

The Ministry August 1892 to June 1895 (Liberal)

Prime Minister	William Gladstone (4 <sup>th</sup> Ministry); March 1894 Earl of Rosebery
Home Secretary	Herbert Asquith
Lord Lieutenant	Baron Houghton
Chief Secretary	John Morley
Under Secretary	Sir Joseph Ridgeway; Jan 1893 David Harrell

[August 1892] Archibald Philip Primrose, 5th Earl of Rosebery, was Scottish, and succeeded to the title in 1868 when he was still at Oxford. In the House of Lords he supported the Liberals. He was largely concerned with foreign affairs, and supported Gladstone over Home Rule. Herbert Henry Asquith was a barrister from Yorkshire. In 1888 he was junior counsel, under Sir Charles Russell who was Parnell's leading counsel. Robert Offley Ashburton, 2nd Baron Houghton and Marquis of Crewe succeeded his father in 1885 and entered the House of Lords. He was a firm supporter of Gladstone over Home Rule. He was largely boycotted by the Protestant nobility and gentry during his three years in Dublin.

At the General Election in 1892 the Liberals were returned with a working majority, including the Irish Nationalists of forty MPs. This was less than the Liberals had expected, but their association with Parnell had cost them votes. Gladstone's majority in Midlothian fell from more than 4,000 to under 700. The Liberals and Nationalists got 355 seats while the Conservatives and Liberal Unionist got 315 seats. Of the Nationalists, those who followed Justin McCarthy and were backed by the Catholic priests got 71 seats, while those under John Redmond got nine seats. Thus the Liberals by themselves were the minority party. Three Labour members got elected including Kier Hardie of the Scottish Miners Federation, himself formerly a miner, but latterly a journalist and organiser. They were elected as Labour Independents and did not at first work together.

The new Parliament opened on 4th August 1892 with Salisbury's Government still in office. The Queen's Speech was read, but the Government was defeated on an amendment proposed by Herbert Asquith. The Government resigned and Gladstone became Prime Minister for the fourth time on 15 August 1892. He was now eighty-two. As some of his older associates were unhappy about Home Rule, he brought into the cabinet some younger men including Herbert Asquith and Sir Edward Grey.

[1893] Parliament was then prorogued until 31 January 1893. Balfour visited Belfast where he was given a great reception. Pearce notes that Gladstone, like Parnell before him and Redmond after him, never considered the Ulster question, or ever imagined the Ulster would have to be treated differently (Pearce, *Lines of Most Resistance* 116). Salisbury intended to visit Belfast in 1893 to support the Unionists but was prevented by illness; nevertheless he welcomed a delegation of the Ulstermen at his home in Hatfield in Hertfordshire which strongly encouraged them. He visited Ulster the following year and was wildly welcomed (Warder 29 Aug 1903). In January, the Irish Under Secretary, Sir Joseph Ridgeway, who was deemed to close to Balfour, was replaced by David Harrell.

The issue which Gladstone put on the agenda before all else was Home Rule, so a Home Rule Bill (1893) was introduced on 13 February 1893. The Bill was substantially the same as the earlier one, except that Irish representation would be continued at Westminster where the representation was to be reduced from 103 MPs to 80, and these were not to vote on purely English or Scottish legislation, but could do so on Acts covering the entire United Kingdom or Imperial affairs. There was no division on the First Reading.

The Second Reading was introduced on 6 April. Gladstone admitted that Ireland had been over-taxed in the past. Sir Michael Hicks Beach moved that the Bill be rejected, but on 21 April the Second Reading was carried by 347 votes to 304, and on 8 May the Committee Stage was commenced and the Bill was piloted through Committee by Gladstone himself as none of the Irish law officers had seats in Parliament. The Opposition fought line by line and clause by clause, so that the Government was forced to set closures for each vote. On 12 July Gladstone conceded an amendment which allowed the Irish Members to vote on all issues. It was not until 30 August that Gladstone was able to move the Third Reading after 82 days had been spent on the Bill. After the Third Reading the House voted on the Bill as amended in Committee, and so on 1 September the Third Reading was passed by a majority of thirty four, nine less than at the Second Reading. In the House of Lords the Second Reading was moved on the 5 September by Lord Spencer. On 8 September 1893 the Duke of Devonshire moved

its rejection, on the grounds that the majority of British voters were against it, and his motion was carried by 419 to 41. Gladstone wished to call a General Election on the issue (which he would certainly have lost) but his colleagues talked him out of it.

