

# CHAIRSEAT

# REVIEW

# NA-ÉIREANN

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## NOTES.

### A Rift in the Net.

THE threatened revolt of the Welsh and Scottish Radical members against precedence being given by the Liberal Cabinet to a scheme of Irish Home Rule was, we are informed by the official organs of the Parliamentary Party, no revolt at all. At the worst, it was only a tiny flare-up which has been promptly extinguished. That may be, yet flare-ups are not to be regarded lightly in a powder magazine, and any clash between the strangely-assorted elements that constitute the Government's majority might easily precipitate an explosion that would send Mr. Redmond's hopes sky-high. Critics who have not the Irish leader's touching belief in the *bonafides* of Mr. Asquith and his Cabinet do not hesitate to whisper that the official Liberals could hardly be said to have been very black browns at the mutinies, while some were quite obviously delighted that the Irish were, as one phrased it, in private, "brought back to their senses." These are signs which cannot be disregarded that some clever tacticians discern in the jealousy of the Scots and Welsh—for jealousy it is, even if it has been checked down for the time being—a useful asset when the *Home Rule Bill* comes up for discussion. If Mr. Redmond jumps at the half-loaf he is offered nothing will be easier than to set buying at its heels the Scotch and Welsh who have to go without any bread at all. And the knowledge that this can be done as easily as vinking will undoubtedly encourage the Cabinet to that Irish proposal, down to the lowest minimum which will serve to justify in the eyes of their English followers the very grudging pledges that have been extorted from them. Irish opposition, as it affects votes, will have never been needed and never will be. Mr. William O'Brien has declared that it is one chance in a million that a Home Rule Bill will pass before another General Election. At all the world knows, Mr. O'Brien loves to put things in the most rhetorical way possible, but certainly the odds are heavy enough to induce the most reckless plunger to think twice before he puts his money on such a hopeless outsider.

### Parliament and Parliamentarians.

MR. DILLON has been proclaiming himself a faithful admirer of the British Constitution, and his new argument for Home Rule seems to be that it will bring the blessings of that Constitution to down-trodden, unprogressive Ireland. If he does not like the *Yeto Bill*, in the course of which Mr. Dillon makes his confession, are a fair sample of how that Constitution works in practice and in theory, we might, without straining ourselves, invent an Irish substitute which probably would not be so impressive to look at, but would get through its allotted task with a good deal less fuss and fumbling. During the last few weeks the English Parliament has had all its fire going full blast and all its wheels revolving furiously, but little more has come out of the potter and the din than a heap of chopped Irish names. The whole affair would have been discussed with infinitely more insight into real issues and with incomparably better temper and taste. But at least one good result has come out of the interminable wrangles that make such dreary reading in the daily papers. The old pretence that some special divinity lodged round the English House of Commons, and made it the type of all that a representative assembly should be, has departed for ever. It is one of the ironies of the situation that those who for generations have been the high priests of the adoration of the altar turn the veil from its mysteries, and when a Cecil ranks himself among the scoffers one knows it is the beginning of the end. No adequate answer was made to Lord Hugh Cecil's taunt that the

House was a corrupt assembly, for the good reason that even those who tried to show it wrong knew it was true. His protest against the squandering out of the private member by the massed cohorts of the Government of the day only put into words a commonplace of modern English politics; and the Government itself is no longer a free agent, becoming each year more and more an instrument that the permanent officials manipulate as seems good to them. No doubt, when Lord Hugh's party comes back to power he will eat his words and pocket his salary with a serene conviction that no human agency could possibly hope to improve the English Constitution, to struggle Mr. Dillon, who now turns a blind eye to its defects, will be thundering about the woes of the private member from his place before the gangway. It is all part of the game, but Irishmen may be pardoned if they begin to find the humour a little forced.

### The New Financial Committee.

THE more one studies the composition of Mr. Asquith's Financial Committee the less one likes it, and the more astonishing becomes the complicity of almost all on the part of the Parliamentary Reformers. The *Freeman*, indeed, though it makes no official comment, has thrown its correspondence columns open to a discussion on the matter, but it does not seem to have been able to see that the fly in the ointment, for it is the exclusion of Mr. Thomas Sexton. Well, Mr. Sexton's name may be a name to conjure with, but even one heaven-born financial expert could not point one against the dead weight of so many English representatives. It may be that the Party has received assurances as to the lines along which the inquiry will proceed; it is to be hoped it has, and that those assurances are down somewhere in black and white. To Irishmen who dwell in outer darkness unilluminated by any rays from Big Ben the whole affair affords profoundly suspicious and unsatisfactory. If it means anything, it means that Mr. Redmond has left the report of the Financial Committee, of which he was himself a member, go by the board, for nothing is clearer than that English statements will hold that whatever findings this new body bring in will cancel those of Mr. Gladstone's famous Commission. Yet, whereas those experts were given every facility to examine the whole complicated question, took evidence in public, and had practically unlimited power and unlimited time at its disposal, the new Committee meets in secret, does not even make known its methods of procedure, and when it ultimately reports, nobody save the members will have the faintest clue as to how far those recommendations are justified by the evidence laid before it. Even if it were as Irish as it is English in composition this bigger-muzzed, would rub its proceedings of all value and significance. In financial affairs, as the middle of the Wyndham Land Act proved, the Parliamentarians have a predilection for buying pigs in poke, but the acceptance of this one-sided committee as a tribunal competent to revise the findings of the Financial Commission is the maddest gamble in which they have ever indulged.

