The proceedings of the past week, therefore, are without interest to us, save on one point alone—*Yesterday* the Irish Secretary was to have 'moved for leave' to rob the tenant-farmers of the north, and to cheat the tenant-farmers of the south;—and he would get leave, of course.

On that one piece of work we shall keep a look out.

What is it to us that Lord JOHN RUSSELL is bringing his Jew masters into Parliament—the gold-mongering, bullionist, and Israelitish interest cannot be stronger in the councils of 'our rulers' than it is already. The Jews of London are already masters of the two rival ministers and of the *Times* newspaper, which is stronger than either. In short, the 'moneyed interest' rules England already, and what is worse, Ireland also, yet a little while.

Neither do we take much interest in the several returns that have been moved for—return of Boards of Guardians dissolved—return of moneys expended in building the great new Westminster Hell, wherein human lives are to be gambled for—return of arms given up to the police, under the Coercion Act in Ireland, (they would like better to get a return, if they could anyhow come by it, of the arms *not* given up, but safely built into walls, or buried in coffins—shrouded in well-oiled flannel—in hope of a happy resurrection.) To these, and such like returns, debates, and palavers, let who so pleases incline his ear.

We shall watch the plot against the farmers. Heaven knows the same farmers are growing fewer and poorer every day; thousands of them have paid their *last* poor-rate;—the next that is struck will be for their relief, in the new character of paupers. Tens of thousands have been brushed off the land by consolidating landlords and the quarter-acre clause. Even in the best parts of the north of Ireland, every tenth man has been smitten down, and in his stead walks a ghastly pauper. And those who are not yet paupers are looking for situations under Poor Laws, or Board of Works, or any board of jobbers that has wages to give. Let those who know the North say—is it not true that respectable farmers, whose checks would have burned with shame two years ago at the bare thought, have been applicants—craving, canvassing, shameless applicants—for temporary employment under some impertinent Cockney 'inspector' or another. And their very Tenant-Right, that which was the pride and bulwark of the North, is *going*, *going*. Every ameliorating landlord philosophizes that it is 'injurious to the tenant himself.' (See Lord DEVON's Report.) Every trading agent is nibbling at it—gnawing into it:—'you must not sell your tenant-right, save to an approved tenant';—then, 'you must not sell it, save to a neighbouring tenant,' that so farms may be enlarged; then, 'you must not sell it too high; for that exhausts the incoming tenant's capital';—then, you shall not sell it at all, save by gracious 'permission' (the thing

your father or grandfather *created*, or bought with hard money)—and to get that permission you must stand, hat in hand, three times at the landlord's door, and nine times at the agents', praying that they will not rob you of *all!*

Farmers of Ulster! Is this your Tenant-Right? *This!* Yes, and be thankful you have so much left; for if the Ministerial Bill pass, you shall not have it long.

We have not seen one word of the proposed Bill; but assume beforehand, as a matter of course, that it is a fraud, and intended robbery—the fourth attempt of that nature within four years. The moment we get a copy, we shall examine, and turn it inside out; and then we shall have something further to say to the Ulster farmers on the means by which they established this right at first, and the means by which they are to keep it now;—and the farmers of the other three provinces, we believe, will listen to the detail with some interest.

The Pope, the Clergy, and the Flock

***United Irishman*, 12 February, 1848.**

The mission of the Englishman, Lord MINTO, at Rome, is to make his Holiness, if possible, head of the Constabulary department in Ireland, and the Sacred Congregation a Board of Police Commissioners.

If the Pope attends to all the reports he sees in 'English newspapers,' whether the same be called *defamationes* or *diffamationes*, it is no wonder he became alarmed about the state of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Once for all, we agree with the Bishop of ARDAGH, 'that Lord MINTO was sent to Rome to deceive the Holy See, and that the means he and his friends use are notorious calumnies.' We agree further with Dr O'HIGGINS, 'that under the name of legal right, the body of the landlords of Ireland are literally starving the poor, and doing so without a single remonstrance from our Lord Lieutenant, or his employer, Lord JOHN RUSSELL.' True as death. And we hold that it is the right and duty of these priests and bishops to stand by their poor people, who have no other friends, and to cry aloud, and spare not, against those tyrant exterminators who grind the faces of the poor, and strip them bare, and hunt them like beasts of prey off the face of the earth. When a price was set by the English on priests' heads—long ago, before Lord MINTO was at Rome—the people stood by *them*, sheltered them, and confronted them, and with their lives defended them against the redcoats and ban-dogs of England. And are they to desert those faithful people now for the terror of 'English newspapers?'

Here are shepherds who see their flocks invaded by ravenous wolves, and shall they, indeed, not lift hand or voice to plead or to save? Shall they not take the part of the weak against the strong, nor rebuke the wrong-doer to his face? Shall they not *denounce*, yea—'with staff and mitre,' or in whatever form is most effective, the men who devour the widow and the fatherless, and dip their hands in innocent blood? Wherefore, then, was the shepherd's crook placed in their hands?

We believe Lord MINTO's mission will fail; that the Pope will *not* help the English to govern us! and that Colonel McGREGOR, and Lord CLARENDON, and Sir EDWARD BLAKENEY, and the Chief Justice, will still have the onus upon them.

For Land and Life!

***United Irishman*, 19 February, 1848.**

Land in Ireland *is* Life. Just in the proportion that our people contrive to keep or to gain some foot-hold on the soil, in that proportion exactly they will live and not die.

All social, all industrial, all national questions resolve themselves now into *this*—how many Irish cultivators can keep root in the earth during the present year—that so the storm and blight, the famine, and the black flood of pauperism may not sweep them off, away into destruction and outer darkness?

Not to the individual farmer only is this a life-and-death question, but to society and to the nation. With the ruin of the tillers of the soil, *all* is ruined;—in vain shall you adopt manufacture pledges—hold meetings to develop resources—form companies—make speeches—insist upon national rights, a national legislature, a national flag;—once let the farmers be swept off this Irish soil, and there is an utter end of us and our cause. '*Ireland for the Irish*' means primarily and mainly, *not* 'Irishmen for Irish offices,' not 'political ameliorations,' not 'assimilation to English franchises'—patient Heaven! no;—it means, *first*, Irishmen fixed upon Irish ground, and growing there, occupying the island like trees in a living forest with roots stretching as far towards Tartarus as their heads lift themselves towards the clouds. In such a nation as this, industry, energy, virtue become possible; manufactures would grow up without ever a pledge, or a speech, or a waistcoat-pattern agitation; a national senate

would meet and sit, and rule the land, of its own native energy and by the necessities of the case, without ever a foreign statute empowering it to do so; a national army would arise from the earth like the sons of a dragon's teeth of old; and a national flag would paint itself without hands, and wave in the dawn of freedom, defying all the ends of the earth to pluck it down.

But let the tillers of the soil be once uprooted,—let the forest be *cleared*, and the prostrate, withered nation is fit for railway sleepers; the living forest is dead and gone;—the living nation is undone for ever, and the place that knew it shall know it no more.

In one word, Land is Life; and for the possession of land there is now a deadly struggle going on in every part of Ireland. The farmers of Ulster are in utter dismay, seeing their ancient tenant-right slipping away from them day by day, and the monster pauperism coming nearer and nearer to the door. The farmers of the other three provinces, without a shred of law or custom on their side, are, it is true, here and there making out a law for themselves; but, on the whole, they are yielding, sinking, withering off the earth. From north, south, east, and west, comes a terrible cry of terror and agony—Spare us, spare us our Lives and Lands!

In this crisis comes in the 'Government' with a 'bill to ameliorate the relations of landlord and tenant.' A fine phrase! A liberal and conciliatory phrase! But the bill, the bill? Surely it legalizes tenant-right at last? Surely it makes some first step, at least, to extend it to the South? Surely it interposes to stop this cruel warfare at last, and to give the hard-hunted peasants some respite, some hope?

Now as Heaven is above us, it is a Bill deliberately framed to destroy Tenant-Right where it is,—to cut off all hope of it where it is not—to rob the north,—to exterminate the south,—to take care that 'property' in Ireland shall support property, not by dividing the property but by slaying the surplus poverty. It does indeed interpose in the agrarian war,

but for the purpose of finishing it in the utter conquest of the People. It is the brother and ally of the Coercion Act. It is the remainder of the bargain between England and the landlords, fulfilled to the letter on England's part.

The bargain is this—Keep for *us*, ye landlords, our Irish province, and we shall set your heel on the necks of all your enemies.

The government bill is a complicated system of *compensations* for improvements,—and only *future* improvements, which shall have been effected hereafter according to certain notices, specifications, dockets, awards, certificates and final decrees,—improvements to which the tenant shall at last be lucky enough to make good his claim, after being coursed through four or five courts of law and equity, after employing attorneys and providing witnesses, at least three times for *each improvement*, covering quires of paper with elaborate schedules and statements, and dancing attendance on the clerk of the peace, the assistant barrister, the agent, the bailiff, the under-bailiff, and all the agents, bailiffs, and under-bailiffs of all persons who have any claim as landlords on the estate, which persons the tenant is to find out by his learning.

The chief point is the arbitration; and we will tell you how the arbitrators are to be appointed—the tenant to name one,—the landlord another,—and these two to name an umpire;—but if they cannot agree upon an umpire, (*and they never will*,) why then an umpire is to be named by the Petty Sessions Court, that is *by landlords*; so that *in every case* the landlord is to have two to one on the arbitration.

If the farmer, by any miracle or mistake, get an award for his improvements, the yearly value of them is to be allowed him in his rent for *twenty-one years*, and no more!

But what of past improvements, made without specification? What of the tenant-right farms purchased with money in Ulster, or held by the farmer and his ancestors time out of mind? Is it not to be legalised,

then? No; this bill is intended for the gradual abolition of that tenant-right property, according to the recommendation of Lord DEVON's Commission. Sir WILLIAM SOMERVILLE says plainly the bill is framed according to the report of that commission; and Mr. SHARMAN CRAWFORD says the certain effect of the bill in Ulster will be to 'afford a pretence to landlords to abrogate the custom. They would say that a law had been passed for the relief of the tenants in Ireland; and the landlord would take advantage of that law to deprive the tenants of those rights who had hitherto enjoyed them.' Of course he would; and such is the intention.

But we forgot; the bill is to be retrospective, as to tenants holding at a rent under 10l. These tenants, if they have effected substantial improvements, *within five years*, and have kept a record of the same, and can produce witnesses to prove it, are to be allowed, on ejectment, some compensation; but, it is not in any case to exceed three years' rent. If they cannot point out these improvements, and prove them in due form (even though they should have bought their little farms at 20l. an acre but last year), why they must tramp; and if the 'union' be a solvent one they may get out-door relief.

As to the southern farmers, if they have capital; and can employ lawyers; and ejectment do not overtake them in the meantime,—they are expected to lay down their guns and proceed quietly to get estimates and specifications prepared, put themselves in communication with the clerk of the peace, and begin at once to invest the capital they have gathered through the three famines in thorough-draining according to the Deanston system, and building *cottages ornees* with mitred caves and Tudor gables!

Yes, let northern and southern farmers lay down their arms, and cease their 'seditious projects,' as landlord HERBERT calls them. They must see that 'Government' is caring for them; in Government let their trust

be reposed, and let them lie down to sleep in peace under the shadow of its wings.

Indeed we are glad to learn from landlord CASTLEREAGH, in the course of this debate, '*that the farmers of the north of Ireland have nothing to complain of!*' Is this true, farmers of the north of Ireland?

But enough for one week; we shall return in our next number to this measure of wholesale and atrocious robbery and slaughter; and consider how it is to be met and defeated.

For defeated it must be.

Waterford Election—Mr. Meagher

***United Irishman*, 19 February, 1848.**

If Ireland had one single *chance* in contending with her ancient enemy upon his own chosen ground;—if Ireland had any *right* to send representatives to a British Parliament;—if Irishmen, there, were indeed members of an Imperial senate, and not captives dragged at the chariot wheels of an Imperial ovation in the enemy's capital city;—if that Parliament were not a Lie, an imposture, an outrage, a game in which our part and lot must be disgrace and defeat for ever,—a shield and strong tower for its masters, but against us a two-edged sword;—if it were *anything* to Ireland besides a conduit of corruption, a workshop of coercion, a storehouse of starvation, a machinery of cheating and a perpetual memento of slavery,—then we should congratulate the 'electors' of Waterford on this opportunity of doing honour to themselves, and conferring a trust on their most distinguished citizen.

Mr. THOMAS F. MEAGHER has offered himself as their representative. We give an extract from his address:—

> 'The grounds upon which I seek your trust are these:—I shall not meddle with English affairs. I shall take no part in the strife of parties—all factions are alike to me. I shall go to the English House of Commons to insist upon the right of this country to be held, governed, and defended by its own citizens, and by them alone. Whilst I live, I shall never rest satisfied until the kingdom of Ireland has won a parliament, an army, and a navy of her own.

. . . . .

> 'Of other things I shall not speak,—petty ameliorations,—instalments of justice,—scraps of government patronage;—if these things mingle in the burning hopes of the nation, the day for Ireland has not yet arrived, and I shall wait for other men and other times.'
>
> 'But if your thirst be, what I hope it is, for the pure and living waters, and if you think that my youth and strength, my glory here and hope hereafter, would inspire my efforts to realise your wishes, every personal objection to me will disappear. You will pledge your trust to my truth, and that obligation will, by its own holiness, compel me to fulfil it.'

They are noble sentiments; and if there be faith in man, here is a man who will redeem his pledges. What glorious genius, indomitable courage and passionate devotion to a sacred cause, *can do*, we might expect to see done by Mr. MEAGHER.

Yet we pray for his defeat. If Mr. MEAGHER were in Parliament men's eyes would be attracted thither once more; some hope of 'justice'might again revive in this too easily deluded people. The nobler his genius, the more earnest his zeal, the more conspicuous his patriotism, just the more mischief would he do in propping up, through another Session, perhaps through another famine, the miserable delusion of a 'parliamentary party.'

No; we trust that Mr. MEAGHER will never sit in an English senate. There are other candidates far more suitable,—moral-force agitators on the *balmy* interest;—old placemen, pensioners, five-pound-Conciliation-Hall Repealers; these are the men to send into Parliament. In our souls we believe the only *use* that can be made of that institution is to turn it into public contempt by *demonstrating* that it is merely a mart for buying and selling. Not eloquence, therefore, not genius, or devotion, or courage, is

the true qualification for an Irish member,—but simply a decided turn for huxtering.

Can we say anything more, calculated to dissuade the electors of Waterford from thinking of Mr. MEAGHER? Yes; he pledges himself against begging places for his constituents. Now, we do assure you, worthy independent electors, that he will keep his word, little as you think it; you fancy it is merely one of the hustings tricks;—you are mistaken;—do not elect him under such an idea; if any of you have meritorious sons or relations waiting for a small place, this gentleman, we tell you deliberately, will do nothing for you.

We have no wish to dictate; but if the electors of Waterford have any confidence in us, we shall only add that we are for COSTELLOE.