There was a fracas in the Commons during the debate on the Second Home Rule Bill, when Col. Edward Saunderson bashed Nationalists right, left, and centre. Mr Justice Ross said he never saw such a look of ecstatic joy on any man's face as the colonel lashed out at all his opponents; "the kingdom of heaven had come at last; he was at liberty to bash the face of the nationalists without reproach" (Weekly Northern Whig 1 Nov. 1924). The House of Commons was privileged ground, so the colonel could not be arrested by the police for assault and battery.

Debate on the Supply Bill (the budget) kept Parliament sitting until 31 September when it adjourned until 2 November. It then took a break of a few days over Christmas and re-assembled on 27 December to try and clear other Bills. On 29 December 1893 Balfour congratulated Gladstone on attaining his 84th birthday, but rumours began to circulate that he was about to give up office. Gladstone wished to proceed with a Parish Councils Bill and Asquith's Employers' Liability Bill which had already been introduced. The Parish Councils Bill was sent to the Lords on 10 January 1894. The Lords inserted an amendment in the latter Bill, and the Speaker in the House of Commons ruled that they had either to accept the amendment or withdraw the Bill. Gladstone took occasion on the discussion of the Parish Councils Bill, which had been returned to the Commons, substantially altered in the Lords, to review the history of conflict between the Houses. Rather than fight over the issue the Lords gave way on all but two points and Gladstone conceded these. It was his last speech in Parliament. The issue of the powers of the House of Lords, like the issue of Home Rule, resurfaced seventeen years later (DNB Gladstone).

After sitting for thirteen months, Parliament was prorogued briefly on 3 March 1894, and it again convened on 12 March with a new Prime Minister. Though Gladstone had displayed extraordinary energy and stamina during the Home Rule debates he was now exhausted. There was a row in his cabinet over naval estimates, and he resigned on 3 March 1894.

In 1893 Gladstone appointed an Irish Taxation Commission composed largely of Englishmen, with Hugh Culling Childers a former Chancellor of the Exchequer as chairman to examine the finances of Ireland. The Commissioners were charged to regard Ireland as a distinct country and to show what taxation it ought to bear justly. The Commission sat for three years. The Warder commented 'It reported with one voice almost what Irishmen had long known that Ireland was and had long been over-taxed at a rate annually not short of £3 millions a year'. 11 out of the 13 commissioners considered that the two revenue systems should be separated. The burden imposed by the Union was too heavy, the taxation of 1853 to 1860 unjustified, identical rates cannot be maintained between the two countries, and Ireland was judged to be over-taxed to the extent of £3 millions per annum (Warder 31 March, 27 Oct 1900). It is rather interesting that an Irish Protestant and Unionist paper should be citing the Report. Everyone is in favour of lower taxation. The suspicion remains that the Commissioners were handpicked by Gladstone to produce a Report in accordance with his own opinions. However, this was a point that the Home Rulers could have picked up had they been willing to discuss Home Rule with the Protestants.

The Warder went on to ridicule the objection that "Taxation- the argument runs- is raised from population, not from territory; it is not England, Scotland, and Ireland that are charged, but the whole of the individual persons in the Three Kingdoms; and taking this truism as a test it is impossible to contend that Ireland is overtaxed in any rational sense". It went on, however, to contend that apparently equal taxes are really unequal; if the English drink much beer and the Irish much whiskey, then putting low excises on beer and high excises on whiskey is unjust (Warder 27 Oct 1900). That was the nub of the objection; if rates of taxation are identical all over the United Kingdom then no part of it can be overtaxed. But by counting taxes on particular items and expenditures on particular items it is possible to arrive at any conclusion a Commission wants.

