

Past and Future

Author(s): R. and Anglo-Hibernus

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that the farmers were planting fruit trees to a considerable extent. Pardon the "gird" but you are so fluent with tongue and pen, one forgets you are doing things as well.

No. I take no interest in things that go on at the Castle. Just now I am building a great deal on the Conference.

That Conference, if its members have the necessary degree of wisdom and courage, and the country supports them properly, will have the ball at their foot, and infinitely more power than Grattan's Parliament ever had.

I hope to have the pleasure of eating your apples next year, and trust that I shall find them old-fashioned Irish, Kerry pippins, lemon pippins, Molly Vawns, lady-fingers, Eve apples, and so forth. Tell the wicked boys that they must moderate their depredations, for that a person who is working at the cause of Ireland a Nation, is coming down to eat them: not the boys, but the apples.—ED.]

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PAST AND FUTURE.

DEAR MR. O'GRADY,—I have never been a subscriber to A. I. R., but read it regularly and like it much. I think our views on many subjects are identical. I am as loyal to King and Constitution as any man breathing. But I detest the dishonest abuse and wresting of the Constitution, for party and personal motives, that we have had to look at all our lives. I detest the robbery, in the name of the Constitution, that we in Ireland have been subjected to by selfish and unjust men—men who have robbed the State even more than they have robbed the individual tenants; who have injured the Kingdom MORE than they have injured Ireland, by driving out the people who could, and would, have tilled the country, and made it fruitful, had they been allowed to do so, without the certainty that if they did so, the very class that should have encouraged them and insured to them the enjoyment of the fruits of their industry, would come on them like bandits and rob them. Wishing you and the A. I. R. long life and success, I remain yours truly,

R.

[DEAR Mr. R.—, I am sure you will agree with me when I say that the root of the evil was the Whig doctrine which came up early in the nineteenth century that land was a chattel, and that the *lord* of land was its owner in the same way that he owned the sheep upon his lawn, and as much entitled to all the improvements thereupon as he was to the wool upon the backs of his sheep.

This was Whig doctrine, the reverse of Tory, and introduced here out of England, and is not, and never was, recognised by hundreds of our best landed families, and its first application to Ireland provoked an agrarian revolution.

But I would now let the dead past bury itself, and see the country bending itself to the great and grave problems of the present and future. Since the dawn of our History such possibilities were never presented to Ireland as those which time and events are surrounding us with to-day.—ED.]

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DEAR O'G.,—It is quite true that I don't agree with your political, agricultural, or industrial views, and your paper often contains pars., which jar on me terribly, as, e.g., when you held up an unfortunate chemist to odium for getting his shop fittings in England. Moreover, the industrial part of your paper was so prominent lately that I could hardly find anything literary to read at all. For all that, I'd be sorry to lose A. I. R. One story like "Nessa," a page of your own Elizabethan yarns, or a poem of Norah Hopper's, makes up for all, and more than makes up. So, go ahead, dear friend, only please remem-

ber that people like myself amongst your friends may be more numerous than you think.

ANGLO-HIBERNUS

[DEAR A.H.,—Thanks. But I think I let you know that for a while things in A. I. R. were passing a little out of my control. The paper which wants to be independent of interests, parties, and traditions has to battle for its freedom in a way the mere reader of it finds a difficulty in understanding.—ED.]

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THE NAKEDNESS OF THE LAND.

THE lines which here follow were, I think, written by Mr. Cooper, author of the pamphlet "Forestry in Ireland." If any of my readers know Mr. Cooper's address, I would thank them to send him a copy of this issue, or at least to send myself his address.

I print the verses as a reminder to all of a *great* national question which, as a nation, we ought not to forget. It is an essential part of the land question, of the Man and the Earth problems which are so obscure, yet so important:—

Thy hills, dear old Wicklow, deserted, denuded,
Are void of the mantle that nature placed there;
When o'er thy grand summits, an Angel of mercy,
Spread her wings to protect thy heights, barren and bare.

Untaught and in error, though full of devotion,
You have failed to protest with your usual force;
And now your grand rivers to streamlets have dwindled,
Or, raging in torrents, have altered their course.

A mantle of verdure gave fullest protection
To the heights of thy country both noble and grand;
Like wings of an Angel it spread o'er thy summits,
And bound up the sod in a tight-fitting band.

This soil that was perfect for all you required,
Giving life and support to your bold mountaineers,
Has gone from thy summits, and sped to the ocean;
Thus the sight of thy hill-tops is mingled with tears.

The coming National Conference should be able to settle without much trouble the landlord and tenant question, and then with freer minds grapple with the great land question in its entirety. To settle this would seem to require all the wisdom and understanding that we can put forth.

Meantime we must not forget the nakedness of our highlands and the consequent starvation of the streams that run amongst the valleys.

ED.

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MAN AND THE EARTH.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

DEAR O'GRADY—Perhaps you will allow a "free lance" a little space on this subject.

The land belonged to the animals before the people existed. The horses, cattle, sheep, deer, etc., grazed on it. But their tenure was somewhat precarious. They held the land, however, subject to certain onerous conditions. They were liable to be killed and eaten by lions, tigers and wolves. And the animals have not yet been quite dispossessed. There are still parts of the earth where they are the only occupants.

Then came man. He took the land by force from the former occupants; but he re-established the cattle, sheep, etc., to a large extent on practically the same conditions as before—except that they were now to be killed and eaten by him instead of the lions and tigers. The horses he made his servants, but occasionally killed and ate them also.

But the first men who occupied the land generally got

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