### Irish Industrial Movement.

IT is good news that Derry is coming into line with the rest of Ireland in regard to the principles of the Irish Industrial Association. The Association of the Corporation in arranging for a citizens' meeting to establish a branch of the society in the city should give a glimpse to the seventh All-Ireland Industrial Congress, preparations for which are being anxiously pushed. The Association's position may now be said to have definitely lived down the last trace of prejudice against its most suspicious and sinister of policies. It can find no time to justify themselves in adopting an attitude of hostility. In Belfast it has emphatically

"caught on," for Belfast merchants would care to divine that it was not only sound politically, but good business, and "Irish week" is now always marked with a white stone by shopkeepers in the Northern Capital. But the Belfast Association is not satisfied to rest on its laurels. It is meditating still more ambitious schemes, the most promising of which is a bureau of Irish industries which it is hoped will be established in the near future. This will provide practical proof of the vitality of the movement amongst Irish manufacturers, and incidentally make smooth the path of the new convert who, desirous of obtaining Irish goods, shrinks a little, from the hard task of bludgeoning into the right path dealers and shopkeepers who are not yet aware that it is to their interest to give Irish goods a fair show. Now that Derry has flung off its apathy, and is prepared to do more than play a waiting part, one looks forward confidently to a big boom in Ulster which should put the other provinces on their nerves.

### Popular Economics.

THE *Irish Homestead* on a question of economics is usually not open to suspicion, but there are times when the editor's pen runs with him in a freakish hunt after paradoxes that will startle the dullest reader into an attempt to realise things for himself. Quite recently he has been having his eye on the question of increasing imports into Ireland, and advances the proposition, backed by all the array of nimble arguments, which never fail him, that "there is no better sign of National progress than the steady increase continued year after year of the value of imports into a country." He points out the elementary economical fact, forgotten by some enthusiasts in a hurry, that if imports are increasing exports must be increasing, too; therefore, the country as a whole must be expanding its trade and growing in prosperity. No Irish thinker worth powder and shot has denied that what he does deny it that it is a sound national policy to buy in foreign countries goods which could be quite as easily obtained at home. Nor can we accept the contention that there are only two economic ideals—one that of self-contained country feeding itself, clothing itself, vigorously barring out foreign merchandise, and the other that of the land which concentrates altogether on international trade, "buying in the cheapest market the world knows, selling in the dearest market it can find." A nation can blend both of these ideals, and be all the stronger and more prosperous for doing so. If Irish produce is to be exported one admits that those exports must be balanced by imports, but that by no means invalidates the question of what sort of imports to come in is immaterial. The existing system under which our farmers send their produce across the Channel and receive the money they receive for it in Lancashire shillings, English-made costumes for their wives, or American agricultural machinery, while our town-workers, living in a great food-producing country, eat Siberian hags or canned beef from the States, tells of radically bad organisation. The *Homestead* has pointed out before this the benefits that would result if co-operation, instead of fixing their eyes on outside markets, were to take up the work of "feeding their own members, grinding their own corn, curing their own bacon, curing their own beef, and doing their own cooking; if the first duty of farmers to feed themselves." With the surplus they might easily make it their second duty to feed their neighbours in the towns. The Belfast Co-operative Society has begun to work along these lines, buying its butter and eggs from the various agricultural societies with apparently the most satisfactory results. The problem is not one that can be solved in a day; it necessitates huge changes in the existing system of organisation that cannot be effected otherwise than

slowly. But, as the *Homestead* itself pointed out some months ago in an acute article on currency statistics, there is a growing demand in Ireland for Irish butter and eggs, and when the same influence begins to operate on other articles of agricultural produce our exports may sink and imports dwindle in proportion, but the effect will be a substantial benefit to the country as a whole and a saving of the big sums that now go into the pockets of English and Scottish shipping companies.