Gladstone also established an Evicted Tenants Commission in 1893. It was always a contention of the Nationalists that all tenants evicted for non-payment of rent on their instructions were unlawfully evicted. It reported that in 1893 there were 1350 evicted farms on 15 estates; of these 205 were derelict, and 482 were being used by the landlords, the Land Corporation, and similar bodies. At that date too 333 of the old tenants had been reinstated, 5 were installed as caretakers and 76 had gone back as purchasers of their holdings (Weekly Irish Times 30 May 1903). The Report also considered that the working of the Land Acts was satisfactory but that there was a lack of uniform procedure, and that some of the interests of the tenants were unprotected. It was intended to have a Bill passed to remedy these, but the Liberals were out of office before this was done. It is interesting that the two protagonists in this dispute were both Ulstermen, Thomas Wallace Russell for the Liberals, Hugh de Fellenberg Montgomery for the landlords (Buckland, Irish Unionism, 194). There

was an appeal in the Land Court in 1900 against a valuer's decision based on evidence before the Morley Committee six years earlier where valuers admitted that they habitually valued on erroneous principles and showed prejudice against landlords generally; this latter was not allowed as evidence (County Councils' Gazette 6 July 1900). T.W Russell was a member of this Committee which seems to indicate that the Committee was chosen to produce the desired Report (Belfast Weekly News 7 February 1901)

In 1893 the Gaelic League was founded by Douglas Hyde along with John (Eoin) MacNeill, and Thomas O'Neill Russell. He was the son of a clergyman from Roscommon, and he learned Irish from the local people. He entered Trinity College Dublin with the intention of studying for the Church, but transferred to studying law. He translated local songs into English and published them as Love Songs of Connaught which won great acclaim. He became an apostle for the revival and spread of the Irish language. The Irish language was studied, especially by clergymen and those interested in Irish antiquities. Among these was a Jesuit priest named Edmund Hogan who taught MacNeill Old and Middle Irish. The League was originally non-sectarian and non-political, aimed only at promoting the study and use of the Irish language. But it was rapidly taken over by rabid nationalist Catholic fanatics who made Protestants and Unionists feel unwelcome. Among these were those who formed the Sinn Fein party, and by the revived Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). But that had never been Hyde's intention.

In Ulster opposition to Home Rule grew more intense. Rifles clubs were formed in all Ulster counties; the Central Assembly of the Ulster Defence Council was set up. It is not obvious what the Ulstermen intended to achieve by these warlike preparations. There was no intention at this date of forming a break-away Six-County state. The aim was to block Home Rule for the whole of Ireland. The idea probably was that if the Liberals forced through a Home Rule Bill it could only be put into practice by armed force. One area in which the anti-Home Rulers were very active was in scrutinising the voter lists, getting as many Unionists as possible registered and getting as many Nationalists as possible removed. (de Valera twenty years later refused to consider a referendum partly on the grounds that the local registers were very inaccurate.) As voting was strictly on sectarian lines identifying Nationalist voters was not difficult (Buckland, Irish Unionism, 177-8). Col. Right Hon Edward James Saunderson, of Castle Saunderson, Belturbet, Co. Cavan sat as a liberal for Cavan County 1865-74 and as a Unionist for North Armagh 1885-1906. He was strictly speaking a Liberal Unionist but stood as a Conservative against the official Liberal candidates in elections. He generally supported the Conservatives but was very independent. He became the leading member of the Ulster Unionist group of MPs. It would seem that the fracas in the House of Commons was started by the Nationalists who were provoked by his language. He was made a privy councillor in 1898, with the title Right Honourable. In private life he was an enthusiastic sportsman who built and raced boats on Lough Erne. A statue of him was unveiled in Portadown in 1910 (Saunderson DNB).

The Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union in 1891 became the Irish Unionist Alliance, representing Unionism all over Ireland. It proved impossible to establish strong constituency organisations over most of southern Ireland, for Protestants were too thin on the ground. Nevertheless much of the wealth and power was in the hands of Protestants and they formed a strong campaigning body (Buckland, Irish Unionism, 124-5).

[1894] Rosebery took over the office of Prime Minister on 3 March 1894. He had supported Gladstone over Home Rule which he just regarded it as merely 'the least impracticable method of governing the country' (Primrose DNB). In a speech on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1894 he said that he considered that the Union in which England was the predominant partner could only be broken by a majority of English votes. (This was close to the position of Abraham Lincoln and the American Union). This infuriated the Irish Nationalist MPs. An amendment to the customary address to the crown following the Queen's Speech proposed the abolition of the House of Lords was carried by two votes, so the address had to be withdrawn and a new one substituted. Rosebery commenced a campaign to get the Upper House reformed but got little support in the country and infuriated the Queen who said she should have been consulted.