‘Sanatory Reform!’

***United Irishman*, February 19, 1848.**

The only assembly, meeting or body, club, committee or council, connected with this island, which appears totally ignorant that a famine now rages in the land, happens just to be the sovereign legislature of Great Britain. The Commons House of the ‘United Kingdom’ is now sitting in its third week; and we defy any practical man to conclude from its proceedings that it knows a tittle or feels it is responsible for, or shows it cares, a whiff about the present sufferings or future lot of our people! Why, the legislature which is supposed to make laws for Ireland is engaged in the aesthetics and courtesies of legislative science, a bill for the emancipation of Jews, who lend them ‘certain monies’—is immersed up to the elbows in the very extreme of social ameliorative measures, the ‘Sanatory Reform of Towns!’ Yes, indeed, our patriotic countryman SHIEL, has delivered a heartfelt and most exquisite bouquet of rhetoric, on the constitutional sufferings of old Clothesmen, and Bell Brokers; and the ‘amiable MORPETH,’ he whom patriots gave dinners to in Hawkins-street, has spoken volumes on deep sewers, barrel-drains, and, above all, the enormities of ‘intra-mural interments.’

And you, starveling people of Ireland, below a common sewer in the regard of *your* ‘legislature,’ ‘where do YOU bury your dead?’ If you consider for a moment on ‘the whole question of intra-mural interments, and on obsequies generally,’ as the *Morning Chronicle* importantly puts it, as regards *you*, you must come at once to the conclusion that you need not

this bland undertaker MORPETH. For twelve months *you* have enjoyed the full benefits of extra-mural interment, and in the open air, too. Yet, strange to say, the sanatory effects thereof are not quoted in the report of one CHADWICK, a constitutional authority relied on implicitly by those who manage these matters for you. Your fathers, your mothers, your brothers, your sisters, your children, have lain coffinless and shroudless for weeks in the ditch, with the rain bleaching their faces, and the wintry wind moaning over them, bearing up to Heaven the offensive stream of suffering, and yet you never thought that was a 'sanatory reform.' Outside the workhouse walls we have seen the coffins piled up—up, like logs of timber; we have seen them lying there for weeks and months, till the ends fell out, and the blue unshapen matter (which had been man) protruded itself in the daylight once more, and yet you did not duly appreciate the inestimable benefits of 'extra-mural interment.' Oh! were you among your legislators for an hour, you would acquire some knowledge of the benefits of civilization, which, without boasting or speeching, its members have for twelve months forced you to enjoy. 'A moral as well as physical degradation is perpetuated' say they, by corpses dying after death in the houses where they died. That moral and physical degradation has been spared you. You could not wait—you could not take time to kiss the damp lips of the dead—but you were compelled at once to drag the corpse naked through the doorway, and fling it into a bottomless creek. You looked not for 'mortuaries'—for artistically solemn, sculptured, architectural houses, 'specially provided for the purpose' (suggests the *Chronicle*), wherein to store your dead, but when you could you brought them to the nearest pit—and when you could not, they lay within the walls they builded, rotten on their own hearthstones.

But these matters have no concern with the recent debates. We are thinking not how to get rid of the dead, but how to keep the living alive—a matter of very small interest to the body which makes laws for us.

Nevertheless, even to some Irishmen 'sanatory reform' in England does appear a most important consideration—nay, some Irishmen do feel, like Mr. JOHN REYNOLDS, very uncomfortable for the last week, because this chief city of Ireland is not going to be patronized with governmental sewers, Viceregal water-closets, and state offices of that character. Here is a 'sanatory reformer' of Ireland in the year of God, 1848, and of Famine the year III! Our national Representative, REYNOLDS, imploreth England for a comprehensive measure!

Yes! one sewerage we want—one common drain for this whole land, one *cloaca*, deep and Broad as Tartarus, and stern and implacable as Styx, to sweep away from us for evermore the corruption, the currish fawning, the slavish envy of even English foulness, the avarice, the jobbing, the ignorance, the besotted brutish insensibility in which we are steeped to the neck! Get on thy knees for *that*, O Corporator REYNOLDS!

To the Small Farmers of Ireland

Letter I
***United Irishman*, 26 February, 1848.**

You are now, I hope, in high delight with your situation and prospects, your 'Tenant-Leagues' and your 'Tenant-Right' meetings; your legal and constitutional resolutions at Kilmacthomas and Kilkenny, at Derry and Monaghan;—your petitions to 'Parliament' for what you called 'Bills,' and the hustings harangues of candidates on the 'Tenant-Right' speculation,—have brought you so far. Here you have your 'Bill' at last.

Surely you have reason to be thankful that you did not listen to the advice of '*seditious persons*,' who declared that you should look no longer to the legal petitioning 'patience and perseverance' method of establishing your rights. You must now feel grateful to the worthy Sharman Crawford who, in his speech at Coleraine, lately, so earnestly cautioned you against those seditious persons, and more especially against *me* by name! You see, too, how that worthy gentleman is borne out in the House of Commons by Mr. Herbert, a great Kerry squire, who quotes his Coleraine speech with approbation, as proving 'that the interests of the tenants are jeopardized by those who make extravagant demands on their behalf, in connexion with seditious and dangerous projects,'—meaning *my* projects. You see now what a danger you have escaped! And the same landlord Herbert, in order to show the atrocious nature of these projects, tells of a certain 'member of the Irish Council,' meaning *me* 'who not only defined what Tenant-Right was, but told them what the effect of it would be:—the

effect, it was said, would be the *transfer of property* from the owner to the occupier'—Oh, horrible! The House was scandalized, as well it might be, at such an idea; and you are expected to congratulate yourselves that you gave no quarter to so sacrilegious a thought, but trustfully committed yourselves to the peaceful ways of the constitution, and the legislation of ameliorating landlords. Whereof I most heartily wish you joy.

But enough of this mocking vein. You are probably in a serious mood; and I have some serious words to address to you. First, however, let me confess that I am quite as 'seditious' a person as the old lady who represents Rochdale describes me;—that my projects are no less 'dangerous' than landlord Herbert fears;—that I do actually hold the life and property of a working man as sacred as the life and property of any squire in Ireland (than which no sedition can be blacker);—and that I did indeed propose to certain landlords in the Irish Council that they should once for all acknowledge in the tenant-class a right of perpetual ownership in the soil, subject to a fair rent; and as landlord Herbert vouches that my speech on that occasion was a speech of 'considerable ability,' I will just, before going further, quote a few passages of it for you as I find it in the newspapers:—

> 'The very best devised scheme of compensation for future improvements, whereby farmers may possibly create a property to themselves hereafter, and a substantial Yeomanry may arise in future ages, will not save the present occupying tenant-farmers from eviction and destruction—will not save the property and industry of Ireland from being swallowed up by the ever-deepening and widening vortex of national pauperism. It would not prevent or even check that frightful operation described here on Thursday, by the hon. member for Clare, the operation of 'passing pauper through the workhouse'—that is, walking farmers off their lands, locking up their doors, quenching their fires, driving them in shoals into the throat of this insatiable poor-law, and flinging them out from thence landless, homeless,

desperate beggars—a terror and scandal to society, and a burden to the very earth. Thus, every scheme for what is called the amelioration of this country, seems based on the assumption that the first thing to be done, is to weed the Irish population out of the Irish soil. Pauper labour, pauper farms, pauper schools of industry, pauper life, and pauper spirit—these are the basis on which our law-makers would have us re-construct society in this island.

It is tenant-right alone that can stay this plague. There is no doubt that the acknowledgment of such a right in the tenants would virtually give them a joint proprietorship in the fee-simple of the land, and might therefore be called, to some extent, a *transfer of property*. But if, at the same time, it stimulated industry, greatly increased production, and added immensely to the national wealth, then it can be easily conceived how it would add to the substantial wealth of the landlord, as well as of the tenant, making the latter an independent man, without taking a farthing from the rent of the former. In fact, all this does take place in Ulster; and there, where the tenant's possession will sell for half the fee-simple value, or more, the landlord has, on an average, quite as high a rent as in other provinces, and infinitely better secured. In tenant-right is security against universal national pauperism and confiscation. And what a blessed exchange this would be! I hold it to be the most signal and fundamental mistake ever committed in legislation since the beginning of the world, that of acknowledging a right to relief in an able-bodied pauper—an able-bodied idler. I maintain that a man has a right to live by the sweat of his brow, and not otherwise; and that it is the duty of society—that is of the State—to secure him fair play, a fair field for his honest labour, and no more. And in Ireland the only available field is the land. Set that free—disenchant the soil— enfranchise industry, and let it loose upon its natural element, and you abolish able-bodied pauperism and out-door relief at once.'

These are the 'seditious projects' which disgust squire Herbert. It is further quite true that I did afterwards write a letter wherein I said the only method of establishing 'Tenant-Right' is by 'the determined public opinion of *armed men*.' And, lastly, it is true that I have habitually made light of all constitutional agitation and parliamentary palaver on the subjects of Tenant-Right, and more especially of the eternal 'Bills.' So that in the matter of 'sedition' I am fully as bad as I have been described, if not a good deal worse. Yet I have some hope that you will listen a little to me now. There stands your legal and constitutional Bill, a Bill brought in by a most 'liberal' Government, introduced by a most conciliatory statesman. You see now what the 'law' is going to do for you; and you are probably aware, at last, that your alternative is, Sedition, or Starvation.

Yes the truth must be told, you are to be slain, one million of you—and these 'laws' are the weapons wherewith execution is even now going on; Those of you who have property are to render it up, and die—those who have none are simply to die. *Will* you give up your properties and your lives? Or if not, how will you save them?

Now, friends, I think I hear some genteel patriot saying to you, meet, agitate, make your voice be constitutionally heard in the parliament! Organize, educate, conciliate. Place yourself in the hands of Sharman Crawford, and he will contrive you another dreary Bill and after he has bored the house with it for half a dozen Sessions, the survivors of you will see what will come of it; but take care, the genteel patriot will say that you do nothing to repel or *alarm* the better classes; after a while they will be flocking to your ranks for nationality; remember that without them you are but a vile 'mob;' and, above all, beware, beware of sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion!

A genteel slave!—who ought to be brained with his lady's fan.

There will not much longer, I think, be toleration for drivelling of this sort; you are by this time aware, I trust, that all 'laws,' law-givers,

constituted authorities, thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, and powers in this land *are* against you, and *will be* against you; but the question comes back—if agitating and petitioning a foreign parliament be useless, then what are you to do?

First, there is a simple calculation to be made;—you, the men doomed to destruction, are a million and more —they, the landlords of Ireland, who find you to be surplus, and declare that you and they cannot live together on this soil, are, we will say, eight thousand—that is, one well-born idler to one hundred and twenty-five working drudges, nearly. And to keep this well-born idler in the position he 'has a right to expect,' the hundred and twenty-five workers are to perish Here is strictly an economic question (Political Economy *for the million*); and it may be stated thus—are the eight thousand idlers worth keeping at this expense?—do they pay?—or is there any cheaper mode of keeping them?

In the meantime, it appears plain, from all authorities, that there is a 'surplus' either of the one class or the other;—you, the million, seem pitted in deadly straggle against them, the eight thousand; and either you or they, it is feared, *must die*.

But it is a great truth, 'that the Life of *one* peasant is as precious as the Life of *one* nobleman or gentleman.

Letter II
United Irishman, 4 March, 1848.

In my last letter I proved to you that, in the opinion of your rulers, there are at least one million of your class *too many* now alive upon this island, including women and children. That is a full million *still*, after all that the Famine, the Typhus, and the Law have already killed. I have explained to you the calculation by which the better classes' and the English, between

them, have determined, or very nearly, the exact numbers necessary to be slain; showed you how their laws, their commissions, their *boons* and *good measures* have been working systematically to that end; and especially pointed out how the new Landlord and Tenant Bill is the most deadly weapon yet contrived for your plunder first, and slaughter afterwards insomuch that where the Famine slew thousands, the Bill will slay tens of thousands.

Their intention is to rob you, and to murder you, and to divide the spoil between the Irish landlords and the English Government. *This* is their intention; and you may as well look it steadily in the face at once.

What you *have* to do, we are now to consider; and the very nature of the peril itself suggests the method of resistance. For *why* are you surplus? *Why* must a million or more of you be slain? Why? It is not that Ireland does not produce enough to sustain all her people; it is *not* that *you* do not raise, with your own hands, far more than enough to support you and your families. It is because—and only because—out of your harvests and haggards the English claim a *tribute*, the state claims *taxes*, and the landlords claim *rent*—all enormous in amount, and all prior to your claim for subsistence. You must pay them *all* before you touch a grain; they have 'law' for it.

The plain remedy for all this,—the only way you can save yourselves alive,—is to *reverse the order of payment*; to take and keep, out of the crops you raise, your own subsistence, and that of your families and labourers, *first*; to part with none until you are sure of your own living,—to combine with your neighbours that they may do the like, and back you in your determination,—and to *resist*, in whatever way may be needful, all claims whatever, legal or illegal, till your own claims are satisfied. *If* it needs *all* your crop to keep you alive, you will be justified in refusing and resisting payment of any rent, tribute, rates, or taxes whatsoever.

This is the true doctrine of Political Economy. All economists write that the *rent of land*, for instance, is the *overplus*, remaining after the cost of labour and the reasonable profit of the farmer.

The learned Malthus (no friend of yours, I can tell you,) defines it thus (*Principles of Political Economy*): That portion of the value of the whole produce, which remains to the owner of the land, *after* all the outgoings belonging to its cultivation, of whatever kind, have been paid.'

The chief outgoing belonging to cultivation is the subsistence of the cultivators,—and if anything be sought in the name of rent before *that* is provided for, it is not rent, but plunder and ought to be resisted.

In one word, *whatever* is needful to be done in order to enable you to consume, in security, as much of your own produce as will keep soul and body together that you must *do*.

But I am told it is vain to speak thus to *you*; that the 'peace policy' of O'Connell is dearer to you than life and honour—that many of your clergy, too, exhort you rather to die than violate what the English call 'law,'—and that you are resolved to take their bidding. Then *die*—die in your patience and perseverance; but be well assured of this, that the priest who bids you perish, patiently amidst your own golden harvests, preaches the gospel of England, insults manhood and common sense, bears false witness against religion, and blasphemes the providence of God.

I will not believe that Irishmen are so degraded and utterly lost as this. The earth is awakening from sleep: a flash of electric fire is passing through the dumb millions. Democracy is girding himself once more like a strong man to run a race; and slumbering nations are arising in their might, and 'shaking their invincible locks.' Oh! my countrymen, look up, look up! Arise from the death-dust where you have been lying, and let this light visit your eyes also, and touch your souls. Let your ears drink in the blessed words, '*Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!*' which are soon to ring from pole to pole.

Pray for that day: and preserve life and health, that you may worthily meet it. Above all, let the man amongst you who has no gun, s*ell his garment, and buy one*.

