Current Events

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All Ireland Review.

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EDITED BY STANDISH O'GRADY.

[ONE PENNY.]

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Current Events.

THE Cork Exhibition was opened last week by Lord Bandon, Lord Lieutenant of the County, who stood side by side with the Lord Mayor of Cork, and looked like a king. He was very shy, too, which made one like him all the better. Looking at him, watching his kindly face and modest manner, I remembered something told me once long ago by a man who was very familiar with the life of the peasantry and farmers of this county. It was before the great agrarian revolt of '79 and '80. He told me that the tenants on the Bandon estate regarded their farms as freeholds, and bought and sold them as such; that the Bandon family never evicted, and never altered their rents. If all our landlords were like the Bandon family we would have had no land question, or it would have come upon us in a very different form. I hazard this remark, too, that it is people like the Bernards, the Wingfields, the Cootes, and Cosbys, and the rest of that noble order of Irishmen, the resident gentry of the country, and *not* the British Government, who have kept the existing social system so long on foot. It was they who checked the agrarian revolution, for everyone who knows them knows that their destruction or expulsion would be a loss and not a gain to the country.

THE Bernards have been in Bandon for centuries. They succeeded the O'Mahonys, whose chief castle was in Bandon, and who owned the country thence westward as far as Three Castle Head, which was also an O'Mahony stronghold. They were subjects of a still greater family or nation—the famous sept of M'Carty Reagh (Fuscus, or the Tawny) of Kilbrittain, from whom, in the female line, are descended, I think, the Frekes (Lords Carberry). When Red Hugh (O'Donnell) came down this way to join the Spaniards and participate in the inglorious "Races" of Kinsale, he made Castle O'Mahony, now Castle Bernard, his headquarters, and reduced West Cork and Kerry into subjection to himself, laying us all under tribute—a fact which, no doubt, had something to do with those inglorious "Races" at Kinsale; for if there is one fact more than another which is impressed upon every page of Irish history it is the rooted objection which we have all had, gentle and simple, and ever since the dawn of time, to the payment of *rent* in any shape or form. Red Hugh, in the day of his power, put all the West Cork gentlemen under rent—M'Carties, O'Mahonys, O'Donovans, O'Crowleys, O'Sullivan, etc., etc.—and the West Cork gentlemen did not like it, and took a leading part in the ensuing "Races" at Kinsale.

I AM very well aware that all this antiquarian lore looks a little old-fashioned and out of date, and very irrelevant to the Cork Exhibition. I don't think it irrelevant at all,

for I perceive that the Exhibition has a vital connection with the Land question, with its just settlement in the interests of this nation and with the allied and kindred question—what are we to do with our nobility and landed gentry, the resident gentlemen of the country, with families like the Bernards, the Whites, the Colthirsts, &c., &c.? I want to keep them, and set them to the discharge of their natural duties, and to bring them out into the public life of our country as leaders and captains. Others want to destroy them and confiscate their property, and these people will probably succeed, for the game is going hard against the Bernards, Colthirsts, Newenham, and all that noble but unfortunate class of Irishmen who might be of such service to this poor country, and who, as the game goes, seem about to be eliminated and cast out. It is a great tragedy going forward before my eyes, and which I can never forget.

I SHALL not leave Cork until I have made myself personally acquainted with all the manufacturers, our Southern Captains of Industry. I tell them that they are going to be the new aristocracy of Ireland. They think that this is humour and fun upon my part, but it is not. It was just men like themselves—a plain, sensible, hard-working, solid kind of men—soldiers for the most part—who founded all these noble and historic Anglo-Irish families. There was no "nonsense" about the Wingfield who founded the Powerscourt family, or the Bingham with whom originated so many noble families in the West. They were just a plain, sensible, hard-working, brave and strenuous kind of men; and if any one told them that they were heroes—which they were—they would think that they were being laughed at. The manufacturers of Ireland will do great things yet, as soon as they get fair play: for I see clearly that they are not getting fair play at all, but are being robbed and plundered in every direction, and in the most scandalous manner. A successful manufacturer ought to be a kind of Prince, rich, strong, prosperous, a Power in the land. Yet, I find him, as a rule, only just able to live and keep his business going. Why? Because he is being preyed upon by so many Harpies. That is to say, the very best men in the country, the Captains of our Industries, are only just able to exist, owing to all the robberies and thievings.