There was little the Lord Lieutenant Baron Houghton or the Irish Secretary John Morley could do in Ireland. Apart from Home Rule the Liberals and the Nationalists had no other Irish policy. Morley reduced the number of areas proclaimed under the Crimes Act, but the Act itself was not repealed. He tried to get magistrates appointed from a wider circle than Irish Protestant landlords (Morley DNB). He had to deal with the two squabbling nationalist factions as well as with the unionists of all hues. He did manage to get the Public Libraries (Ireland) Act (1894) passed. This Act allowed all urban districts, no matter under which of the three Municipal Acts or other local Acts they were governed, to strike a rate for the construction and maintenance of public libraries. It had been originally intended to allow rural districts to do the same, but there were troubles with the rating districts (Adams, The Printed Word 168; New Irish Jurist 22 Nov 1901). This was remedied in

1902, after the reform of local government, by the Public Libraries (Ireland) Act (1902). The Diseases of Animals Act (1894) applied to Ireland, and the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council was empowered to make Orders under that Act and other Acts. In 1901 the Local Government Board reminded the new County Councils that 23 such Orders were in force beginning with the Glanders Order (1892). These dealt with communicable diseases like foot-and-mouth in cattle, glanders in horses, and rabies in dogs (County Councils Gazette 11 May 1901). Morley had a high opinion of Houghton as an administrator.

The teachers' unions secured a signal victory over the Catholic school managers in 1894. The Catholic teachers secured a court of appeal against the arbitrary dismissal by a manager the parish priest, namely by an appeal to the bishop of the diocese. The Catholic bishops by the Maynooth resolution of 1894 and emended in 1898 applied the procedure in all schools under Catholic management. This ended for them a prolonged agitation. The 1000 teachers under Protestant clerical management had no such court of appeal, or those under lay management; the 44,000 teachers in England are similarly subject to arbitrary dismissal (Irish Teachers' Journal 29 June 1901). There was a problem though for the Maynooth Resolution was not enforceable in canon law. However, an appeal for wrongful dismissal was heard by Chief Baron Palles and a Dublin jury and at the Chief Baron's insistence the jury awarded her a quarter's salary plus £221 (Irish School Weekly 29 July 1922).

The Parliamentary session for 1895 commenced on 5 February 1895. John Redmond's group was hostile, and the Government found it could only count on a majority of 15. Various Bills were proposed including the disestablishment of the Church in Wales. The question of the House of Lords was relegated to the background. On 21 June 1895 the Government was defeated on a minor point, and Rosebery resigned. Salisbury became Prime Minister after coming to an agreement the Duke of Devonshire and the Liberal Unionist Joseph Chamberlain. A general Election was called and the Conservatives were returned with a majority of 152. [TOP]

The Ministry June 1895 to July 1902 (Conservative)

Prime Minister	Marquis of Salisbury (3 <sup>rd</sup> Ministry)
Home Secretary	Sir Matthew Ridley; Nov 1900 Charles Ritchie
Lord Lieutenant	Earl Cadogan
Chief Secretary	Gerald Balfour; Nov 1900 George Wyndham
Under Secretary	David Harrell

[June 1895] Sir Matthew Ridley was from Northumberland. He first entered Parliament in 1868 and supported Disraeli. He was Financial Secretary to the Treasury in Salisbury's brief first administration but otherwise did not hold office. He had no previous connection with Ireland. Charles Ritchie was from Dundee in Scotland, but his family moved to London where the family firm specialised in the importation of jute fibres and the manufacture of jute products. He was elected in the Conservative interest in Tower Hamlets in the East End of London, and knew a lot about the conditions of the working class. In 1888 he was responsible for the Local Government Act (1888) which established county councils in England and Wales. In Salisbury's third administration he became President of the Board of Trade, and when Ridley moved to the House of Lords in 1900 he became Home Secretary. One of his earliest duties in that post was to organise the ancient ceremonies which followed the death of a monarch, when Queen Victoria died after 63 years on the throne. (Ritchie DNB). George Henry Cadogan, 5th Earl Cadogan was from Durham in Northumberland. As a young man he was associated with the Prince of Wales. In Salisbury's second administration he was Lord Privy Seal and conducted Irish affairs in the House of Lords. In 1895 he was made Lord Lieutenant with a seat in the Cabinet. He took a deep and personal interest in the welfare of Ireland. Gerald Balfour was Arthur's younger brother. He was elected to Parliament in 1885 where he was for a time Arthur's private secretary.