To Lord Clarendon, Her Majesty's Ameliorator-General and General Developer of Ireland

***United Irishman*, 11 March, 1848.**

My Lord,—

I am glad to see, by Lord Lansdowne's speech, that your lordship's attention is turned to THE UNITED IRISHMAN. If you attend to it regularly, you may hear of something to your advantage: but I have not leisure to-day (being occupied with more important matter) to do more than congratulate you on your wisdom in resolving *not to prosecute this journal*. Let Lord Stanley rave—let the *Times* rant—let the *Evening Mail* roar, and let me alone.

Lord Lansdowne's *reason*, indeed, for letting my treason escape, is false and libelous, as one might expect from a Whig minister. He says that the 'want of character' of the persons who write this paper, and whom he calls 'young gentlemen of no property,' deprives their efforts of mischievous effect: and he further says that he 'concurs with Lord Stanley, that there is no extent of sedition, *of falsehood*, and of exaggeration, to which these young gentlemen of no property will not resort.' Now, Lord Stanley has said nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he attributed

honesty, *earnestness*, and *incorruptibility* to the writers of THE UNITED IRISHMAN.

But I take Lard Lansdowne's *reason* for not prosecuting me to be also the reason of the whole gang of 'ministers,' and especially your lordship's reason; for the matter we find is entirely in your hands. Well, then, I have only to say, that it is a false, wicked, scandalous, and malicious libel; and if the privilege of Parliament enables Lord Lansdowne to utter it, I take leave to trample on the privilege of Parliament, in order to tell him that he lies in his threat.

The writers of this newspaper have a higher character than Lord Lansdowne or your lordship has, although they do not receive a large portion of the public money for pretending to govern the country, as you and he do.

But now I will tell you the true reason why you do not try to punish my 'sedition,' and why have invented this false and base excuse—it is because you know that you would be *defeated*; it is because you are conscious that you and your colleagues, and your red-tape officials, are not a government at all, but a crew of conspirators, holding our country by force, fraud, corruption, and espionage: and you are afraid to take issue with me in your own law-courts, simply because you know that your law-courts are a sham, just as your bayonets are a chimera, and that it only needs one bold effort to trample on them both.

My good lord, your excuses will not do. It is your duty, if you mean to go on governing this country, to put me down—but it also my duty to put you down, and *I* will do my duty.

But to convict your lordship and your colleagues, not only of politic lying, but of unparalleled *meanness* also, you see the letter I print to-day from my agent in Enniskillen. It is only one of many such I have received, and I will give more of them next week. That letter *proves* that you do feel it necessary to put down this UNITED IRISHMAN, *if you are able*: it

proves that your excuse about giving me a contemptuous pardon, because of 'want of character,' is a lie: and it proves that your *only* reason for not ordering my arrest at once is that you *dare* not.

In saying this, I use no bravado. I know as well as you do that your Attorney-General would probably obtain his conviction against me, and that your Chief Justice would certainly sentence me to two years' imprisonment at least. But though convicted and imprisoned, *I will not be defeated*; and you know it. And then, if I am *not* convicted, you also know that you may forthwith pack up your portmaneau, and go to England, (if you are allowed to escape so easily,) and you may as well in that case roll up the Union Flag that flies in the Upper Castle-yard, and take it along with you, (if it remain untorn.)

At all events, my lord, you should tell your policemen to let my agents alone. I, the principal offender, am here, at 12, Trinity-street, a few yards from your castle gate.

I remain, your enemy,
JOHN MITCHEL.

To Lord Clarendon, Her Majesty's Executioner-General, and General Butcher of Ireland

***United Irishman*, 18 March, 1848.**

My Lord,—

The city of Dublin has been thrown into a mighty ferment this week by you and your *aide-de-camps*, and other deputy and assistant butchers. One who prided himself on being 'charitable,' as I do not, might in his charity suppose that you feel simply ashamed this morning for having caused so many peaceful citizens, and their wives, to lose their sleep, last night, and who knows how many nights?—Listening breathless for the first roar of the insurrection.

I am not so 'charitable.' I believe you are disappointed that you have lost the occasion of making a terrible example of the disaffected Irish. The pretence of governing this country by what you call 'law' having been finally abandoned, the edge of the sword was your only hope. This policy is distinctly marked out for you by the *Morning Chronicle* (one of the organs of your masters, the Jews) in an article of last week. The writer says, speaking of Ireland—

> 'A British government ought not, except in circumstances of peculiar extremity, to run the chance of being baffled in a court of law by political offenders; and it can afford to abstain from such proceedings, because it is conscious that it will not be baffled by them *in the field or the street*. The moment the fighting begins, *we have them*.'

It is true, this butchering plan of government has long been the only one at bottom relied on for Ireland. The show of governing by 'law,' that was sometimes resorted to, has become too transparent; the trick of packing castle-juries by means of jugglers for sheriffs, and retired wizards for clerks of the crown, has really grown too stale; and it was too well watched, and in fact *blown*. Happily, that imposture is given up, and any body who has heretofore deluded himself with the idea that there is a 'constitution' in Ireland—even your friends and allies, the Messrs. O'Connell, who would be satisfied with the smallest shred, thread, patch, or tatter, of constitution,—must now at last see the terms on which we stand with respect to you and your government—terms, namely, of mortal hate and defiance.

The events of the last week are valuable, because they prove this, and set it at rest. The people of Dublin intimated their wish to hold a peaceful public meeting on St. Patrick's Day, to congratulate the people of France, and express their sympathy with the French Republic. Nobody had advised, or suggested, or hinted, that the citizens should attend that meeting armed, or should, either in going to it or returning, excite any tumult, assault any passenger, or break any window—far less, storm your Excellency's Castle, and then and there extinguish foreign rule in Ireland, which, however desirable, is evidently not to be done by an unarmed multitude in the face of a powerful and prepared garrison, under arms day and night, with cannon pointed and matches burning, distributed through the city in such positions as to enfilade every street; and especially

while there is bright moonlight, and the measure of cutting the gas-pipes would not avail. In short, there was not, as you well know, the slightest danger of expectation of the meeting of Trades ending in an insurrection; but inasmuch as you, and the government you serve, hate and *fear* the French Republic, and the French People, and can ill endure that those who abhor the Union Jack should publicly hail and bless the Tri-colour—for this reason it suited you to devise a panic, and pretend to believe that what was announced as a peaceful meeting was really intended as a rebellion. All your newspapers, both in London and Dublin, helped you in this plot: and thus we hear of all the grind-stones of all the barracks being worn down with the whetting of cavalry sabres, for the bowels of Dublin citizens;—of English military officers being sworn in as extemporaneous magistrates, that they may read the 'riot act,' as they lead a charge of bayonets;—of all the public stables being occupied by dragoons, and their horses shod with plates of iron, or, in some cases, as I hear, with *gutta percha*, that they may come upon us, at full gallop, with the velvet step of tigers—on the principle of *Lear's* paternal contrivance:—

> 'It were a delicate stratagem to shoe
> A troop of horse with *felt*. I'll put it in proof;
> And when I have stolen upon those sons-in-law,
> Then, kill, kill, kill.'

But you will say there was danger; there *was* alarm; and there were instigators to insurrection. The UNITED IRISHMAN gave directions for street-fighting and the construction of barricades; and 'treason is openly preached in Dublin,' as Lord John Russell declares. Well, then, it was your duty, if you were a legal governor, and *not* a butcher, to use the resources of the 'law,' if there were law in this land, to punish the instigators of rebellion, and to crush the public preachers of 'treason;' but with that

ferocious cruelty that ever belongs to a government of fraud and force, you have deliberately relinquished the law-courts, where you would meet the advisers, the originators, the head and front of all this Jacobin 'treason,' and chosen the streets and fields, where you can easily provoke or suborn a riot, and then mow down the innocent people with your grape and canister. This might be the thought, not of a butcher, but of a demon.

'Treason,' you say, 'is openly preached in Dublin.' Yes—for instance, I preach, from week to week, that saving doctrine which you and Lord John Russell call treason. I have long thought it an unfair and cowardly practice in those who assume to advise the people, or who conduct organs of public opinion, that they have inflamed the multitudes against their rulers by indirect and convert inuendo, keeping themselves in safety all the while, behind some quibble of law. I have reversed that plan: I avow distinctly, every Saturday, what I know the people think and feel, and sign my name to it. I court your *ex-officios* and your criminal informations, and all the other weapons of your Queen's Bench warfare. Yet, though the articles of the UNITED IRISHMAN can draw together an army of ten thousand men, they have hitherto failed to provoke a simple information or indictment.

The reason, of course, is, that Ireland is governed, not by 'law,' but by the sword; and that you are not a Lord Lieutenant, but a *butcher*.

And as for those same warlike and treasonable articles in this newspaper, they will be steadily continued and improved upon, week after week, until they have produced their effect,—the effect not of a street riot to disturb a peaceable meeting, but of a deliberate and universal arnament to sweep this island clear of British butchers, and plant the Green Flag on Dublin Castle. The object of them, I may as well inform you (for our Lodge has no secrets from you), is to produce a reaction against those drivelling doctrines of 'legality,' and 'constitutional agitation,' which were preached

for forty years by your late ally, Daniel O'Connell. Ireland, if I can help it, will not much longer endure talk of *law*, where there is no law but rope and steel—or *peace*, where there is no peace but the grave, or *patience and perseverance*, where human beings are daily, hourly, withering and perishing by myriads, for want of food, in the midst of abundance. To make my countrymen despise, and hate, and curse, this vile teaching, and adopt and love the *true* methods of winning freedom, and practise the same the first favourable opportunity—this is the aim and mission of the UNITED IRISHMAN, and *not* to raise a street riot on St. Patrick's Day.

As to the meeting itself, which has caused all your lordship's campaigning, it will, most assuredly, be held, and has been postponed from Friday to Monday, not on account of your splendid squadrons and frowning batteries, but simply because of the negotiations which were still on foot to secure the union of all true haters of British power for this demonstration in honour of the Sovereign People of France. But whatever may come of those negotiations, *the meeting will be held*.

We will have another day for the Revolution.

In the mean time, I cannot conclude without testifying my joy that the humbug of a 'Constitution' is gone, and that the people of Ireland and their mortal foes at length stand opposite one another, within point-blank range.

Your enemy, as ever,
JOHN MITCHEL.

P.S.—I cannot help mentioning that a violent rumour has been current all the week (strengthened considerably by the declarations of your accomplice, Lord John Russell, in the English Parliament), to the effect that your lordship is, after all, going to return to legal courses—to prosecute certain 'Jacobins' for sedition—to indict me

for ‘treason,’ and to take your chance for getting the juries packed as usual. I do not believe it. I think this rumour was raised by you and your accomplice, to induce me to abscond—just as the rumour of an insurrection was, to give a colour to your preparations for carnage. I will not abscond—I am here at 12, Trinity-street, and intend to remain here.

To Lord Clarendon, Her Majesty's Executioner-General, and General Butcher of Ireland II

***United Irishman*, 25 March, 1848.**

My Lord,—

Being disappointed in a premature street insurrection, which you hoped to drown in the blood of Dublin citizens, you have been at length shamed into an attempt at vindicating the 'law' in the courts of law. This is much better and more manly. It was a shame to let 'seditious' writers and speakers go on so long with impunity exciting disaffection,—up to the very point, as you though, of revolution,—and then, instead of citing *them* to the courts, which stood open all the while upon Inns'-quay to lie in wait at the corners of all streets with your well-whetted slaughter-knives, to mangle the people. Indeed, it was a shame: keep those butchering-tools *for the French*, in case they should unhappily come to propagate Equality and Fraternity here; and for the future, my dear Lord, govern your province by 'law,' according to those humane and never-to-be-enough-admired methods provided by the British Constitution; and with that mixture of firmness and conciliation which is admitted on all hands to distinguish your Lordship above all other statesmen.

Not that I join by any means in the ridicule which has been cast upon you for your extensive military preparations. Some of the newspapers, I observe, try with all their might, to be facetious at your Lordship's expense; but truly I think there was nothing laughable in the business. There was not a single butchering-knife too many—not a single ambuscade in the College, the Custom-house, or Lundy Foot's, that was not a necessary precaution. For this People are, I must confess it, so desperately disaffected (not knowing and appreciating as they ought the blessings of the constitution aforesaid), that your Excellency is actually not safe in Dublin. There seems to be some danger, that so long as your Excellency shall honour our city with your residence, you will need to be guarded night and day in such sort as very few paternal governors have been in this world. Mind not, therefore, the laughter of a ribald press, and take care of your precious life.

Meantime, you have undertaken to vindicate the law, in the Court of Queen's Bench, 'before the Queen herself,' and by the help of the worthy Chief Justice. Truly, it was high time. I am no advocate for 'Liberty of the Press;' I think no man can commit a much graver crime than exciting discontent against government and laws, wherever there are government and laws. I hold that in any well-ordered state—in any state, indeed, that has a pretence of government at all, such a society as the Irish Confederation—such a journal as THE UNITED IRISHMAN—ought not to be suffered for one week to pollute the social atmosphere with its poison; it is a nuisance, a scandal, and ought to be abated quickly, and put out of sight, if not by the indignation of the community, then, surely, by the strong arm of the law.

But the case is this:—I assert and maintain that in the island of Ireland there is no government or law—that what passes for 'government' is a foul and fraudulent usurpation, based on corruption and falsehood, supported by force, and battening on blood. I hold that the meaning and

sole object of that government is to make sure of a constant supply of Irish food for British tables, Irish wool for British backs, Irish blood and bone for British armies; to make sure, in word, of Ireland for the English, and to keep down, scourge, and dragoon the Irish into submission and patient starvation. This being the case, I hold that the Irish nation is, and has long been, and ought to be, in a state of *war* with 'government,' albeit the said government has heretofore had clear victory, and is at this moment in full possession of the island, its inhabitants, and all that is theirs. But your lordship, on the other hand, maintains, I presume, that the thing called a government is not a foreign usurpation, but one of the 'institutions of the country'—that the persons composing it are *not* robbers, and butchers, but statesmen—that their object is not the plunder and starvation of the people, but the good order and peace of society, the amelioration of social relations, and the dispensation of justice between man and man.

Here are two very distinct propositions: and it impossible they can both be true. Either there is a government or there is none; Law or no Law:—either the Confederation and THE UNITED IRISHMAN are a nuisance, or else *you* are a nuisance. You ought not to have suffered our existence so long, or else we ought to have extinguished yours. You and we are mortal enemies; and now that issue has been happily joined, I fervently hope it will result in the utter destruction of one or other of the parties.

When I speak of *your* destruction, my lord, I mean only official extinction; the abolition of that government of which you are agent;—when I speak of *ours*, I mean our death on field or scaffold, by your weapon of 'Law,' or your weapon of steel. I mean, simply, that we will overthrow your government, or die. This trifling persecution for 'sedition' is but a beginning: you have invited us to fight you on the battle-ground of 'Law'—depend upon it you shall have enough of it; the resources of this 'Law' of yours will be taxed to their very uttermost; I already hear your Courts ringing with 'Sedition,' boiling over with High Treason, pouring

forth manifestos of Rebellion from the very Temple of Justice (as the Chief Justice's den is called), to fly by myriads and millions over the land, until every cabin in the island shall echo with curses upon foreign law and foreign governors.