IF I had the fire and energy, the vitality and the pluck which were once mine, I would go into public life to-morrow and make a "Land and Property Defence League" on national principles, which would consist of the resident gentry and the manufacturers and merchants; for they are natural allies; a great league of people like the Bernards, and people like the Robertsons and Gallaghers of Belfast, and the Pims, Findlaters, and Goodbodies of Dublin, the great landlords, the great manufacturers and the great merchants, and harness all Ireland under them, and abolish for ever and a day this absurd Irish democracy. They are the true leaders and captains of our race and nation, not these ridiculous bags of gas who go to London to explode there on "the floor of the British House of Commons," and in doing so, though they don't know it, are guilty of High Treason, and have forfeited their wretched lives.

I AM in a very frank mood to-day, and intend to say some things that have been in my mind for many years, and unsaid till now. There is, and was, and always will be, such a thing as the rabble. Our ancestors knew it and kept the rabble well down under strong government and control. The rabble are out now; they have got out of control. In the eye of the world we are represented to-day by the rabble and their leaders. I would not be mistaken, for I like and respect individually those who collectively constitute our Irish democracy rural and urban. I like farmers and labourers, and fishermen, artisans, jarveys, etc. The most interesting, fresh, lovable, and even respectable people I know belong to this great Irish order. But, collectively and politically, when they get into crowds and swarms, and with their leaders, the talkers, come out to govern us, don't like them at all.

They don't think, and are governed by phrases, as, indeed, are the upper classes, too; but then the upper classes have no power and these people have. And, in short, I think the great work of our coming statesmen will be to find out everywhere the true leaders and captains, and in one way or another get them into the saddle, and confine the workers to their work. Of the patriotism and public spirit of the labourers I have heard a good account, and from different quarters, but it is plain that a class so poor, so unfortunate, and so dependent is not one to be trusted, certainly not to be trusted with the direction of the destinies of this nation.

* *

At the Exhibition I met a very fine type of our Irish manufacturer, Mr. O'Connell, of O'Connell and Co., wheelwrights and workers in timber generally, who, I hope, will pardon me for introducing him so summarily into these columns. He explained to me three signal and great improvements which he had himself made in the construction of trolleys, in the strengthening of the framework, and the saving of the cap of the axle-tree from bad usage. All great improvements, as I could not but think. Listening to him, I was reminded of a dictum of Prince Kropotkin, whose marvellous little book "Field and Workshop and Factory," I would like all my readers to buy. It was to the effect that all the great inventions which have so revolutionised modern industry were the discoveries, not of philosophers and savants working in their closets, but of practical men looking at their machines in action, and considering and thinking how that action might be made more effective. I feel perfectly certain, on general principles, that Kropotkin is right in this.

* *

I AM very glad to think that I am editing this number of the ALL IRELAND REVIEW, in the beautiful country, and not in the great City of the Mandarins. I write these lines just above, and looking down upon "Drake's Pool." Drake, it seems, was being hunted by the Spaniards, who, at the time, were the great tyrants of the deep, and he escaped from their clutches by fleeing into this little, quiet inlet of the great harbour of Queenstown. My host and I do not at all agree upon the subject of "Bos," and, indeed, to be quite candid, I do hope that when Mr. O'Donnell drives his plough "up to the foot of Tara," he will so manage his revolution that we shall retain large spaces, and in all the provinces, in which the human face divine shall not oppress by its frequency, for, much as I like Paddy, I think I almost prefer rural solitude and rolling champaign, and woodland such as surrounds me here in this storied land, overlooking the Pool that gave shelter and protection to Drake. I find my scantling of Gaelic lore very useful here, for it enables me to explain to my host the meaning of the names of her fields.