The Countess of Fingall noted that Cadogan and Balfour arrived full of schemes for the benefit of Ireland. Lady Cadogan was the most perfect hostess of all the countess knew at the Viceregal Lodge. When travelling in Ireland she would often stop to chat with old women in their cottages. The Cadogans vied with the Londonderrys in the magnificence of their entertaining. 'It was a wonderful moment. Ireland was in the very air. Far from being a problem she had entered into her Golden Age, and as Dark Rosaleen, came into her own (Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 230-1). (Dark Rosaleen was a poetic name for Ireland.)

The initiative was however taken by Horace Plunkett who in August 1895 called together a committee of Irish MPs during the recess of Parliament, and so it was called the Recess Committee. It was welcomed by all parties except by Justin M'Carthy, apparently in case the Irish people should become too satisfied and cease to demand Home Rule; John Redmond however gave his support.

The committee consisted of 23 members and was assisted by an Ulster consultative committee 14 in number. It met frequently during the spring and summer of 1896 and discussed Ireland's problems with moderation and produced a unanimous Report. An Appendix to the Report contained the reports of commissioners it sent abroad to see how foreign states developed local industries. Nine European countries were visited, those which more closely resembled Ireland in size benign chosen especially.

It recommended the establishment of a new Department specially charged with fostering agriculture and industry, and with the technical education connected with these. It should have at its head a special minister responsible to Parliament. There should be consultative committees representative of the agricultural and industrial interests of the country. Various existing boards should be amalgamated into the new department, and other kindred duties distributed in a haphazard manner among existing boards or departments should be transferred to the new Department; in fact it proposed a plan of legislation fully worked out (Church of Ireland Gazette 12 Jan 1900). With regard to technical instruction, the Munster Institute which barely survived the Treasury retrenchments of 1880, but had survived owing to local control and local opinion, proved an inspiration to Horace Plunkett; this local support was crucial, and its absence explained failures elsewhere (Warder 24 February 1900). The Munster Institute trained girls in the management of dairies and the art of butter-making.

Tomas Patrick Gill, a Nationalist politician, had been editor of the Catholic World in New York, and MP for South Louth 1885-92, but withdrew from Parliament after the split. He was a member of the Recess Committee, acted as its Honorary Secretary 1895-98, and drew up its Report. He became Secretary of Department of Agriculture 1900-1923. He produced exhaustive Reports on agriculture in Denmark, France, and elsewhere. When he became Secretary of the Department Gill worked harmoniously with the able team Sir Horace Plunkett had assembled to work in the new Department. On his retirement in 1920 Gill noted that the Department of Agriculture was founded in a spirit of co-operation, as a sphere in which men of all political opinions could work together; that era was now passed, though he had striven to preserve its spirit (Irish Industrial Journal 15 May 1920).

The Royal Veterinary College in Ireland, the only place for Irish vets to train was granted its royal charter granted in 1895. Diplomas were granted by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in London, but its examinations were held in Dublin. A clause in the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act (1899) set aside £15,000 to provide buildings; the first lectures were in temporary buildings (Weekly Irish Times 9 Nov 1912).