This is on the supposition that *time* is given for your legal enterprise to develop itself into all its fair proportions—which is far from certain. None of us knows what any day or night may bring forth.

But if the cause do come to be tried before a jury, there is one stipulation I would make:—your lordship already guesses it;—need I repeat it? *Why should you pack a jury* against us? Remember, my lord, you belong to that liberal and truly enlightened party called 'Whigs'; it is only a 'Tory,' you know, who packs:—and remember, also, that although I deny the lawfulness of your 'law' and your law-courts altogether, and hold a trial for sedition before a packed jury in Ireland quite as constitutional a proceeding as a trial before an unpacked one, yet your lordship cannot take this view of the matter. *Your* case is that there *is* law in the land—that we have broken that law, and are to be tried by that law. Remember, therefore, all the fine things that your jurists and statesmen have said and written about the great *palladium* of British liberty and so-forth: remember how the learned Sir William Blackstone hath delivered himself on this point; how that 'the founders of the English laws have with excellent forecast contrived that the truth of every accusation, whether preferred in the shape of indictment, information, or appeal, should be confirmed by the unanimous suffrage of twelve of his (the accused person's) equals and neighbours, indifferently chosen, and superior to all suspicion.'

I will not weary you by reciting the commendations which the admirable Sir Matthew Hale and the inestimable Sir Edward Coke have bestowed upon this most ancient and laudable custom. I am quite sure your lordship is aware that those great doctors of your law never contemplated this great *palladium* in the for which has been uniformly adopted by

the English Government in Ireland—an arranged list of thorough-going partisans, who can be depended on for voting one way in politics. A trial for 'sedition' here is a mere political *voting*, and as your faction (that is, the English faction,) have held the sole appointment of all the officers and clerks employed in that business, they have always been able, by stealing lists, or juggling and falsifying cards and numbers, to secure twelve men who will vote for the Castle, and find any one guilty whom the Castle does not love.

This method of applying the British *palladium* to Irish affairs is as old as the introduction of the said *palladium* into our island: and Master Edmund Spenser, a great poet and great undertaker in Munster, in his pleasant dialogue between *Eudoxus* and *Irenaeus*, distinctly says, 'The law of itself, as I said, is good, and the first institution thereof being given to *all Englishmen* very rightfully; but now that the Irish have stepped into the very rooms of our English, we are now to become *heedful and provident in juries*.' But *Eudoxus* suggests 'that the judges and chief magistrates of the land which have the choosing and nomination of those jurors either most Englishmen and such Irishmen as were of the soundest judgement and discretion.'

Of late years the requisite management cannot be resorted to so openly. But your lordship knows how the trick is done. You know that when the trial of the seven Repeal conspirators was approaching, *somebody* stole one of the lists containing the names of the special jurors, so that those names never went into the ballot-box at all;—you are aware also that the operations of the ballot itself are mysterious; and that in short, by one contrivance or another, your juries are always well and truly *packed*. I suppose your lordship was never actually present in the Crown-office while the balloting was going on. I will describe it to you. First, then, you are to suppose that the list of names has been delivered safely by the Recorder to the Sheriff, and been by him duly numbered, and the

number of each name written on a separate card—that the list, in fact, the whole list, and nothing but the list, is now actually in the ballot-box, faithfully numbered to correspond with the Sheriff's book;—you must *suppose* all this, albeit I know a rather violent supposition;—and then, in presence of the attorneys for the Crown and for the accused criminals, forty-eight cards are to be taken out of the box. On one side of a table stands a grave-looking elderly gentleman with the ballot-box before him; on the other side sits a second still more grave, with an open book; in the book is written, each several number, on the margin, and opposite the number the name of the juror thereby denoted. The first grave gentleman shakes the box, puts in his hand, and takes out a card, from which he reads the number—then the other grave gentleman turns to that number in the book, and pronounces the name of the juror so numbered, whose name and address are then taken down as one of the forty-eight; and this process is repeated forty-eight times.

Now it is painful to harbour any suspicions of such grave-looking elderly gentlemen: but you know *juries are packed*; that is an absolute truth; and somebody must be the villain. Well, then, it is said—I say nothing, but it *is* said—that those two gentlemen know each juror just as well by his *number* as his *name*; and so, when the first takes out a card and finds 253, for example, written on it—if he knows that 253 would vote for the People, and against the Crown, it is said he gives out, (for as solemn as he looks), *not* 253, but, say 255, or some loyal number; and thus a safe man is put on the list. Or, if any one is standing by, and has an opportunity of seeing the card, he cries 253, and *winks*, or otherwise telegraphs to the other grave gentleman. Then the *onus* is upon the man with the book, who has nothing to do but call out a loyal man for the disloyal number, and so you have a safe voter still. There seems no help for this, save to place men close behind *both* these elderly gentlemen, to

see that the first calls the right number, and the second gives the right name.

They never make the mistake, these elderly gentleman, of turning out the whole forty-eight all of the right sort: there is no need: there is a margin to the extent of *twelve*: and so they generally leave about nine or ten dubious names amongst the forty-eight. The crown has afterwards a right to strike off twelve peremptorily, without reason assigned, and always gets rid of the men who would vote for the people.

Thus, my lord, your jury is safely packed, and your verdict, or rather vote, is sure. They poll to a man for the Crown.

The earlier adventures of the special jury-list, its perils in the Recorder's office, and its moving accidents in the Sheriff's dominions, with its long and dangerous journeyings under the direction of suspicious guides, till its final appearance in the jury-box at Inns'-quay, it were long and wearisome to tell. I do not, however, mean to lose sight of that subject, and shall, probably, have to call your lordship's attention to it again, as well as that of the Chief Justice, the Sheriff, the Recorder, the English Prime Minister, and the 'Secretary of State for the Home Department.'

In the meantime I cannot help repeating my congratulations to you on the fact, that the Irish nation and the British government are now finally at issue. Whichsoever field of battle you prefer, the Queen's Bench or the streets and fields—whichsoever weapon, packed juries, or whetted sabres—I trust, I believe, you will now be stoutly met. One party or the other must absolutely yield: you must put us down, or we will put you down.

I remain my lord,
Your lordship's mortal enemy,
JOHN MITCHEL.
12, Trinity-street, March 24, 1848.

The Landlord Thugs

***United Irishman*, 1 April, 1848.**

> 'Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be alone in the midst of the earth!'— ISAIAH v, 8.

What is to be done with Irish murderers of the better classes?

The canting English House of Commons pretends to be horrified when it hears of a *single instance* of wholesale slaughter; the canting press affects most sanctimonious indignation; and although the murderers are encouragingly told that there *is* no law, and *shall* be no law, to punish them, yet they are at the same time assured that their conduct is much to be deprecated—that they are naughty—that the 'moral sense' of the canting 'House' is outraged by them; and that the unhappy circumstances engage the anxious attention of Government.

Just as if those canting accessories before the fact, and after the act, did not *know* that the Landlord-Thugs are doing weekly and daily murder on a large scale all over Ireland; and as if they did not know, too, that *they*, by express laws, as well as by their soldiers and police, are helping those Thugs to do that murder.

A certain Mr. BLAKE has been fastened on by POULETT SCROPE, and denounced, with great fury, as if he were a monster in human form. But poor BLAKE is only going by the custom of the country, making his property support his poverty, and doing what he likes with his own, precisely as other landlords do. The man is no worse than his neighbours in

Galway county; and Galway is no worse than Cork or Mayo, Roscommon or Clare. The case of Mr. BLAKE is really hard. His property swarms with 'paupers.' Government, with its poor laws and quarter-acre clauses, gives him every motive and stimulant to clear them off, sends down an Assistant-Barrister four times a year to eject for him, lends him police constables and troops of the line, to pull down and lay waste the pauper haunts; and then, when the thing is done, if any pertinacious POULETT SCROPE *will* harp on the business, this same Government disavows poor BLAKE, *deprecates* his conduct, and even goes so far as to threaten him with the *moral indignation* of the Parliament!

Now, there is evidence that legislators and ministers read THE UNITED IRISHMAN with great diligence. We have looked through the four last numbers; and if our rulers, in their anxious search after 'sedition,' had had leisure, to inform themselves of the state of the county they pretend to 'govern,' they would have found, in those four numbers, the following narratives of slaughter extracted from provincial papers, within one month:—

'On Monday last (27th February), the sheriff of Mayo, *assisted by the police*, levelled six houses in the parish of Shruel, the property of Charles Blake, Esq. (*another Blake*), about thirty human beings, the occupants of these houses, are left by the roadside in this inclement season.—*Galway Vindicator*.

On the 4th March, Lord Dunsandle, in the parish of Killimore, Galway, ejected four widows, and their four families, and three other families. And on the next day, John Connolly, Esq., of Rashane, cleared away three families from his property, in the same parish.—*Galway Mercury*. [All the names are given.]

On Saturday last (March 11th), we witnessed the wholesale levelling of *twenty-one* houses, and the extermination of one hundred and four unhappy individuals, in the centre of this town, by a writ of *habere*. To add to the

melancholy spectacle, the rain poured down in torrents the entire day; and to have looked on the hapless inmates as they issued from the homes that were being destroyed over their heads, and heard their pitiful lamentations, would have appalled the stoutest heart.—*Athlone Sentinel*.

The *Limerick Examiner* gives a list of *one hundred and sixty-six* persons ejected from the property of Mr. Westby, an absentee English proprietor (near Kilrush, County Clare), during the first week in March. The writer adds—The friends who were left in were warned, at the peril of the agent's displeasure, not to admit to a night's lodging those who were turned out; and on the very night that their houses were thrown down, they let in some of them by stealth, but sent them out before day, *lest Mr. Kean's men should see them on the land*.—*Limerick Examiner*.

Dr. Derry, Bishop of Clonfert, in his Lenten Pastoral (published in all the newspapers), makes the following statement, with respect to his diocese:—'In almost every parish, the work of extermination is ruthlessly carried on. The smoking ruins of *thirty-one dwelling-houses*, *on one townland*, all levelled in one day, lately filled our hearts with anguish; and on our inquring the fate of the unhappy outcasts, we have learned—that for a time they clung to the ruins—that their exposure, during the snow, brought on sickness, and that some, with limbs already mortified, ultimately sought refuge in the union workhouse.'

Every one of these slaughters, and far more, the Queen's ministers knew; they knew also that the Queen's troops, as many of them as could be spared from protecting the Castle of Dublin, were aiding and abetting in the perpetration; and they were receiving the price of this help in the shape of 'addresses of confidence.' We presume that Mr. BLAKE, both the Mr. BLAKES, all the Mr. BLAKES, signed such an address, and will, so far as they are concerned, help Lord CLARENDON to make the 'laws' respected in Galway. To be sure they will. And even the BLAKE who has

been so unlucky as to be singled out by Mr. SCROPE, and threatened with the high moral indignation of Parliament, he is not disconcerted at all; he knows that all the virtuous indignation is a mere tribute to the decencies of British society; and he will go on with his work till the estate is cleared to the required state of depopulation.

But what are the People to *do* with these assassin landlords? To keep conciliating them, we suppose? wooing them to 'nationality?' conjuring them to join with us, and against their present friends and allies, and demand from England the 'Constitution of '82?' Surely, if we do but wheedle, coax, and tenderly entreat them yet a little while, they will throw themselves upon their fellow-countrymen, and realize our dream of an united nation, banded together in all its ranks and classes, to win an Irish Senate, an Irish Army, an Irish Flag!

Is there any dreamer yet in Ireland who has not awakened from that vision? Who does not see that the Times and the Men are all different, and that '82, or the like of '82, can never appear on this island more? Seventy years ago the gentry were for Ireland—now they are against her. Seventy years ago the condition of the labouring and farming classes was still *tolerable*; there was no struggle of class with class for the bare means of life. 'Free-Trade,' 'free Parliament,' and the honour and dignity of the Irish nation, were then the themes; men had leisure to think of them. Hunger had not swallowed up all other feelings and passions. The several 'interests' of society could still exist together here without the one devouring the other; and it was then possible for the Irish gentry to trust themselves in the hands of their own countrymen without English body-guards. But *now*—now there is a total break-up of the system; the old aristocratic social arrangement here will hold together no longer. The nation is in bankruptcy; the people and the gentry are at *war*—war, as necessary and as desperate as that of two shipwrecked men in a raging sea, when they find that the single spar they hold by will sustain but *one*.

Irish landlordism is near its latter-day. Earth or Heaven will not endure it much longer—and the monster knows this well, and instinctively clings to the only power that can yet save it for a time. The two blood-stained old oligarchies of Ireland and England feel that their only chance of preservation is in the union of their forces. They see Democracy surging and chafing around them, gathering strength for his fatal spring; and they know that if they are parted for a moment, they go down to perdition. *Therefore* they are in alliance. Therefore Lord Clarendon sends troops to exterminate surplus tenants; and the landlord signs an engagement that he will help Lord Clarendon to butcher mutinous citizens.

Show us your materials for this constitution of '82. Let us see that the landlord that will ask it, or tolerate the thought of it. Let us see the tenant or labourer that will ever pull a trigger or push a pike for it. The ambition of your gentry now is not to unfurl a national flag, but to screw the uttermost mite out of the poor man's blood and marrow: the one great want—the prayer and passion of the poor—is not 'Queen, Lords, and Commons of Ireland,' but, simply, Land and Life.

What need of more words. We must strike at English sway through the heart of this Landlordism. The English Government, indeed, is our enemy; but the Landlords are traitors within our camp. We must crush them first;—or, rather, one blow, rightly planted, will abolish both together.

For the *Government* of a country is simply the disposal of its produce. It is out of the pasture-fields and haggards of Ireland that England keeps her mercenaries here; without them (melted down into *taxes*), Lord CLARENDON could not buy so much as a whetstone for his slaughtering-knife; without them (diluted into *rents*), your better classes could hardly procure paper whereon to write 'addresses of confidence.' If the men who plough and dig, who saw and reap, will but eat the food they raise—if they will but consent to live like Christians, instead of dying like dogs,

there is an end both of foreign sway and domestic tyranny and treason: Landlordism in Ireland, we say, is doomed—:its cup is full:—its gale-days are numbered.

Would to God that it could yield peacefully to its destiny; and that the new order of things might come about by negotiation and pacific enactments of law;—with *compensation* for vested interests! Would to God the evil days before us could be averted! But what hope is there of such pacific death-birth? Consider the two notable examples of extinguished feudalism in modern Europe, France, and Prussia. In the latter the powers of government were in the hands of an absolute autocrat outside *both* the warring classes; and a bold minister was found, with a will of iron, to abolish, alter, modify, and settle 'rights of property' by royal edict, and *compel* obedience. Here, then, landlordism died in peace, and serfs rose into lauded citizens without a struggle. But in France, *as in Ireland*, government was in the hands of the aristocrats themselves; in France, as in Ireland, they stood upon their 'rights of property,' and hardened their hearts against hunger and despair, until the People stormed up around them in frantic wrath, read them the rights of man by the glare of their own burning mansions, and scourged them from the face of the land for ever.