* *

THE following letter will explain itself:—It deals with a question of the very greatest importance, viz., the utilisation of the great national resources which we possess in the South-West of Ireland in a climate which is almost sub-tropical and where there is virtually no winter at all. I am sending a copy of this issue to Mr. Hamilton, Akasha, Vale Road, Guernsey, Channel Islands, who will probably join Mr. Boswell in forming the company, and who, I think, would consent to be the managing director; also to Mr. Fletcher, the hon. secretary of the Growers' Association, St. Peter's Port, Guernsey. One acre will be quite enough to start growing with, but I would respectfully suggest to the promoters the advisability of buying or securing pre-emption rights over one hundred contiguous acres, for, if the experiment succeeds, the adjoining land will have a greatly increased value, which ought to belong to the company.—ED.]

* *

DEAR MR. O'GRADY,—I have been much interested in your "Letters from Guernsey," on the prospects which they open up for Irish horticulture. Assuming that a closer examination into the conditions prevailing in West Munster should warrant the experiment, it would seem that a small limited company would afford the readiest and safest means of making the trial. It might be long before a really competent grower could be found to risk his means of livelihood in pioneer work.

It would be necessary to commit the whole responsibility as to cultivation, etc., to a highly skilled manager, to be engaged from some place where extensive gardening has already been brought to perfection—e.g., Guernsey or

France; maybe the latter would be preferable for several reasons. Probably many skilled gardeners, or sons of growers, would be glad of the chance of amassing a little capital, with a view to establishing themselves in the new field thus offered to them.

Various collateral advantages might be obtained by this method. Needless to say, any such scheme would have to be conducted in a severely practical manner, and on strictly commercial lines; still its indirect benefits would be enhanced by the fact that the promoters would not be actuated by exclusively commercial aims. Being *ex hypothesi* interested in the development of the country, they would aid in forming a nucleus for all activities conducive to that end—language, small industries, etc. The greater the output of the latter, the easier it would be to make favourable arrangements for carriage—the great difficulty.

* *

A successful issue to the enterprise might induce many small capitalists to find a more profitable investment for money now lying idle in saving-banks, and to employ co-operation in a department in which it would be quite as practicable as in the creameries, and in some favourable localities more remunerative. No doubt there would be many causes to make the establishment and working expenses both heavier in Ireland, than they would be in a country where the industry has long been scientifically pursued, and brought to a high state of perfection. You refer to several of these—viz., the greater cost in the erection of glass-houses, and the supply of manures, fuel, and all manner of appliances, transit difficulties, want of skilled labour, etc. Experience would inevitably bring other difficulties to light. Two points in particular occur to me—(1) Sun. Do the climatic advantages of West Munster over Guernsey and central France counterbalance its comparative deficiency of bright sun and excess of rainfall? (2) Carriage. Supposing even that through rates should render the railway cost less obstructive than usual, still the sea transit from Dublin to England corresponds to that from Guernsey to Southampton, while the railway journey from any West of England port to London, or even the midlands, is longer than that from Southampton to London—thus the transit across the whole width of Ireland is a sheer dead weight. Again, should the sea-route from Cork be chosen, would the additional time in transit take the freshness off the more delicate kinds of garden stuff?

* *

A partial set-off against these expenses might be found in the lower price of land, and especially in the selection for the main crop of produce that is especially adapted to outdoor culture, aided by artificial heat and shelter, and with glass, on a much smaller scale than in Guernsey.

Taking it all round, and dismissing all thoughts of profits on the Guernsey scale, it would seem as though a well-devised and well-managed scheme might bring in, not a fortune for every few acres, but a decent dividend on a small capital. I add a few suggestions, rather to explain my meaning, than with the idea that they could be adopted as they stand; for my ignorance of industries in general, and of company promoting in particular is exhaustive. Still something tangible is always convenient, even if only to alter and amend.

1. The company to consist of the necessary seven members, or as few more as are necessary to provide the capital—say, each holding shares to the value of £100 to £200 or £300, or as much more as they are willing to adventure.