### As Others See Us.

WE have before us a copy of the sixth number of a new monthly publication called *Irish Progress*. This paper has been founded for the purpose of keeping alive in the hearts of the people of Ireland the principles of the men of '98 and '67, and preserving free and unimpaired the holy spirit of liberty, which for over seven centuries has made us irreconcilable rebels to English rule. That spirit of liberty, that hankering after the glorious gift of freedom which is ours by every right of God and man, has been our only consolation in many a year of black and bitter despair. And now *Irish Progress* is setting itself the glorious task of perpetuating that love of liberty in every Irish heart, and "keeping before our minds the glorious deeds of every Irish patriot, from Cathair Muintir to the brave Dublin artisan, Joseph Proudhon, who expiated the crime of loving his country on the scaffold of Richmond Prison in 1833. There is little danger, however, of Irish people forgetting the sacrifices of the past, and the appeal which *Irish Progress* makes month after month to cherish an unrelenting hatred of England and her robbing people we are confident will not fall on deaf ears. For our part, we wish increasing respect to the true patriots who, without fee or reward, are running this new Irish journal, and we would advise all readers of the *Nationalist*, who loved the lessons of Nationality in the glorious Fenian Brotherhood, or are proud to be the sons of the men who made that great movement the power that it was, to become subscribers to it immediately, and thus help on the good old cause which is still as virile as ever, and speed the coming of the day when the charter of Irish liberty shall be written with the blood of an annihilated foe. (From "The Ship Nationalist.")

"UNIONIST," writing in the *Coric Constitution*, says: "The physical force organ, *Irish Progress*, of this month, April, contains some violently written, rubbishy articles, contributed evidently by some of the 'lads' who were in the ranks of the Fenian Brotherhood, and who were found hiding under their beds when the hour of battle with the false Saxon had come in 1867. The audacity and cheek of some of those fellows in these days are something preposterous. The King, when he comes, should well be received by all classes and creeds in Ireland. Dublin should not allow itself to be deterred by those miserable members from the back lanes, who sport treason now against England, which would, if allowed to go on, end in treachery, like all the other things that they have done in this country."

### FOR IRELAND.

(In memory of May, 1798.)

Let Erin remember the heroes brave,  
And give their names in her story.  
Who nobly died their land to save  
When knaves forgot her glory.  
Like brothers at last uniting,  
Stout heart and hand, they took their stand,  
For Ireland, for Ireland, fighting.  
Some hoast of victories, of battles fought,  
With never a gun's loud pealing;  
Some boast of a single light being sought,  
With never a life-blood's sealing;  
But with ring of steel the *beanna* shouted,  
And the spirit of the people's hand,  
And he loves her best who with dauntless breast  
Dies there, for Ireland, falling.

THOMAS MAC DOUGHER.



## II.—MORAL FORCE

[illegible]

said a Gentle in the field:—"War is hell." This, of course, is exaggeration, but there is a grim element of truth—the horror—in the warning that must be kept in mind at all times. If one among us still would resist being asked to forego what he thinks a rightful meed of vengeance, let him look into himself. Let him consider whether he is not a coward, a traitor or criminal: not satisfaction, but awe, is the uppermost feeling in his heart. Death seizes us all. But away from death this may be unconvincing; and one may still shout of the glory of floating the ship of freedom in the blood of the tyrant. But when we see the suffering of the innocent, his philosophy in view of the horror of street accident or the brutality of a prize-fight,

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If it is imperative we should fix our minds only on guiding principles before we are plunged unprepared into the whirl of events, we must remember that we should clasp the mind to the truth now, for we have fallen into the dangerous habit of deferring the decision until it is too late. The time has now come when we must choose between the right and the wrong. In a word, we lack moral strength, and so, that virtue that is so safeguard in times of crisis, is wanting. We are not strong enough in the time of severity. It need not be further laborious that in a state of emergency, when the moral barrier is admitted of its maker, in such a state it is more important that every individual should be able to stand firm, than that many temporary evils may arise; yet they are not dangerous—in the glow of a people's freedom they are easily removed. But when the light of freedom, where independence is suppressed and a people is degenerate a little evil is often the seed of a great one. It is in the nature of things that evil multiplies and destroys. That is why men of high spirit and high principle are so often so much more insistent to watch every little defect and weak tendency than in a brave time would have been. It is the duty of every citizen to be vigilant, once it becomes evident is ripe for settlement. To evade the issue is to invite disaster. But to resist is to invite the same. The only way to keep a plan of policy will be raised to evade a particular and urgent question is to resist it. But to resist it is to invite disaster. Ignorant people will

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T. msc S.

CORRECTION.

In the article on "Separation" in the March issue there is the following error:—

"He has sacrificed the hour to give advice for all time."

*Should read:—*

"He has sacrificed the hour to give service for all time."

T. msc S.

The blossom of early summer whitened the fragrant hedgerows, a cluster of delicate rose hedges here and there breaking through the gleaming green. The hedges were the scene of the most beautiful and beautiful early May, yet gladly tripping towards the curtained portals of the future, behind which love and life are waiting. The gold and silver of the blossoms, the green of the leaves, the green of the pasture fields, the milk-white calves and the kindly red and dappled kine were browsing, as all tended to do, on the buttercups, the buttercups, the buttercups making, at intervals, a brilliant spangle in the warm, mellow glister of sunny light. Oh! how vivifying the sight of that sweet scene, how vivifying the sight of that scene, how again vigorous and imperious, and in the long, lingering heart the divine sense of beauty on earth in air, and sky—the senses keen to see and hear and feel, and to feel the light with the glow of a new perceptive.

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*E. mac S.*

GRAVES O'MARA