Is it *thus*, in flames and blood, that Irish landlordism is to perish, and Ireland to be born again? Alas! our unhappy 'gentry' have no autocrat to coerce them—no sage to advise them; Government and Law are all their own—they are left to the devices of their own hearts; and so surely as 'sorrow tracketh crime,' a terrible doom will come upon them.

Be it so! Foreign dominion and home oppression must be struck down at any rate, at any cost, with any weapon that comes to hand. These landed men of Ireland have industriously sown the wind for two hundred years;—let them reap now and garner up their whirlwind harvest!

Speech to the Irish Confederation

5 April, 1848

I have been instructed to bring up a resolution decided on by the committee to be submitted to the Confederation – a resolution which I hope will be found a practical step towards the attainment of our objects. Before coming to that, I wish to remove a misapprehension which I find, by the letter of my friend, Mr. Dillon, has been produced on the minds of some persons, by what I said on the last night of meeting. I said I was a Republican; and I do believe that I am not alone here in holding the Republican creed. I believe that every universal suffrage man, every Radical, every Chartist, every man who demanded equal rights for all, is at heart a Republican. I hold that creed, sir, and will always avow it; but I never meant to commit the Confederation, or any member of it, to Republican opinions.

As to our future form of government, indeed, there is no need now to raise any question: the movement now is simply to win Ireland for the Irish—Ireland for the Irish under any form. If the Irish aristocracy would acknowledge themselves our countrymen—if they would lead us as they ought to do in the struggle for national freedom—if the nation is to move together in its ranks and orders—then, in God's name, let this aristocracy hold its place—let it have its House of Lords in College-green, as we shall have our House of Commons. In that case, the constitution of Ireland, as it stood before the Union, might be accepted for the present.

But, sir, I ask, what hope is there for such an arrangement? The gentry of Ireland will have none of your constitution; they are arming themselves to crush you; they are signing addresses of loyalty to the government, which is high treason against the people. When I speak of an Irish Republic, then, I do so not as a matter of personal predilection, but of political necessity. It is not open to us to choose. For if the Irish nation were united class with class, and could so induce or coerce the British Parliament to repeal the Union peaceably, the immediate result would, of course, be a Legislature of Queen, Lords, and Commons. But, sir, if a shot be fired, or a sword drawn—if blood flow here in civil strife—if the people, for self-preservation, have to take the affair into their own hands—in abort, if, as in Paris, the revolution must be made by the people, then it shall be made for the people, and, save the sovereign people, there shall be no Sovereign on this soil.

Above all things, let us, in Heaven's name, avoid petty discussions on points that do not immediately press for solution. In fact, there is no ground or material for such discussions. Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Hagan, I believe, fully agree in every word I have now said; and although those gentlemen disavow Republicanism for the present, I know well that neither one or other of them would hesitate, if the people are to be left alone in this struggle, to go through it with the people, and follow it to all its consequences.

I will now leave this disquisition upon forms of government, and turn your attention to what is far more to the purpose. The resolution I have to propose is as follows; you will all know the meaning of it well.

> 'That the council suggest to all Repealers, both in town and country, that in order to form the basis of a national guard, they immediately form themselves into sections, each consisting of twenty men, living near each other, in one street, or other limited district, and that each section elect a

master and warden, in whom they have implicit confidence; that five of such sections (which should also have their residencies adjacent) form a class, numbered class No. 1, No. 2, and soforth; that the masters and wardens of the five sections elect a vice-president and secretary; and that the several vice-presidents and secretaries of the classes elect a president.'

It may not be absolutely necessary to set forth this plan of organization for the Dublin Repealers; for I am glad to say they are putting it in practice already. Two of our clubs are already formed into sections, and the rest will soon follow. But for the country and the provincial towns it is quite necessary that such an idea as this should be fixed in their minds, so that they might at once begin to lay the basis of a uniform national organisation.

Even those Repealers who are not Confederates, I have no doubt will generally join their neighbours in this scheme. Let the whole country be classified into sections, and the sections into classes—or if you choose to call them companies, with their wardens and masters, or if you like it better, commanders; so that in any national business which is to be done, peaceful or otherwise, there may be an available power ready to act.

And let me exhort you to do all this openly and publicly. The English press accuses us of hatching treason in holes and corners. It is false; I never saw or heard of a meeting of the Confederation or of any of our clubs that was not held with open doors. There is no need of secrecy; and let me tell you there is no possibility for secrecy; for town and country swarms with government spies. Wherever two or three are gathered together, there is a detective in the midst of them.

We had meetings lately of the trades' and citizens' committee; and although there ewre not generally more than twenty or thirty in the room, one of them was a friend of Colonel Browne's; and it turns out that the most illegal man—the most violent and enthusiastic revolutionist in the

room, was this friend of Colonel Browne's—a fellow employed by him, as I heard him say, to do the dirty work for Lord Clarendon, and Lord Clarendon does the dirty work for, I know not whom.

It is all dirty work; and I have no doubt that the object of it is to get up a case that would enable Lord Clarendon to proclaim and disarm the city. Unquestionably those were the fellow's instructions, since we find him going about to smiths, and talking of the coming insurrection, in which the pikes he was getting were to be used.

I endeavoured at the Police-office to make the magistrates detain this spy, and send him for trial, if not on a charge of conspiracy, then for high treason—in short, upon any charge that would get him into a public court, and enable us to put Colonel Browne and Lord Clarendon upon their oaths, and drag out of them the secrets of their plots against the people.

But it was in vain; their worships were too wise, or too complaisant for that; and the moment the Police Commissioner said the man was one of his spies, they seemed only anxious to get him out of sight—in fact, they dropped him like a hot potato, fearful, apparently, of seeing their own names some day in his memorandum book, for sedition against the detective, as in constituted authority.

Another motive of this plot was, of course, to throw an air of secrecy and criminality about the purchase and sale of arms—to produce a vague impression that it is illegal and dangerous to have pikes. Now, there is nothing to prevent any smith or ironmonger to expose pikes for sale in his windows as freely as horse-shoes, or any other kind of ware. In fact, I would like to see pikes exposed for sale, upon stalls, in the streets, like books, or under the porticoes of the Bank of Ireland, where umbrellas are sold in rainy weather.

We must get rid of this ridiculous idea about the criminality of having arms; and I am glad to see that in Limerick, where the government people

tried the same trick, a man named Ahern was dragged before magistrates, for making pikes; Ahern has proclaimed his intention of exhibiting his pikes for the future in his shop-window.

You will excuse me for dwelling so long upon this point; for, in truth, there is no national manufacture now in Ireland so important as pikes and guns. As to fire-arms, let me beg of you not to buy the wretched Birmingham guns that are sold here for ten or fifteen shillings. Fire-arms that are not ball-proof, are absolutely good for nothing—a good big stick is better.

Union amongst Repealers has been spoken of. Nobody, certainly, desires that union more heartily than I do; and, indeed, I think the meetings in Cork, Limerick, Kilkenny, and other places, exhibits a spirit that will no longer tolerate our paltry quarrels, but will force leaders of all sections to work together whether they like it or not. However, the true way of bringing about this union is not negotiation and expostulation—it is simply to show that you are sincerely determined to free the country from foreign dominion.

I have said little hitherto about the union of Repealers; but I believe that I have done something towards bringing such a union about; and how? Why, by proving beyond all question that I hate foreign dominion, and am determined, at whatever cost, to root it out of the land. I wish, indeed, that we could effect a combination with our fellow-countrymen, the Protestant farmers of the north. I have lived amongst those people, and know them well; and indeed it seems strange to me that I, a native of Derry county, with none but northern Protestants for my kindred, should be supposed to be ranged in this national struggle with Munster, Connaught, and Leinster, and against my own province. And I tell you this, my friends—if Ireland were now united as in '82, and had her citizen army arrayed, each battalion under its own banners and emblems—my place in that army should be where the orange and purple were waving;

but until those Protestants declare for Ireland, and against England—until their colours are seen on the right side, the green is the colour for me.

And I should like to know what quarrel the Protestant democracy of Ulster have with us (for I speak not of their gentry at all). What is their great demand at this moment? Is it not security for their tenant-right? Well, and who attacks their tenant-right? Against whom do they want this security? Is it against their brother farmers of the south? No; it is against their own Orange landlords, leaders, and grand masters. Now, we want the democracy of the north to make common cause with the democracy of the south, and secure national freedom and tenant-right both together.

I would far rather see 5,000 northern Protestants joining this Confederation, than hear of 50,000 Frenchmen whom somebody surmises to be ready to come here at our bidding. Indeed, I was sorry to see the enthusiasm with which you hailed the vague promise of possible aid from France—as if Irishmen were well content to let Frenchmen, or Americans, or anybody else, do for them what they ought to be doing for themselves. You will never, believe me, never see 50,000 Frenchmen, or one Frenchman, on your side, until we have shown ourselves not only willing, but able and ready to achieve our own freedom. I, therefore, do entreat you to organize in sections, as recommended by this resolution, to continue steadily, openly providing arms; and then, when Irishmen are ready to turn out—then, and not till then, will we be entitled so much as to negotiate a foreign alliance.

To Earl of Clarendon, Her Majesty's Detective-General, High Commissioner of Spies, and General Suborner of Ireland

***United Irishman*, 8 April, 1848.**

My Lord,—

What 'dirty work' is this you have been about! Are you the amiable and ameliorative CLARENDON of six months ago? The philanthropic CLARENDON? The Philharmonic CLARENDON? The rotation, practical-instruction, and green-crop CLARENDON? The statesman so mild, and yet so firm, who frequented the literary *re-unions*, and distributed prizes so gracefully, and took quite a kind of interest in Irish talent? Why, it seems to be a rotation of plots you want, a green-crop of burglarious street-riots, a harvest of bloody corpses;—your practical instructions now are in suborning private treasons; and the Irish talent you take the deepest interest in developing is the talent of the Irish detective!

Irish weavers want work,—Irish farmers are broken, horse and foot,—Irish masons, carpenters, wheel-wrights, mill-wrights, coach-makers, and sawyers, are fast going to the poorhouse; in every department (except, of late, in the blacksmiths' forges) the hand of the industrious lies idle in his bosom:—but the trade in swearing begins, under your Lordship's gracious auspices, to revive somewhat; blood-money is changing hands;

perjury is looking up; the Irish Spy lives and thrives once more, wears good clothes, sees good company, and 'goes to the Castle.'

Will anyone say that your Lordship has not 'ameliorated the social relations' of the Irish people?

But what base and filthy company your Excellency keeps! Ah! But it is not *you*, I suppose? It is Colonel BROWNE'S department. Your Lordship is much too enlightened and amiable to have anything to do with such dirty work; the worthy Police Commissioner gets it all done himself, quite on 'his own responsibility,' he says, and you know nothing about it! Your Lordship's precious life is supposed to be threatened at a St. Patrick's ball, and, behold! A corps of gentlemanly detectives, in tabinet waistcoats, appear in the vice-regal drawing-rooms, smiling, dancing, making love,—and you never the wiser; it was just Colonel BROWNE'S own thoughtful care for you, on his own responsibility. Thus, also, an outrising is confidently expected on a given day; Colonel BROWNE tells you so; you write to London in a terrible fright—you cry out for horse, foot, and artillery; ten thousand men surround you, prepared for war and slaughter; they bar you up in your Castle, and mount guard day and night at your door;—and you, good, easy man, don't know how or where BROWNE got his information; you have not the curiosity to inquire; you upturn the Horse Guards, ungarrison England, and levy war in Ireland, on BROWNE 'responsibility.'

Yet BROWNE'S office is in *your* house; you cannot go into or out of your own door without being jostled by some of BROWNE'S familiars, as they pass and re-pass, weaving their nets for men's lives and honours. I fear BROWNE'S responsibility will not do; I fear you hire these rascals yourself, instruct them yourself, and pay them yourself (with our money), *through* BROWNE and his responsibility. *You* want a small insurrection, and one of them goes out and brandishes a pike, and bawls for liberty. *You* want an alarm created amongst the better classes, and BROWNE'S

men fly out of your Castle, some by Cork-hill gate, some by Ship-street, some by Dame-street, and straightway there are a thousand anxious whisperings about breaking houses, robbing banks, plundering shops. *You* want clandestine pikes made, to justify your butcherly preparations in public opinions, and one of your spies gives his order with a mysterious air, saying he wants the tool for the insurrection. It *may* be, contrary to all belief, that BROWNE does all these atrocities of his own mere notion; but public opinion attributes every atrocity of them to your Lordship, and I agree with public opinion.

In the first letter which I did myself the honour to address to you in THE UNITED IRISHMAN—you remember it well—I told you plainly that spies and informers would be of no use to you; that we meant to abolish their trade—that the movement then about to commence should be, in all parts, open, public, and above-board; that you would be told the very worst of it; if not worse than the worst, every Saturday, regularly, in the papers; and that I had no objection to your opening all my letters in the Post-office, provided they were forwarded without losing a post.

Well, you did not believe me; you did not, unhappy Whig that you are, even understand me. The idea of men preparing in broad day-light to overthrow a powerful government, by *force*, and giving a programme of their plans beforehand, seemed to you wholly absurd. You were sly—you thought there was something under it; so you re-doubled your detective force, opened all your Argus-eyes and Dionysius-cars, and watched, and listened. Of course your battalion of testimony undertook their duties—why not? Men must live, and the times are sad:—and the worthy fellows, having nothing particular to tell, invented astounding intelligence, and told *that*. They have been humbugging you, taking you to the fair, doing you, and selling your lordship a bargain; and they have made a very good thing of it, have lived well, and, I am told, moved in the selectest circles,

taking countesses down to supper, the scoundrels!—Lest your Excellency should be shot in your own ball-room.

Will you give ear to me, then at length? I am about to tell you all that is going on, and all that is in contemplation. *First*.—The Irish people are providing themselves, just as fast as their means and opportunities enable them, with weapons of various kinds, for which they have conceived a sort of divine passion; no holier fervour since the crusades has possessed any nation of men—not to rob houses, as you, through your reptile spies, give out—not to attack 'person or property,' as your Queen's prime minister dares to affirm—not to abolish 'social order,' or rights of property, or sayings of industry, as your rascal press prints twelve times a-week. No, my lord; the young men of Ireland arm for a nobler enterprise; they arm to defend person and property against brigands of the 'law' and harpies of the 'government'—they arm to make social order possible, and to secure to industry its just reward:—they arm to scourge you and your Commissioners, detectives, *aid-de-camps*, butchers, and stranglers, forth from the island of Ireland with rods of steel.

Second—The Irish People are busy organizing themselves in 'sections' and 'classes,' and appointing their officers, so that each man may know his left-hand and his right-hand comrade, and the man whose word he will obey.