2. The undertaking to be on as small a scale as is consistent with *thoroughness* as regards both culture and market considerations.

3. Capital to be estimated on a sufficiently liberal scale to allow of the whole being paid up, and thus avoiding the unpleasantness of unexpected calls. No debentures: the directors not to be expected to give personal guarantees to banks, etc.

4. As it would be necessary to have the very pick of the land, in point both of quality and situation, it might save capital, and also risk, to take, say, a seven years' lease, with option to purchase at the expiration of the term at a price to be stated beforehand.

5. The general business of the company to be conducted by managing directors resident in the vicinity, men of experience and business habits, remuneration varying with the net profits. No bonuses or extra allowances to directors on any pretext. Large increases of business to be met by arrangements for increased regular remuneration.

6. The grower to have full control over all matters relating to cultivation, packing, consignment, etc. Probably it would be advisable to exclude from his department all matters relating to orders, bills, receipts, and payments, choice of markets, etc., these matters being dealt with by the managing directors, or a paid clerk.

7. The grower's remuneration to be by salary, or share of net profits, or a minimum salary supplemented by a share of the profits—in every case to be partly dependent on results; also a share of pupils' premiums, or a capitation grant in respect of them.

This is a long rigmarole to inflict upon you, but from much friction a spark may be kindled in some quarter,

I have been glad to observe the sleek and comely appearance presented of late by A. I. R., judging therefrom that his prosperity increases with age. Still there are, perhaps, indications that shades of the prison-house begin to close around our growing boy. There is a trifle less of the personal element in the paper which used to give it its greatest brightness. This is not meant for carping—rather as a token of appreciation.—Faithfully yours,
C. S. BOSWELL.

Bromsgrove, England, 10th April, 1902.

DE SACERDOTIBUS, &c.

TO THE EDITOR OF ALL IRELAND REVIEW.

DEAR MR. O'GRADY.—Staying here for a few weeks. A. I. R. seems to be getting on swimmingly. Matter, &c., excellent. It is fine to achieve this without mortgaging one's Soul to the Capitalists and "the Disciplined Interests." Would like to see the little paper spread among R. Catholics, and hope it is spreading. A paper which appeals to ALL classes—I mean to the natural human element in all as distinguished from our artificial prejudices—must do some good. The Priests are and will remain a great power in Ireland long after we of the present generation are dust, and on the whole their influence is on the side of the angels. Faults they have and bigotry, some of them, but these defects are our common heritage. [Very common, I fear, M.M.—Ed.] I notice your Irish column is erratic. I may be able to help you here some day. I know enough to make a column, or two, interesting. [Quite sure of that, M. M.—Ed.] I fear your last leap, or plunge, *re* land question, will lose you many of your subscribers. [I don't think so, M. M. A man may own land and also have sense.—Ed.] Your view is absolutely demonstrable. It would be interesting to find out, as far as generalization from statistics go, how much Ireland loses on the mere commercial exchanges of her present products. Does she get value for her exports, or is she cheated there, too, by trade juggling? I do believe she is; and I believe further that agricultural countries are the prey of the manufacturing ones, through trade juggling and other ways. Does Ireland, think you, get £100 back for every £100 worth of bullocks, &c., that she gives out? I think not, but don't know. This, perhaps, is a sort of hazy instinct with me, derived from early associations. Yes, you are right, *re* Bos. We must eat more of him and export less, and transform his splendid carcase into capital, human and financial. With best wishes.—Yours truly,
M. M.

[Dear M. M.—I wish I could afford to have you for sub-editor to-day and successor to-morrow. But in spite of the very sleek appearance of A. I. R., who, as you observe, is putting on divers kinds of flesh, I can't just yet. Newspaper industry is a very singular kind of industry, and I may tell all about it some day when more communicative than usual under the caption "Bits of Ireland."

But, *re* the Ecclesiastics, was it not an Ecclesiastic who sounded the trumpet-cry and watchword of the new movement—"The Plough to Tara."