Also in 1895 was the setting up of the Irish Tourist Association under the auspices of the Royal Dublin Society and the patronage of the Lord Lieutenant the Earl of Crewe [Houghton]. It later became merged with the Development Syndicate (Ireland) Ltd, which in turn was reconstructed as the Tourist Development (Ireland) Ltd. The aims were to promote Ireland as a holiday destination. Their efforts resulted in great improvement in facilities for travellers, and in the conditions of hotels. The work has been facilitated by the passing of the Health Resort (Ireland) Act which enabled the company legally to advertise Ireland, as other centres on the Continent and Britain do. Corporations and urban and rural districts were enabled to strike a rate, not exceeding 1d in the £1 for advertising purposes (Weekly Irish Times 20 Nov, 4 Dec 1909). This development of the tourist industry was in a way as important as the development of the creamery industry. Ireland always had inns, but most of them in the early nineteenth century could be described as being of the 'greasy spoon' variety. Many people came to Ireland, or travelled to other parts of Ireland, chiefly for angling, for the scenery, and for sea bathing. Most parts of Ireland became accessible either directly by train, or by train followed by local horse-drawn transport. Much was done by the railway companies to develop tourism. Standards improved in the course of the nineteenth century, but the aim of the Tourist Association was to see that in the seaside, lakeside or riverside towns there were hotels and boarding houses of good quality, and that there were facilities and amusements for those who wished to spend some time in those places. There could be golf courses, or boat trips or excursions in jaunting cars to picnic areas. The Development Syndicate set up under the chairmanship of the Earl of Mayo in 1896 to develop tourist traffic in Ireland met at the Imperial Institute in London. The syndicate also included the Duke of Abercorn, the Earl of Crewe (Baron Houghton), Lord Iveagh, and Horace Plunkett. It had a nominal capital of £25,000 in £500 shares of which £7,000 was paid up. They, in conjunction with the Treasury and the railway companies devised tourist routes in the south of Ireland and equipped comfortable coaches with horses which were very successful. It also promoted a scheme of electrical lighting and tramways in Dundalk. The syndicate was re-structured as the Tourist Development (Ireland) Ltd with an increased capital in £1 shares, the Earl of Mayo still the chairman (Church of Ireland Gazette 18 May 1900).

Queenstown was the gem of Irish seaside resorts. Its mean temperature was the same as Torquay in Devon and higher than the other English south coast resorts. In 1900 it was very much improved and continually improving. People nowadays want more than a place to pick up shells or dig in the sand; young people want places to cycle to, amusements beyond paddling in the sea, somewhere to parade in a smart frock. It had easy excursions to Youghal, Killarney, etc., and many good hotels. The promenade committee provided a series of amusements such as music by the band of the King's Royal Rifles, and there were numerous steamer trips (Weekly Irish Times 25 May 1901). This was before the age of mass tourism and resorts aimed at the wealthy. (By 1956 the number of foreign tourists visiting Ireland was over 800,000 and reached 6.4 million in 2000 (Encyclopaedia of Ireland, Tourism.))

[1896] The Locomotives on Highway Act (1896) was passed, which permitted a motor car to be driven on the highways, a speed limit of 12 mph being imposed, but with no additional taxation.

In 1896 there were complaints that primary education was too "bookish" and the Belmont Vice-regal Commission on Education was appointed in 1897 consisting of ten members of the National Board and other educationalists to study manual and practical instruction and kindred subjects in National Schools. The Report in 1898 recommended among other things, drawing in all classes, kindergarten exercises in the lower standards, object teaching, elementary science, and drill and physical exercises. They also recommended an elaborate system of hand-and-eye teaching, from which more was expected than was reasonable to expect from Irish schools. Matters that some thought should have been relegated to technical and industrial schools were foisted on the national schools. By the school curriculum 1900 boys of 14 years old were obliged to devote four and a half hours a week to paper folding, wire-bending with pliers, making tiny garden chairs from cardboard. The INTO was the only body that objected (Irish School Weekly 11 Feb 1922; Church of Ireland Gazette 19 June 1903). Though there were many criticisms of the new scheme when it was introduced, much thought and research had gone into devising it. Andrew Nicholas Bonaparte Wyse, great-grand-nephew of Napoleon I, educated at the Benedictine school at Downside in Somerset and London University, and Inspector under the National Board 1895 was sent to study education on the Continent in 1897. The hand-and-eye co-ordination was innovative and probably failed because teachers did not understand it. The idea was that most pupils in later life would have to use their hands, the girls perhaps in sewing or the boys mending bicycles, fishing rods or motor cars. Manual dexterity would always be useful.

