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Ireland and the King

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fade, it is myself! For, *through* the All Ireland idea I have been fighting their battle, too—according to my lights—lights which are beginning to look not such Will-o'-the-Wisps as they did, I confess, about two years ago.

AGAIN, note in Col. Shawe Taylor's letter, a certain reach of mind and imaginative grasp of an existing situation. In the present imbroglio he sees no beggarly dispute about money, but the immediate and contemporaneous aspect of a great social war waged here with varying fortunes, and surely with appalling results! for the last 200 and odd years, that is to say, since the Battle of the Boyne and the Limerick Treaty. And, once more, note how rapid he is! how straight and straightforward, going by the shortest road into the very heart of his subject. Why? Well, I believe, I hope, it is because he desires to see the mind of the country concentrated, and as soon as possible, on the next great problem, while the experts are working out the details of the land settlement, and before they shall have handed in the results of their work to the Conference or to whatever National authority we shall have by that time appointed to review and adjudicate upon the same.

I DON'T know Col. Shawe Taylor, and, possibly, my high opinion of his powers, founded solely upon his action with regard to the publichouse question and his pronouncements and invitations *re* the Land Question, may be altogether wrong. We can only judge, here at least, by outward signs and tokens; and from these and from all we can hear as to his private career, we hope, or hope to hope, that we have in him at least one of the half dozen of his class who are impregnated with the All Ireland idea, and who look at their own rights and wrongs not sordidly, or selfishly, but through the medium supplied by a whole nation—all their rights and their wrongs, rights many, all unrecognised, and wrongs many, wreaked, and to be wreaked, and from which there seems to be no escape unless men like him, and Mr. Crosbie, and Lords Castletown and Mayo and Monteagle, and Kavanagh, and Villiers Stuart, and many more whose hearts God has touched, step out with an open hand to meet the people's leaders and confer together with them over all these troubles—like men and like Irishmen.

A THOUGHT.—That public money lent upon the security of real property, which is imperishable, need never be repaid, like public money lent upon the security of perishable property such as houses, drains, etc., etc. Therefore, that from our tenant farmers, converted into occupying owners, the State need not demand any sinking fund at all, or repayment by instalments of the purchase money of their holdings. *E.g.*, take a holding the judicial rent of which is £10. Twenty years purchase of this is £200. Now £200 at 2½ per cent. is £5. So the tenant can reduce his rent by £5 a year, the landlord can get 20 years purchase, and the State hold a most ample security for the punctual payment of the 2½ per cent. interest, viz.: £5 a year. Where does the necessity come in anywhere for the repayment of the principal?

A. I. R. would be glad to hear an answer to this question from those who are wise in such matters.

Again, if the arrangement arrived at by a conference of leaders be endorsed by a national conference of all Ireland as broad-based and representative as we can make it, and if Irish land stock be issued on the security of that arrangement, will there be any security in the whole world so "gilt-edged" as that? The Imperial credit, behind which there is only "a promise to pay" given by the governing classes of Great Britain, and which may be repudiated by the masses of the great British proletariat when they come into power, is strong enough, notwithstanding, to bring forward the moneys of capitalists and investors at 2½ per cent. or £2 10s. per annum for the loan of one hundred pounds sterling.

IRISH land stock issued as the result of, and with the sanction of, a national conference, will have behind it the

honour, not of governing classes, but of a whole nation.

Therefore, stock of this nature, having behind it not only the Imperial guarantee, but the guarantee of a nation in solemn conference assembled, and solemnly pledging their word, may be taken up at par at 2 or 1½ per cent., for it will be such a security as the whole world cannot offer to-day.

IF we are right in this surmise, there is here visible another possible grand step forward towards the solution of our land question and other kindred problems. In that case our typical Irish tenant farmer, though giving 20 years purchase to the landlord, would have to pay the State or central land authority only £4 a year or £3 10s. instead of £10. At that rate he might undertake for 30 years purchase, and make a handsome gain in the transaction, for the interest upon 30 years purchase would be only £6 a year, £6 a year perpetual interest, instead of £10 a year perpetual rent—and after that—peace! peace and contentment and quiet industry.

IRELAND AND THE KING.

BY PACATA HIBERNIA.

DEAR SIR—Your kind notice of my last letter induced me to consult my old friend "Henry Hallam" as to the constitutional position of the King.

After referring to the personal part which Henry VII., Henry VIII., and the kings of the house of Stuart took in the government of the country, he says in his history (vol. iii. p. 211) "this was eminently the case also with William III., who was truly his own Minister, and much better fitted for that office than those who served him." "The King," according to our Constitution, "is supposed to be present in council, and was, in fact, usually, or very frequently, present so long as the council remained as a deliberative body for matters of domestic or foreign policy; but where a junto or cabinet came to supersede that ancient and responsible body, the King himself ceased to preside and received their advice separately, according to their respective functions of Treasurer, Secretary, or Chancellor, or that of the whole Cabinet through one of its leading members."

The writer of the constitutional history then explains how the personal action of the sovereign dropped out of the government. He says:—"But on the accession of the house of Hanover this personal superintendence of the sovereign necessarily came to an end. The fact is hardly credible that George I. being incapable of speaking English, as Sir Robert Walpole was of conversing in French, the monarch and his minister held discourse with each other in Latin. It is impossible that with so defective a means of communication (for Walpole, though by no means an illiterate man, cannot be supposed to have spoken readily a language very little familiar in this country) George could have obtained much insight into his domestic affairs or been much acquainted with the character of his subjects. This, says the historian, continued in a less degree to be the case with his son, who, though better acquainted with the language and circumstances of Great Britain and more jealous of his prerogative, was conscious of his incapacity to determine on matters of domestic government, and reserved almost his whole attention for the politics of Germany."

The two last of the "Four Georges," though not so much engrossed by German politics, found other distractions. William IV. had little desire or opportunity to interfere, and during her long reign the late Queen let matters go on much as she found them.

Thus from the force of circumstances and by custom, but not by law, the constitutional prerogative of the sovereign fell into disuse, but it is capable of revival.

In no way could the present sovereign better resume it than in his council, looking himself closely into the affairs of his "Kingdom of Ireland." It is universally believed that to his action is mainly due peace in South Africa. Would that he would exercise his undoubted prerogative to insure peace in Ireland.

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