That word ought to have been said by the Duke of Leinster. And I am not forgetting that fine, young Geraldine, the chief of the greatest family in all Europe, I am thinking and inquiring about the lad, and as a free commoner of this Realm intend to talk very straightly to him one of these days.

I hope, too, this Summer, to meet the author of that "word," and discover his exact meaning; for the land laws which it heralds may be Conservative, stabilitative and progressive; or, may be revolutionary and destructive; and in all things I try to keep A. I. R. as Conservative

as possible—consistently with the native dignity of my country and the native rights of my people.

And so good-bye, M. M., and take good care of your health and the bodily tabernacle, for we may want them both one of these days.—Ed.]

HURLEYS.

TO THE EDITOR OF ALL IRELAND REVIEW.

DEAR SIR—We are anxious to express to you our gratitude for the cordial reception your representative's suggestion—to elicit some public attention to our "native" wood-working industry—has received at your hands, and still more for the esteemed courtesy of your letter to us.

In answer to your enquiry *re* hurleys, what is most worthy of note is the increasing popularity of the game in Ireland and among Irishmen in England and Scotland. It will surprise many to learn that considerable quantities of them are being sent by us to the Argentine Republic, and if increasing orders, unaided by any kind of extensive advertising—as the actual demand and future "natural" increase tax for the moment our resources—are a criterion of the increasing popularity of the game in one year, we rest assured that the near future will make it universal among Irishmen, so that we may look upon it as one of the factors that will contribute to the better utilization of our natural resources. Sir, with your permission, I shall write you something of a more general character about our timber work in the south.—P. P. C. O'CONNELL, Cork, April 25th, 1902.

[Please do, dear Mr. O'Connell; I shall be pleased.—Ed.]

THE GARDEN OF ERIN.

LUMINOUS PLANTS.

It is not generally known or noticed that the common nasturtium, which is found in almost every garden, possesses the curious property of giving forth sparks or flashes resembling miniature lightning in the hot summer evenings, just after sunset, and again before sunrise. Nor is this peculiarity confined to the nasturtium, for the sunflower, common marigold, African marigold, and martagon lily are all luminous. This luminosity appears in scintillations which play around the flower-heads, or about the leaves, and it is never seen on days when the air is misty, or loaded with the vapour that follows rainy or showery weather. This phenomenon is chiefly noticeable on flowers of an orange colour; but many others are similarly affected—for instance, the white rose, scarlet geranium, white anemone, hairy red poppy, and scarlet verberna. Christina, the daughter of Linnaeus, the great naturalist, was the first to observe it; but since those days many persons have seen it glimmering round fungi, plants, and trees—even decayed wood, lying in a damp place, on a hot dry night, may become luminous.

M. Tulasne made careful experiments in 1848 on this subject, and said the cause was "slow combustion, without heat, arising from a chemical combination of the oxygen of the air inhaled by the fungus, with a substance peculiar to the plant." Whatever action releases this phosphorescent light in flowers, it is certain that it radiates from their centres outwards, and flows along the veins, and that it is not material, since the light can be seen quite as plainly if the flower be wrapped in tissue paper. It would, therefore, seem as if plants radiated a species of electricity which is made visible on its contact with certain gases they exhale; and that it is flowing *from*, and not *to* the flower, is proved by the sap of the *cipo*, a South American vine, which bleeds when the stem is injured as if it were streams of living fire running down. The luminous fungi in the coal-mines of Dresden are a wondrous sight, and simply dazzle the eyes with their glowing festoons of light, and groups of star-like radiance, until they seem to turn the dreary pits into fairy palaces, lighted (as fairy palaces should be) with moonbeams.

M. L.

If flowers cannot be put in water, tie them by the stalks, and hang them head downwards.

The woods in East France are full of lilies-of-the-valley in spring; especially near Toule do they attain a perfection never seen in England.

Poppies can be blown out when in bud with a bicycle pump.

Carnations are invariably grown on the Tyrol with their blossoms hanging, just as we grow ivy geraniums in our window boxes. They do far better thus, as their natural growth is downwards.