Mr. G. L. Tottenham on the Landed Interest

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Christ defend me to-day
Against poison and burning, against drowning
and wounds,
Until a multitudinous reward have fallen to me.
Christ be with me, Christ before me.
Christ behind me, Christ within me,
Christ below me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right hand, Christ at my left hand.
Christ in breadth, Christ in length, Christ in
height.
Christ in the hearts of all who think on me ;
Christ in the mouths of all who speak to me ;
Christ in every eye that sees me ;
Christ in every ear that hears me.

I bind to myself to-day by a mighty virtue, an
Invocation of the Trinity.
I believe in the Threefold Nature, with confession
of the Unity of the Creator of the elements.

Domini est salus, Domini est salus, Christiest salus.
Salus tua, Domine sit semper nobiscum.

Críste do'mm im'ogail iníu,
Ar neim, ar loircu,
Ar bádao, ar gúin,
Co no' m' thair-ilar fochraice ;
Críste l'm, Críste r'm,
Críste i'm oegait, Críste innium,
Críste írrum, Críste úarum,
Críste oerrum, Críste tuathum,
Críste il-uur, Críste i-riur, Críste i n-erur ;
Críste i críou cech ouine immi' m' iorída,
Críste i n'gin cech óen ío' íom' labraíthar,
Críste in cech íore ío' m' íeíreíeíar,
Críste in cech íluar ío' íam' íhíeíeíar.

Ατομικὸς ἰνὸς,
Νικητὴς τῆς ἐν, τοῦ αἵματος τῆς πίστεως,
Χριστὸς τρεῖς αἶνες,
ἑνὸς θεοῦ αἰῶνος,
ἰν οὐλέμην [οὐαί].

Domini ert íalur, Domini ert íalur, Chíricti ert
íalur ;
Íalur tua, Domine, íit íemper nobírcum.

MR. G. L. TOTTENHAM ON THE
LANDED INTEREST.

DEAR MR. O'GRADY,—You write in the issue for March 1, that you have been pondering much over the position of the landed interest in this country, where you say—at this time of day!—that it has so much power if it chooses to assert itself, and that you entertain a hope “as you do not see in Ireland any other order which is capable of furnishing us with leaders,” that you may bring back its men “as the champions and heroes and captains of this poor afflicted but not altogether unworthy nation.”

Do you really think that the hands of the democratic clock move backwards? Do you find anywhere in history that the slow moving round of change, a democracy has ever been succeeded by anything but the tyranny of one? Take France as a recent instance. Has there been any sign during the last hundred years of the old families dethroned from power and their feudal rights at the time of the Revolution, and now forming a clique only in their Faubourg, resuming a leading place?

Take Norway, where also a hundred years ago the people emancipated themselves from their Danish lords and tabooed all pretence of inferiority on the plea of large proprietorship, have they ever attempted or been asked to come back? We, too, have had our revolution, a late one, and from a much more feudal state of things in some parts of Ireland than many people think. I find, for instance, in leases in this county, given so recently as by my grandfather, covenants to do suit and service, to grind all corn, etc., at the manor mill, and to give so many days' duty service in the year. Many other *droits de seigneur* unexpressed were no doubt enforced, and here as elsewhere, “spend me but defend me,” meant very much spending and not a great deal of defending. All that is changed, has been changed by those from whom you would expect it, for when a Conservative Government comes into power every interest trembles. The old order has gone, never more to return any more than the ideas and practice of the Stuarts, which the political revolution of two centuries ago wiped out for England once and for all.

Let me give you a concrete illustration of the position: The late Colonel Cooper, of Markree, whose death was

announced last week, was before the revolution the most prominent man in the County of Sligo, the largest proprietor, the owner of a fine place where he constantly resided; a man of culture, of wide experience of men and affairs, a first-rate man of business, and though not an Agamemnon or a Rhodes compelling by commanding personality, undisputedly one of the *áristoi* who in an un-Cleonised state of society naturally take and are conceded the lead. He was consequently chairman or foreman of every public body in the county, and devoted himself to its business; never missed an assize and seldom even a meeting of his board of guardians. The revolution came—promoted by Mr. Arthur Balfour, who, when in Opposition, said that to give representative Government to the counties in Ireland would simply mean establishing in such county a Committee of the National League—and he was not even named for the County Council, and before his death he had been removed even from the District Council of his immediate neighbourhood and shut up within the walls of his demesne. Do you suppose that such a man—and he is only a typical instance, as you are aware, of many who have been similarly thrust aside with contemptuous rudeness, as it was well called in the *Times*—would ever consent, or be expected, or be asked to come back and lead, or would even care to remain much longer in a medium so totally out of harmony with him? He would be much more likely to pack up his traps, as so many are doing, get what he could for his demesne, and leave it to be cut up into small holdings as they pleased. The policy of squeezing out is being entirely successful, and it will soon not be easy to find anyone who cares how rapidly the process of re-congestion may proceed.

You will have then—but perhaps I have written enough for your space for the present.

GEORGE L. TOTTENHAM.

[DEAR MR. TOTTENHAM,—I succeeded in jumbling a crowd of things into one of my sentences; therefore, it is no wonder that I failed to make myself understood. Lady — is a Countess, the wife of a Peer of Ireland; and the Irish Peerage—our Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, and Barons—are, in the Constitution, and according to the fundamental Laws

of this Kingdom, the second Branch of the Legislature, the Constitutional protectors of the rights of Property, the sole interpreters of all laws, and the supreme judges of the validity of laws, from whose decision there is no appeal, inside Ireland, or outside of Ireland.

An appeal from the Irish Peers to any other authority is high treason.

That is the law. If you don't like it, don't blame me. I did not make it. It was made by some twenty generations of Irish men, Milesian-Irish, Norman-Irish, Anglo-Irish. I but enunciate once again in the midst of this “maze of blind alleys,” out of the midst of all this shame and humiliation and suffering and disaster, national and individual—enunciate once again the fundamental unreppealed Law—no Power on Earth to make laws for us, save the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland; charged—they—down through all the centuries with the duty of administering the Constitution and of serving the Law—never, at any time, armed with any authority to sell.

And this is an old-fashioned doctrine for me to bring forth once more in these tame times; but I am old-fashioned enough to believe in the cause for which, “Tottenham, in his Boots” strode, all splashed and muddy, into the Senate, and voted, and for which the same Tottenham armed, and for which he and all his order were once ready to die. And I think that some of the spirit of that brave Tottenham has come down to and is lodged somewhere in my correspondent, and in a great many more of his class than is generally suspected to-day.

You argue from the past, from the history of other nations, that men like Colonel Cooper and his type can never, never again lead us and direct. I don't care about the past or the history of other nations. Our future lies before us like a blank scroll—virgin white.

It is very old-fashioned, too, I know, to quote Scripture; but, as I was thinking how I might best answer you, I took up an Irish antiquarian tract, written by my friend F. J. Biggar, entitled, “*Dextera Dei*,” and there, instantaneously, there met my eyes the blazing divine prophecy, true yesterday, to-day, and for ever:

“The Right Hand of the Lord hath the pre-eminence;

“The Right Hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.”—ED.]