Third—The Irish People, or a competent number of them, will simply continue so to arm, and so to organize, openly, my lord, fearlessly, zealously, with passionate ardour, with fervent prayer, morning and evening, for the blessed hour when that organization may find itself ranked in battle array, and when those arms may wreak the wrongs of Ireland in the dearest hearts'-blood of her enemies.

Fourth—The Irish People will, by their mildness, their moderation, their love of order and respect for property, convince those who live in good houses and wear good clothes, that the armament is not against

them—that your lordship, and the prime minister, and the detectives, have foully belied this nation, when you gave out that 'social order' was in danger, and that pillage and massacre were intended:—that in fine, the sole enemy against whom we arm is the government of England in Ireland, and that no Irishman is our foe, unless he comes forth to maintain that government with armed hand.

Fifth—The People of Ireland will continue to cultivate friendly relations with the people of England, who are as deeply sworn to abolish that 'empire' of fraud and blood, as we are. And we and they together, by the destruction and dismemberment of this thrice-accursed 'empire,' will give the 'three kingdoms' each to its own people, with all their wealth and resources, material and moral, to hold, enjoy, and govern the same for ever.

There now—you have it all—your detectives can tell you no more. There is no day fixed for taking the Castle; indeed you will know that day as soon as we, and, in all probability, you will fix it yourself.

You will not, I am sure, believe this plain statement; you will conclude that there is some horrid occult meaning under it; you will send forth your spies to the four winds, and cover the land with a cloud of witnesses. Yes; I know that; I mean it. Our policy is to mislead you, and confound your politics, by telling you the simple truth; and we will totally disconcert you at the last moment by doing the very thing you were always told we would do.

As for me, my lord, your lordship's humble correspondent,—you have been told that I am *mad*—a dangerous lunatic, labouring under *cacoethes seribendi*. Do not believe it; I am merely possessed with a rebellious spirit; and think I have a mission,—to bear a hand in the final destruction of the bloody old 'British Empire,' the greedy, carnivorous old monster, that has lain so long, like a load, upon the heart and limbs of England, and drunk the blood and sucked the marrow from the bones of Ireland. Against

that Empire of Hell a thousand thousand ghosts of my slaughtered countrymen shriek nightly for vengeance; their blood cries continually from the ground, for vengeance! Vengeance! And Heaven has heard it. That buccaneering flag, that has braved so long the battle and the breeze, flies now from a ship in distress; the Charybdis of Chartism roars under her lee—the breakers of Repeal are a-head, and the curses of the world swell the hurricane that rages round her, pirate and blood-stained slaver that she is, filled with dead men's bones, and with all uncleanness. Her timbers are shivering at last—

Quamvis Pontica pinnus,
Sylvae filia nobilis—

She will not never float in harbour more. On the day she goes to pieces, all the ends of the earth will give three cheers.

To help this grand work of necessity and mercy is my highest ambition upon earth; and I know no better way to do it than to make Ireland arm for battle. To me it is a grateful and blessed sound, this cry—'The People are arming.' Thank GOD, they are arming. Young men everywhere in Ireland begin to love the clear glancing of the steel, and to cherish their dainty rifles as the very apple of their eyes. They walk more proudly; they feel themselves more and more of *men*. Like the Prussian students (when this work had to be done for Prussia), they take the bright weapon to their hearts, and clasp their virgin sword like virgin brides.

How long will your detectives, your swearers, your villainous back-stairs panders to the hangman, check this noble passion—this most holy crusade? Think of it well. I remain, my lord, with profoundest contempt,

Your very obedient servant,
JOHN MITCHEL.

P.S.—I had some thought of addressing to you an expostulation about the packing of our juries next term. I fancied some feeling of decency, or even of justice, might induce you to give orders that the ordinary but disgraceful practice of the Crown-office should be reversed. I have changed my mind. He who employs a spy will pack a jury; and I, for one, scorn to appeal for *anything* to a man who lays a plot for massacre. Pack away, then, *if you dare*. I expect no justice, no courtesy, no indulgence from you: and if you get me within your power, I entreat you to show me no mercy, as I, so help me God, would show none to you.

J.M.

To The Right Hon. Lord John Russell, Prime Minister of the Queen of England

***United Irishman*, 15 March, 1848.**

My Lord,—

The Crown and Government of your gracious Sovereign Lady are, it seems, in danger, and want 'further security.' Security not against foreign enemies—for the Frenchman, the American, the very Russian bear, give assurances of friendly relations—but against her own beloved, highly-favoured, too-indulgently-used, but ungrateful, subjects! What is more wonderful, the danger arises not in the administration of those wicked Tories,—wretches obstructive of 'human progress,' the enemies of the human race,—but while you, even *you*, rule her Majesty's councils; *you*, the very high-priest of Liberality and Concession; *you*, who were to have ruled by justice, not coercion—opinion, not bayonets; whose thoughts were for ever intent on commercial reform, or municipal reform, or sanatory reform. What could a conciliatory Premier do (or promise) that you have not done (or promised)? Yet the very Crown and Constitution are in danger. May GOD be between us and harm!

And, what is strangest of all, it seems to be from the Irish that you fear this danger most; the people whom you have been nourishing, cherishing, and spoon-feeding, by means of so many kind and well-paid British nurses, for two years—on whom you have lavished so many tons

of printed paper, so many millions of cooked rations—the exact number is it not written in the books of Bromley and the archives of the Union workhouses?—These are the people who plot 'treason,' and eagerly flock to hear 'open and advised speaking,' eagerly devour 'published, printed, and written' language, all urging them to arm for the overthrow of British rule in Ireland! It is a bad world!

I fear that your Lordship, in your Whig complacency, has but a slender perception of the truth. Think of it a moment calmly. Here is this UNITED IRISHMAN newspaper, that your Lordship has been studying so attentively of late. It has reach only its tenth number; it was hardly advertised, and not puffed at all; it has been written ten with no extraordinary talent, has displayed, I muss confess, but little wit, and less brilliancy;—yet never a newspaper in Ireland reached such a circulation before in so short a time, and that circulation, remember, is amongst the very poorest of the people both in town and country; it is the very organ of pauperism; the public opinion it seeks to concentrate is that of the 'Men of No Property'—*A Pauper Public Opinion!*

And why has it grown so popular? Why do poor men club their pence to buy it, and get it read to eager crowds every Saturday evening and Sunday morning? Why?—Because it utters for them the deep and inextinguishable hatred they all bear in their inmost souls against the 'Crown and Government' of Britain; because it translates this holy hatred, never yet uttered, save in stifled curses and gnashing of teeth, into loud defiance, and hurls it weekly in the face of all your Viceroys, and Premiers, and Commanders-in-Chief; and especially because it points out the way, and the only true way, in which brave men ever win freedom or bridle tyrants, and exhorts them continually to rise out of the miserable slough of moral force wherein O'Connell plunged them, and stand erect with the words of freemen on their lips, and the Arms of freemen in their hands, defying 'Law,' trampling on Cant, and waging open war upon Humbug.

But you, the 'Government,' will not endure this sort of teaching! You will check it at all hazards:—if it cannot be stopped as a misdemeanour, you will make it 'felony:'—if nothing else will do, the people of Ireland must be weaned from anarchists and 'Jacobins' by taking the said Jacobins, chaining them in couples, cropping their heads, arraying them in grey jackets, and shipping them to the Antipodes!

And indeed, my lord, this 'vigorous' policy will prove an effectual check upon us Irish 'revolutionists,' provided the men with whom you have to deal are fools, braggarts, traitors, and cowards. If we have undertaken the trade of patriotism for profit—if we have played the game of patriotism for notoriety—if we have been merely aspirants to the cheap martyrdom of two years' imprisonment, with *fetes*, and *levees*, and *couches*—why, in that case, the thing is at an end—you have tamed us, and fixed a bit between our teeth;—sedition is crushed, and the Queen's 'Crown and Government' are safe for this time.

Or if we have made a gross and signal *mistake* as to the position, feeling, and necessities of our country—if we have not, after all, a nation at our back, but are merely isolated enthusiasts, *fugling* preposterously before imaginary troops—in this case, also, our game is over—we shall just get punished—all sensible men will say we deserve it; and there an end.

These issues will soon be tried, and I am glad of it. For twelve long months we have desired to see this day. Twelve months ago, on the Easter Monday of last year, Dublin saw one of the most ignominious Easter festivals—one of the ghastliest galas ever exhibited under the sun—the solemn inauguration, namely, of the Irish nation in its new career of national pauperism. There, in the esplanade before the 'Royal Barrack,' was erected the national model soup-kitchen, gaily bedizened, laurelled, and bannered, and fair to see; and in and out, and all around, sauntered parties of our supercilious second-hand 'better classes' of the Castle-offices, fed on superior rations at the people's expense, and bevies of fair

dames, and military officers, braided with public braid, and padded with public padding; and there, too, were the pale and piteous ranks of model-paupers, broken tradesmen, ruined farmers, destitute sempstresses, ranged at a respectful distance till the genteel persons had duly inspected the arrangements—and then marched by policemen to the place allotted them, where they were to feed on the meagre diet with *chained spoons*—to show the 'gentry' how pauper spirit can be broken, and pauper appetite can gulp down its bitter bread and its bitterer shame and wrath together;—and all this time the genteel persons chatted and simpered as pleasantly as if the clothes they wore, and the carriages they drove in, were their own—as if 'Royal barracks' Castle, and Soup-kitchen, were to last for ever.

We three criminals, my Lord, who are to appear to-day in the Court of Queen's Bench, were spectators of that soup-kitchen scene; and I believe we all left it with one thought,—that this day we had surely touched the lowest point—that Ireland and the Irish *could* sink no further; and that she must not see such another Easter Monday, though we should die for it.

My Lord, I came to the conclusion on that day that the Queen's 'Crown and Government' were in danger—nay, that they ought to be in danger;—and I resolved that no effort of mine should be wanting to make the danger increase and become *critical*. As I looked on the hideous scene, I asked myself whether there were, indeed 'law' or 'Government' in the land—or if so, whether they were not worse than *no* law and *no* government. What had law done for these poor wretches and their five million fellow-paupers throughout Ireland? It was the 'law' that carried off all the crops they raised, and shipped them to England; it was 'law' that took the labour of their hands, and gave them half food for it while they were able to work; and cast them off to perish, like supernumerary kittens. 'Law' told them they must not wear the cloth they wove, nor cut

the corn they raised, nor dwell in the houses they builded; and if they dared do any of these things, or remonstrate against the hard usage, 'Law' scourged and bullied them, imprisoned, gagged, and coerced them; to bring them to a more submissive mind. And what was more shameful and fatal still, this devoted people were in the hands of 'leaders,' who told them that all this 'Law'—this London Parliament Law—was the law of God,—that if they violated it by eating the food they made, or wearing the cloth they wove, they committed a crime, and gave strength to the enemy—nay, those 'leaders' never failed to thank God in public, with sanctimonious voice and head uncovered, that their fellow-countrymen *were* dying in patience and perseverance amidst their own bounteous harvests; Parliament Law was acknowledged as the supreme Ruler and Judge, and its decrees submitted to as the inscrutable dispensations of a Parliament Providence.

Such degradation was unexampled in the world. To think that Ireland was my country became intolerable to me. I felt that I had no right to breathe the free air or to walk in the sun; I was ashamed to look my own children in the face, until I should do something towards the overthrow of this dynasty of the Devil. And I resolved that Parliament Law must be openly defied and trampled on; and that I—if no other, even I—would show by countrymen how to do it. For I knew, my lord, that the monster, for all his loud roar and formidable tusks, was impotent against Truth and Right,—in other words that not Parliament Law, at bottom, but God's justice, ruled the earth. In short, I determined to walk, before the eyes of this downtrodden people, straight into the open jaws of 'Law,' to draw his fangs, to tear out his lying tongue, and to fling his carcase to be trampled on by those who had trembled at his nod.

I may be devoured, it is true. 'Law' may be able to resist the first attack; and the three first assailants may fall:—yet shall we *do our business*. We may be destroyed; we will not be defeated.

You heard SMITH O'BRIEN on Monday last, amidst the howling of your Parliament mob, deliver Ireland's defiance;—think you this man will shrink from your new-made London 'felony,' or be gagged and frightened by your 'bills' with their huge mob-majorities? But, perhaps, you imagine it was a mere display of individual contumely, or piqued vanity?—My lord, in every word, every syllable, every tittle that O'BRIEN promised or threatened on Monday night, he knew that he was uttering the inmost thoughts and feelings, the cordial hatred and defiance, of five million hearts; and it shall be made good to the letter. No more fortunate event has happened for Ireland than your selection of WILLIAM SMITH O'BRIEN and THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER to be treated as degraded criminals or dangerous lunatics; because these are precisely the men who will not blench before your judges, your bayonets, your juries, or your gibbets. What the People want to see in their leaders is individual heroism; is the determination to *do* themselves what they incite others to do; and seeing *that*, I believe they will follow, though it were to the gibbet's foot or the cannon's muzzle.

See, now, what it is you have undertaken to do! *First*, to crush and frighten men who have taken upon them a task like ours, moved by such motives, stirred by such passions, sustained by such determination, as I have described to you. *Second*, to stay discontent and disaffection by shutting the mouths who utter what all think and feel. On this latter point, I am surprised that your lordship's well-known learning as a political economist has not aided you. There is a *demand*, a brisk and increasing demand, for treason and sedition; you know demand (see ADAM SMITH) creates a supply. If THE UNITED IRISHMAN be removed, others will be found to furnish the article in any quantity that may be needed; and, indeed, I hereby advertise to all enterprising 'Jacobins,' that in Ireland there has been opened an altogether boundless market for this kind of ware;—that the article wanted is of the coarsest and strongest kind;—that ornaments

and trimmings (as brilliant humour or tender poetry) are not absolutely necessary;—all that is required being good, sound, hearty, *bona fide* sedition, plain military instructions, sharp incentives to rebellion, strong treason, and thorough-going felony without benefit of clergy.

However, my lord, as you *have* undertaken this task—as you have deliberately pitted this British 'law' against the Irish nation, there is one little matter I should like to arrange with you. I have already broached the subject to my LORD CLARENDON; but there is no use in talking to *him*—he is too hopelessly committed to bad company, and involved in evil courses. I mean, of course, the packing of the jury. Your lordship, however, is the author of a work on the British constitution, and also (perhaps you forget it, as most other persons do, but I assure you that you are) of a memoir of Lord WILLIAM RUSSELL, your distinguished ancestor. It is mainly for the sake of refreshing your memory (and the public's) upon the subject of this memoir, that I have chosen to address my present letter to your lordship. You had great zeal thirty years ago for 'constitutional liberty,' and all that sort of thing (you may forget it, but I do assure you that you had)—and you tell, in this memoir, with becoming indignation, how that the Court, when it intended to shed the blood of the popular leaders, cheated the citizens of London of their rights, and got hold of the appointment of the sheriffs (this villainy was only temporary in London—it is a permanent institution of state in Dublin), and how the Court 'soon had an opportunity of making use of their new power;'—how, 'having shed the blood of Colledge, the Court next attempted the life of Lord SHAFTESBURY' (vol. ii. p. 6)—how the city was thronged with troops to intimidate the people; and how ROGER L'ESTRANGE, in the columns of *The Observator* (which was the name the *Times* then went by), declared 'that a citizen's scull was but a thing to try the temper of a soldier's sword upon'—(vol. 2. p. 11.) You further narrate, my lord, how that when the bloodhounds at last pounced on Lord Russell, 'after the

examination was finished he was sent a close prisoner to the Tower. Upon his going in, he told his servant, TAUNTON, that he was sworn against, and that *they would have his life*. TAUNTON said, he hoped it would not be in the power of his enemies to take it. Lord Russell answered Yes; the Devil is loose (meaning that the Sheriff had his instructions.) From this moment he looked on himself as a dying man, and turned his thoughts wholly to another world. He read much in the Scriptures, particularly in the Psalms'—(vol. 2, p. 25.)

Truly, it was time for him to make his soul! But the trial came on; and 'upon calling over the names, Lord Russell challenged no less than one-and-thirty; a fact which can hardly be explained,' says your lordship 'but by supposing that *some pains had been taken by his enemies in the selection*.'—p. 40. Your lordship may say that. But all his challenges were of no avail; his enemies had selected too skilfully; and they murdered him on Tower Hill.

In the Act of 1. William & Mary, annulling Lord Russell's attainder, it is recited, that he was convicted by means of 'Undue and illegal returns of jurors.'

It seems, then, that there was packing of juries in those days—a horrible scandal, when practised in England, and against so amiable a nobleman! But does not your lordship know that all these enormities, and worse, are regularly practised in Ireland down to the present day? Do you not know that in Dublin the Sheriff is *always* the creature of the Crown? And that he is created for this express purpose? Do you not know that your faction—I mean the English government—*never* got one verdict against a political offender, save from a well and skilfully packed jury? And that in the only case where they did *not* pack (viz., *The Queen against Duffy*, tried two years ago), they failed ignominiously.

The reason why they did not pack the jury in this case was, that they had been thoroughly shamed, and brought into disrepute by the monstrous

fraud practised in the framing of the jury to try O'CONNELL and the Repeal Conspirators a short time before. They thought they could not repeat that trick so soon again; so they foolishly admitted three of the national party into the box.

I know, my lord, you will not commit that mistake again. I do not quote these passages from your lordship's book in the expectation that any silly weakness will prevail to make you give us a fair trial. I hope I know my place better; we are mere Irish; and I have not the presumption to imagine that we are entitled to as fair a jury as the noble British martyr, Lord WILLIAM RUSSELL. I have set these things down, therefore, not because I hope to produce any effect upon you, but because I know this letter will be read by (or read to) at least a hundred thousand men.

Of course, you will pack the jury against us, merely because all the world knows you dare not bring us to trial before an impartial jury of our countrymen. If you do, it will be the last criminal prosecution in Ireland at the suit of 'our Lady the Queen'—as indeed, in any case, I trust it will be the last.

It matters little now whether you pack or do not pack. Whatever kind of trial you select—a fair one or a fraudulent—a trial for misdemeanour, or a trial for felony;—or whether you drop juries altogether, and try grape-shot, I tell you that *you are met*. The game is afoot; the work is begun; Ireland has now the 'British Empire' by the throat; and if she relax his gripe till the monster is strangled, may she be a province, lashed and starved forever. Amen!

I remain, my Lord,
JOHN MITCHEL

P.S.—I find a sentence in your lordship's book (it is in vol. ii. p. 178), which it may be interesting to quote—not for you, my lord, but as before,

for the aforesaid hundred thousand men. It is in these words:—'It is sufficient to justify the leaders of an insurrection that the people should be thoroughly weary of suffering, and disposed to view with complacency a change of rule.' Very good.

J.M.

Address to the People of Limerick

Speech given 30 April, 1848.
Reported in the *United Irishman*, 6 May, 1848.

Mr. Chairman and citizens of Limerick, my first duty is to thank you, which I do cordially and sincerely, for the generous reception you have this night given to those who have been selected for prosecution by the British government—a reception which, notwithstanding what has occurred outside that door, must be called a triumphant one.

I have seen nothing in all this mob violence to make me despond for a moment. The people are the true source of legitimate power; that howling multitude outside are a thousand times preferable to the howling legislators of England, who yelled against Smith O'Brien. I am no drawing-room democrat, who can discourse of the powers and virtues of the people only while they are smiling and cheering around me. Mob law itself in Ireland is far better than government law—that well-ordered and civilised system that slays its million of human beings within the year. I tell you that rather than endure one other year of British dominion, I would take a provisional government selected out of the men that are bellowing there in the street.

Sir, I fear that I am unfortunately the cause of your meeting this night being disturbed. I think, however, the matter arises out of a misapprehension. There is a great difference surely between bearing testimony to one's approval of a man's general conduct, and identifying oneself with all his acts. It is one thing to offer encouragement and support

to a person singled out by government (which is the enemy of us all), as the especial object of its vengeance; and it is quite another thing to adopt for your own every particular sentiment, saying, and doing, of the individual in question. This difference I feel bound to note and acknowledge to-night; and I do so with alacrity and with gratitude. You need not fear, my friends, that I will misinterpret the compliment that has been paid me, in inviting me to your city on this occasion. You need not fear that I have accepted your invitation in order that I might thrust any particular opinions of my own down your throats, or in order to induce a belief that there is between me and your distinguished guests—Smith O'Brien and Thomas Meagher—a more thorough identification than there is, or needs to be. We don't want this thorough identification.

Some of the things I have done and written these gentlemen have both condemned, as believing either that they were wrong in themselves, or that the time had not come for them. And I cannot be even with my friends in this matter—I am not able to repudiate any of their public acts. Can I repudiate, for instance, the last speech of Mr. O'Brien in the British Parliament—one of the noblest, clearest statements of Ireland's case—the very haughtiest, grandest defiance flung in the face of Ireland's enemies, that ever yet fell from the lips of man?

Or can I condemn the alternative put by Mr. Meagher, who says, when the last constitutional appeal shall be made, and shall fail—'Then, up with the barricades, and invoke the God of Battles?' Can I repudiate this—who hold that constitutional appeals are long since closed against us, and that we have even now no recourse, except—when we have the means, and the pluck to do it—the barricades and the God of Battles? No; all the seditions and treasons of these gentlemen I adopt and accept, and I ask for more.

Whatever has been done or said by the most disaffected person in all Ireland against the existence of the party which calls itself the

government—nothing can go too far for me. Whatever public treasons there are in this land, I have stomach for them all. But, sir, have we not had in Ireland somewhat too much of this adopting and avowing, or also repudiating and disavowing, what has been said or done by others? Might we not, perhaps, act with advantage less as parties, and more as mere men, each of us on his own individual responsibility?

For myself, though an active member of the Irish Confederation, I declare that I do not belong to the Young Ireland party, or to any party. I have found myself unsuited to party ties and trammels altogether; I have been found not to draw quietly either in single or double harness. I very soon quarrelled with the old Repeal Association; and as for the Confederation, it has once or twice nearly quarrelled with me. Not many weeks ago the Council of the Confederation, headed by Smith O'Brien and Mr. Meagher, thought it necessary to disavow my proceedings. Very well; what harm came of it? I merely retorted in the most good-humoured way in the world, by setting them at defiance; and things went on afterwards more smoothly than ever. In short, I have long felt that I belong to a party of one member—a party whose basis of action is to think and act for itself—whose one fundamental rule is, to speak its mind. Its secretary, committee, librarian and treasurer, are all one in the same person; and in its proceedings I assure you there reigns the most unbroken unanimity.

Seriously, sir, I know no other way of ensuring both honest unanimity and independent co-operation than this very way of mine; and with this views and sentiments, you may be sure I am not likely to misconceive the motive of your kindness in asking me to join your party to-night. I am here I believe as your guest on one account alone. You will say whether I state it truly. I am here not as a Jacobin (which I am not)—nor as a Communist (which I am not)—nor even as a Republican (which I am); but simply and merely because I am a bitter and irreconcilable enemy to the British government.

Will you forgive me for speaking so much about myself, on this, the first time, I have had the honour to address an audience in the south of Ireland? I assure you it is not my habit; nor would I do so to-night, but that I found myself, on my arrival in Limerick to-day, in a rather singular position. I found some twenty or thirty poor fellows who had risen very early in the morning for no other purpose but to hoot me as I came into town. I have no ill-will, I assure you, against those who hooted, nor even against those who set them on to hoot. I believe it all arose out of some expressions in my paper, THE UNITED IRISHMAN, which were construed as disrespectful to the memory of one whom—whatever I may think of him—most Catholics revere as their Emancipator. I think the passage did not really convey the gross and degrading imputation on O'Connell's memory that has been spelled out of it; but at any rate I must acknowledge that the feeling on the part of these people against me is not an unnatural one, and that is merely an exaggerated and perverted example of a sentiment creditable in itself.

But sir, while I admit this, I must also insist on my right to hold and to express, on all public questions, and on the characters of public men, the opinions which I have honestly formed. I established that paper in order to assert and vindicate this right, as well as all other rights of Irishmen, and especially the rights of labouring people like my friends who hooted me this morning. And I must inform them that I value the hootings of a mob just as little as the indictment of an Attorney-General, and, further, that I had rather never be invited to a public assembly, nor appear in a public place, nor sit at good men's feasts—I had rather be overwhelmed by state prosecutions and by the execration of my countrymen, all at once, than yield or waive the privilege of saying what I think for a single hour.

Enough now about these personal matters. As to the position of our great cause, I think it is full of peril as well as full of hope. In proportion as the Irish nation has been gathering up strength and spirit to rid its soil of

their enemies, those enemies have also been collecting their strength and hardening their hearts to hold our country in our despite. It is fortunate, I think, that those who have taken a forward part in rousing our people to these hopes and efforts are the first to bear the brunt of the danger. It is better that they should be called to encounter it in the courts of justice first than that it should fall on a people not yet prepared in the field. But while we meet the enemy in the Queen's Bench, we have a right to call upon you to sustain us by a firm and universal avowal of your opinion. On the constituents of Smith O'Brien especially devolves this duty. While the British Parliament calls his exertions 'treason' and 'felony,' it is for his constituents to declare that in all this treason and felony he is doing his duty by them. And more than this; it is your duty further to prepare systematically to sustain him, if it come to that, in arms.

May I presume to address the women of Limerick. It is the first time I have ever been in the presence of the daughters of those heroines who held the breach against King William; and they will understand me when I say, that no Irishwoman ought so much as to speak to a man who has not provided himself with arms. No lady is too delicate for the culinary operation of casting bullets. No hand is too white to make up cartridges. And I hope, if it be needful to come to the last resort, that the citizens of Limerick, male and female, will not disgrace their paternal and maternal ancestors.

Before sitting down now, I wish to contradict one calumny. It has been said of me—Lord Clarendon has had it posted up over Dublin—that I have been inciting the people to plunder and massacre; that my object is to raise a hasty and immature insurrection; that I want to plunder houses, to rob banks, to break into shops and stores. Need I refute this outrageous calumny? Who ever heard me stimulate my countrymen to civil war against their own flesh and blood? My friends, we have no enemies here save the British government and their abettors. A war of

assassination and plunder against our countrymen would be a wound to our own vitals. I shall say no more of this; but again heartily thanking you for your kindness, I conclude by urging you once more to stand by and sustain Smith O'Brien against his enemies and yours—to sustain him, not for his sake, but for your own.

If yet you are not lost to common sense,
    Assist your patriot in your own defence;
The foolish cant—*he went too far*—despise,
    And know that to be brave is to be wise.

Petition to the Houses of Parliament

***Nationality*, 13 November, 1915.**

Mitchel, in the last year of his life, was elected a member of the English Parliament by Tipperary—the first Sinn Féin election. For Mitchel pledged himself never to set his foot in the English Parliament, and by his example to lead the people of Ireland to see that the only safety they had in connection with that institution was in electing representatives who would refuse to attend it, and attend instead to Ireland's business at home. But Mitchel did once draw up a petition to the English Parliament—a petition which probably not a dozen of the present generation have ever read, and which forms a perfect model for all petitions to that Parliament from Irishmen. In 1848 the Young Irelanders determined on formally demanding from England, before they repudiated the connection altogether, Repeal of the Union. Mitchel and Meagher were asked to draw up the formal petitions. Meagher's was the petition agreed upon. This was Mitchel's:—

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF ENGLAND IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

The Petition of the undersigned Irishmen humbly sheweth—that every people should mind their own business, and are best fitted to mind their own business; and that the people of Ireland, of whom your petitioners are a few, are quite willing and well fitted to mind theirs.

That since the 1st of January, 1801, Ireland, the native land of your petitioners, has been, to its sorrow, degradation, and misery, "incorporated" with the British Empire.

That this incorporation was legally effected by a certain grievous act of your Honourable House, called "an act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland"; and in reality by the systems of assassinage, incendiarism, and subornation, which your honourable House has always sanctioned as its means for the extension of English dominion.

That since the incorporation aforesaid, in the name of the act aforesaid, and by means of armed troops, regular and of police, spies, placemen, and others (the means which your honourable House has always approved for the sustentation of English dominion), divers persons, calling themselves successively, the 'Imperial Government,' have, to the utmost of their ability, and under the sanction of your honourable House, abused the native land of your petitioners for the sole benefit of the English, and the complete misery of the Irish people.

That the accumulated evil-doing of those persons aforesaid has at length necessarily inflicted upon the native land of your petitioners famine and pestilence unprecedented in the world.

That your petitioners are ignorant of and indifferent about the intentions of these divers persons aforesaid, forasmuch as they are all of necessity incompetent to govern the native land of your petitioners, which really needs to be governed; and forasmuch as those of them whose intentions were said to be worst did least ill to your petitioners' country, fearing to interfere in the affairs of your petitioners' fellow-countrymen where they could avoid such interference, and being opposed tooth and nail by the majority of your petitioners' fellow-countrymen, on account of their reported intentions, whether their acts were bad or worse; and those of them whose intentions were said to be best did most harm, inasmuch as, at various times, saying they would 'lay the foundation of

most just systems in,' 'better the conditions,' 'improve the lot,' 'extend the happiness,' and the like, of your petitioners' native country, they were permitted by your petitioners' simple fellow-countrymen to make divers cruel experiments for such purposes.

That the incorporation aforesaid of your petitioners' native country into the British Empire has been necessarily followed by the incorporation of Irish labour into the English capitalist, the incorporation of Irish wealth into the English Treasury, the incorporation of Irish blood in the English armies, the incorporation of the Irish flag into the English jack, and the incorporation of Irish food into English stomachs, all or any of which incorporations would not be submitted to by any other people in the world, and are so cruel and humiliating to your petitioners that your honourable House may well be, since you can safely be, surprised at our inhuman patience and our unchristian resignation.

That, however, self-preservation is a severe necessity. That of the natives of your petitioners' country not more than one million are yet starved. And that, whereas one John Russell, a grave member of your honourable house, having rashly said to the remainder of your petitioners' fellow-countrymen (they being now in a state of direst famine, caused by the English having devoured their food), 'Help yourselves, and God will help you,' your petitioners are grievously afraid their fellow-countrymen will hearken to the advice of the Honourable John Russell aforesaid, and help themselves, whether your honourable House will it or no, to their own food, and their own country, in future.

Wherefore your petitioners, being peaceable men, anxious to save the lives of millions of their fellow-countrymen by obtaining for them the eating of their own produce, 'peaceably, legally, morally and constitutionally,' do beseech your honourable House to repeal the aforesaid act of 'incorporation,' called an 'Act for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland,' in order that, without offence to your honourable House, your

petitioners' fellow-countrymen may be enabled to drive the armies of your honourable House, the laws, and other grievous impositions of your honourable House, the police, English accent, Manchester clothes, 'felon flag,' and all things English, off the face of their own country into the sea—an event, for which the judgment of Heaven, the incompetency and the crimes of men, are daily preparing the nations of Europe.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

When Irishmen think, speak and act to usurp an alien authority in the spirit of this admirable petition we shall have reality in Irish politics.

Speech from the Dock

***Speeches From The Dock or Protests of Irish Patriotism*, *Part I*, A.M. Sullivan, 1868.**

Dublin, 26 May, 1848.

I have to say that I have been found guilty by a packed jury—by the jury of a partisan sheriff—by a jury not empanelled even according to the law of England. I have been found guilty by a packed jury obtained by a juggle—a jury not empanelled by a sheriff but by a juggler.

The law has now done its part, and the Queen of England, her crown and government in Ireland are now secure, pursuant to act of parliament. I have done my part also. Three months ago I promised Lord Clarendon, and his government in this country, that I would provoke him into his courts of justice, as places of this kind are called, and that I would force him publicly and notoriously to pack a jury against me to convict me, or else that I would walk a free man out of this court, and provoke him to a contest in another field. My lord, I knew I was setting my life on that cast, but I knew that in either event the victory should be with me, and it is with me. Neither the jury, nor the judges, nor any other man in this court presumes to imagine that it is a criminal who stands in this dock.

I have shown what the law is made of in Ireland. I have shown that her Majesty's government sustains itself in Ireland by packed juries, by partisan judges, by perjured sheriffs.

I have acted all through this business, from the first, under a strong sense of duty. I do not repent anything that I have done, and I believe that the course which I have opened is only commenced. The Roman who saw his hand burning to ashes before the tyrant, promised that three hundred should follow out his enterprise. Can I not promise for one, for two, for three, aye for hundreds?

Here Mitchel was transported to Bermuda.
He did not return to Ireland until 1874.

To the Secretary of the St. Patrick's Confederate Club

***The Pilot*, 5 June, 1848.**

Newgate, Friday, One O'Clock.

My Dear Sir—

In taking farewell of the St. Patrick's Club, which I do with deep gratitude, for their unwavering kindness to me, I wish to make some remarks to them on the position of the cause.

There is no reason to be dispirited, *provided* the Confederates will, from this day forth, insist on an *aggressive* course of action being entered on and steadfastly persevered in; I mean that a resolute stand should be taken for right and justice against 'law,' and for the common privileges of manhood against police constables and soldiers.

I tell you it will never do to recognise for one instant their ruffian acts of Parliament for laws, nor to suffer continual insults and buffetings at the hands of men in blue coats armed with truncheons. The spirit of no nation could live through such an ordeal, if it be much longer continued. You may organise, and recruit, and arm, and what you call *prepare*, till harvest, or till an European war, or till the sky falls; but the cause will be going back instead of forward.

Now, to insure safe and rapid progress, the Confederation absolutely needs a more efficient executive head. I need have no delicacy on this point, because I have expressed to the principal members of the Council

in person my decided opinion that the Council has not been doing its duty, and that, constituted as it is, real service of the sort now wanted is not to be expected from it. The Council is at present, and always has been, a clique or close borough; and the practice of adding at pleasure to its own numbers has a tendency to make it become continually more and more of a clique, and less and less independent and effective. Do not understand me as intending to undervalue either the character or the abilities of most of the 'leaders,' as they are called, now in the Council. For several of them, and especially for my dear friend, Mr. Meagher, I have the highest esteem and regard. But I say, that constituted as the Council is, arranged as all its proceedings are, in a select circle of gentlemen, no bold forward movement is to be expected.

I mean, in short, that the Confederates, the Clubs, the *People* in some form, should actually elect the members of the Council—say for six months, and not by any means suffer it to add to its own numbers. Of course, this would violate the 'Convention Act,' which I consider an additional argument in favour of the thing I suggested. It is plain that no *unpacked* Jury will ever convict for sedition in Ireland, and I hold it to be absolutely essential to the cause, that we should continually put the government to the disgraceful and diabolical resources of *packing*. This is needful, in order to rouse indignation, to excite all honest and manly feeling in the country in our favour, to show what British government in this country really rests upon—viz., force, corruption, perjury, and blasphemy; but, above all, it is needful, in order to keep alive and increase the *spirit* of the people. Believe me, it is not arms, it is not food, it is not organization, opportunity, or 'union,' or foreign sympathy Ireland wants—it is spirit—a proud, defiant, intolerance of slavery, and scorn of pretended 'legal penalties,' as well as other personal consequences. When this soul has come into Ireland, her opportunity is come, till then—never! never!!

I know that in writing this to you I subject myself to the imputation (which I bear some Confederates dare to cast on men who hold such sentiments) that I am an agent of the British government, hired to excite what is called a 'premature insurrection.' Let me entreat the Club to look with dislike upon any of its members who is ready to make such charges lightly against others. This wretched cowardly spirit of mutual suspicion is really the most fatal element I see in our movement at present; and the man amongst us who charges another with so hateful a crime, or hints it, or says such or such conduct, opinions, or advice, look *like* such an iniquity, ought indeed, to be prepared to substantiate the charge at his peril. Our proceedings hitherto have been public and above board, and I had hopes that our excellent principle of no concealment would have got rid entirely of the mischief of informers and detectives, and their odious trade. But I find that the mutual distrust created by continual hints of their existence, may as disastrously effect our action as the very things themselves.

I do not know that I have more to say to you, except to exhort you earnestly to go on. The villanies of these criminal prosecutions must show every one of you that it is now only the more necessary to provide arms and ammunition so as to have the *power and spirit*—the opportunity will come from Heaven—to abolish the frightful system which, under the names of law and government, lays waste, and beggars, and degrades our noble country.—I remain, dear Sir, your sincere friend.

John Mitchel.

Election Manifesto

***The Life of John Mitchel*, *Vol. II*, William Dillon, 1888.**

I solicit the high honour of being elected as your representative.

I am in favour of Home Rule—that is, the sovereign independence of Ireland.

I shall seek the total overthrow of the Established Church, universal tenant-right, and abolition of ejectments; free education—that is, denominational education for those who like it, secular education for those who like that, with the express organic provision of law, that no person shall be taxed for the education of other persons' children.

I am in favour of the immediate liberation of those prisoners of state whom the English Government keeps in prison as 'Fenians.'

Lasty, as well as firstly, I am for *Home Rule*.

Electors of Tipperary! Many of you, as I hope, know me by name and reputation. If you believe that all the strength and energy now left in me would be faithfully, and perhaps usefully, dedicated to the service of our native country, then give me your suffrages, and believe that the honour of Tipperary will not suffer in my hands.

I shall immediately present myself to you in person, and ask Tipperary to confer upon me the highest honour that I can conceive awarded to mortal man—that of being the representative of the premier country.

Speech to the Electors of Tipperary

***The Life of John Mitchel*, *Vol. II*, by William Dillon, 1888.**
The short preface in italics is Dillon's.

At Tipperary (on 16th February 1875), John Mitchel made what may fairly be called his last public speech. Some hours later he spoke a few words to the people at Clonmel; and some ten days later he again spoke a few words at Cork to the audience who had come to hear him lecture. But, practically speaking, it was at Tipperary that he made his last public speech. He was extremely weak—hardly able to stand up while he spoke. But the spirit within was still unconquered. I give the speech—interruptions and all—as I find it in the newspapers of the day:—

Men of Tipperary, it is true that I have come over more than three thousand miles of this globe's surface to the people of Tipperary to get returned by them to Parliament (*loud cheers*). It was nothing to come three thousand miles to receive such an honour as I have received this day, and especially such a distinguished honour as I received yesterday (*cheers*). I would have come from the North Pole for it (*cheers and laughter*). It makes it the more impressive upon me that I have not even the honour to be a Tipperary man. I have the honour to belong to Down, but I suppose Down is as Irish as Tipperary (*cheers*). At any rate I am an Irishman (*loud cheering*).

A voice.—The first Irishman living.

Mr. Mitchel.—I am an Irishman, and I think you all seem to acknowledge that (*cheers and laughter*). My friend, Mr. Doran, has alluded to some steps he thinks the Government are about to take—that is, the British Government over in London (*laughter*). There is a man over there in London who writes novels (*laughter*), and he is of opinion that he knows better who Tipperary should elect than you do—that is his opinion (*great laughter*).

A voice.—He lies.

Mr Mitchel.—Now, if Tipperary is to submit to the dictation of the novel writer, why, the next thing will be Cork, and then he will go to Limerick, and will make them all select for their representatives such men as he shall approve of.

A voice.—Limerick is not rotten, sir.

Mr Mitchel.—No, I think not. Men of Tipperary, some years ago the British Government selected me as a fit subject to carry a felon's chain, and to bear the penalties of felony at the antipodes. And now, when I have returned here, you, the people of Tipperary, have thought me the very person worthy of being your representative at her Majesty's counsels, to offer her Majesty's ministers and advisers the best and all my information and talents to help them to govern a free country (*laughter*). I am now going to help the English, the Scotch, and the Welsh to govern their own countries as well as to govern this country. It seems they cannot do it without us (*laughter*); and I have only this much further to say to you—you have had little experience of me yet. You have only heard or read of me. Well, there is one thing I wish to state to you, and it is—that as long as I have the honour of representing you I will not sell you (*cheers*). I will not trade upon you in any shape or form. The efforts and sacrifices the people of Tipperary have made in putting me in the very proud position I hold to-day—these efforts and sacrifices I will not trade or traffic upon (*loud cheers*). I will not be found haunting the doors of ministers, pressing them

to give little offices and places to by constituents, or the relations of my constituents (*cheers*). I am not going to say to his lordship, the Premier, or the Secretary of State, 'Now, in my district of so-and-so there is a very eminent and influential constituent; he has a little estate, and it will gratify him to be made a J.P.; or he has a cousin or brother-in-law who would like a good office—inspector of police, say' (*laughter*). 'Now,' I should continue, 'you will gratify me and maintain me in my county, barony, or parish, and we will maintain you and your administration' (*cheers*). That is a fair bargain. Now, I suppose a great many of you know that is the sort of bargain and traffic made every day in London (*hisses*). I hope the days of that base trade are nearly at an end. I think there is a better class of representatives now going over to London than we used to have (*cheers*). I did not say, recollect, that I am ever going to London at all. I didn't promise to go to London. I have not pledged myself to that effect; but whether I go to London or stop here at home, I think Tipperary may be very sure I will never bring disgrace upon her (*enthusiastic cheering*).

Final Letter to the People of Tipperary

***Weekly Freeman's Journal*, 20 March, 1875.**

Newry, March 17, 1875.

It is time that I should formally and most gratefully thank you for all the noble efforts and sacrifices that you made in the second Tipperary election. Since two days before the polling I have been confined to bed at Mr. Irvine's house, in this county of Armagh, which has not only disabled me from paying my respects in person in every town of Tipperary, but has prevented me up to this moment from addressing to you this letter of thanks. While I express my gratitude for what you have done, I know that it was not done for me, but for the electoral privilege of your county. For me it is enough to have furnished the occasion to that powerful county of making so emphatic and so peremptory a protest against the English system of Parliamentary government in Ireland; and your second election struck a heavier blow than the first. It interprets the first and drives it home. At the first of the two elections, when I was declared elected without opposition, it was open to your enemies to say:—

> 'That was a surprise—that was a mistake. The gentlemen who was to oppose this rebel accidentally was not there. A telegram miscarried; a coach broke down. Let Mr. Disraeli only give us another chance and we shall soon see that the county has no occasion for this "felon."'

Well the Queen's Minister most courteously gave them their chance, with all manner of courtesy towards *them*, but with the most blackguard brutality towards the electors and the elect of Tipperary. Now, the second election turned out a more damaging and damning pronouncement than the first. I was returned again by a majority of more than twenty-three hundred, not counting some five hundred spoiled votes—a most overwhelming majority under the circumstances of this case.

Then at once arose the question for me—Having been honoured with this high responsibility, what am I to do with it? Not that I laboured under any doubt or perplexity on that subject. I thought that there was no man in Tipperary, nor in Ireland, who really supposed that I was going to creep up to the bar of the House of Commons and crave permission to take oaths and my seat, or that I would appear, cap in hand, before Monahan and Keogh and the other election judges, to defend my election against a petition by a Mr. Moore. In short, I concluded that all was already one. All that was possible for the Tipperary franchise or Tipperary freeholders to accomplish was already won.

I am made aware by letters from friends in the county that some of my worthy supporters feel a little aggrieved at my pausing suddenly at the triumphant declaration of the poll on the second election. They have given me, by unequalled personal exertions, a superb majority in Tipperary, and they feel reluctant, perhaps naturally enough, to see that great power stop in the mid-career of its triumph, and I think that I should do something to carry on the war at the bar of the house and before the judges. But there is no war now to be carried on; we have come to the very end. The matter as it stands is now complete. Your county has used her franchise in the very best manner possible—that is, in making a desperate protest against the whole system of pretended Parliamentary government in Ireland. If, nevertheless, any friend of mine in Tipperary thinks he has reason to be surprised at my manner of meeting the present emergency, or that I have,

ever at any time or in any manner, led him or others to suppose that I should act otherwise than I am doing, I can only refer him to my whole past political career, and to all my published writings and speeches, so far as they relate to this subject of Irish representation in the English House of Commons. More particularly, I refer him to that lecture I delivered in New York on my return from Ireland last summer, a lecture which was reprinted in almost all the Irish journals, and which was intended rather as a manifesto to the Irish in Ireland than as an address to the people of New York. In it occurs the following sentence:—

> 'Yet certainly it was my full intention, if any vacancy in the representation of any county or borough existed, or should occur, during my stay, to offer myself to the electors, not merely to test the question whether I was eligible or illegible, but, if elected, to originate, and to get other members to join me in adopting, the system once put in operation by O'Connell, of declining to attend in the Parliament at Westminster—that is, of discrediting and exploding the fraudulent pretence of Irish representation in that Parliament.'

So now, my friends of Tipperary, I ask your favourable construction, and bid you farewell for the present, with God save Ireland.

JOHN MITCHEL.