Fairs were regulated under the Markets and Fairs Clauses Acts 1847; in that Act there was a vague clause referring to the 'undertakers' who were defined as those authorised by any subsequent Act to control or regulate a fair or market. Such authority was conferred by the Public Health Act (1878) which conferred large powers on all urban authorities to regulate fairs and markets. The Public Health Act (1896) extended the scope to all Town Commissioners under any public not private Act who were not sanitary authorities. The result was that all towns and boroughs in Ireland are placed on the same footing. By the 1878 Act the local authority was enabled to purchase existing markets (Irish Law Times 20 Jan 1900). Under the same Act the Local Government Board was empowered, on the application of a rural sanitary district or others, to declare that the provisions of the Public Health (Ireland) Acts 1878 to 1890 in force in urban sanitary districts are in force in that rural sanitary district with all the powers, duties, liabilities etc contained in those acts (County Councils Gazette 16 March 1900). The sanitary district was becoming the unit of local government in place of the county, the barony, the Poor Law Union, or the Dispensary District. All this was due for a complete overhaul in 1898. As noted above, in most of rural Ireland the Dispensary District could be made the sanitary authority.

The Government decided on another minor Land Act. The Land Act (1896) provided further facilities for purchase. Under the system of decadal reduction, which most purchasers availed themselves of, the final payment was not made for 72½ years. It removed defects in existing Acts and facilitated purchase by tenants; it also increased the purchasing powers of the Congested Districts Board (Belfast Weekly News 6 Oct 1900). The Railways (Ireland) Act (1896) was intended to improve railway and other communications; under it two light railways were built in Donegal. The Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Act (1896) gave powers to the sanitary authorities to acquire land compulsorily for the erection of dwellings for the working classes; in the same year an Act was passed for simplifying the acquisition of land for labourers' cottages (Belfast Weekly News 6 Oct 1900). Under the Diseases of Animals Act (1896) an embargo on Canadian cattle was imposed which lasted until 1922. It prohibited the importation of live cattle and insisted they be slaughtered on arrival (Irish Farmers' Journal 28 July 1922). This apparently was to prevent the importation of animal diseases; transport costs ruled out the importation of live animals for the meat markets.

Women were now allowed to be Poor Law Guardians in Ireland, the first of the elective offices opened to them. In the first year, 1896, there were only two women Guardians, in 1897 13, in 1898 21, and in 1900 86. Women were bringing their knowledge and eyes to reform the workhouses. The two Dublin Unions appointed 17

women inspectors, 4 as sanitary sub-officers and 13 as schools attendance officers, while neither Cork nor Belfast had appointed any yet (County Councils Gazette 17 July 1900).

Dublin had several different systems of horse-drawn trams, but in 1896 a new company, the Dublin United Tramway Company (1896) was formed. It was soon established that the electric system was by far the more economical so the rest of the system was converted with a quicker and better service traffic. However, at first, when they tried to get parliamentary permission they were defeated; they however constructed a line on the north side of Dublin to Dollymount to show the advantages of the new system and resistance crumbled. The motors consisted of 2 25 hp GE motors, and an overhead trolley system. A new generating station was constructed at Ringsend and older stations were discontinued. Mr William Martin Murphy became the Chairman of the Dublin United Tramway Company. He was a native of Bantry, Co. Cork and by training an engineer, and was chiefly responsible for the introduction of the electrification (Irish Engineering Review Oct 1904). He was for a time a Catholic Home Rule MP allied to Tim Healy. Murphy's trams were to be a prime target for Larkin's strike in 1913. The Belfast Street Tramway Company also wanted in 1896 wanted to change to electric traction, but the Corporation demanded 6% of gross receipts, which was refused (Weekly Irish Times 22 August 1903).

Ominously for the future, the Socialist Club in Dublin invited James Connolly from Edinburgh to be its organiser. He and Larkin belonged to the brand of socialism which was to find its fullest expression in the National Socialist street-fighters in Germany.

[1897] In 1897 there was passed an important Act which applied to the whole of the United Kingdom the Workers' Compensation Act (1897). Prior to 1897 there was no obligation on an employer to compensate an injured workman except in a case of negligence or culpable fault. This was changed by the Workman's Compensation Act 1897, by which an employer was bound to give compensation unless there was negligence on the part of the employee.

Under the Inebriate's Act (1898) the Lord Lieutenant might obtain money from the Treasury, and establish inebriate reformatories under the Prisons' Board. One was established in County Clare in 1899 (Warder 21 July 1900). A state reformatory at Ennis was established for the accommodation of 30 males and 30 females. This did not come under the jurisdiction of the petty sessions and police courts. It was intended for those who committed a serious crime, under the influence of drink, punishable with imprisonment or penal servitude, by those who admit they are habitual drunkards (Constabulary Gazette 12 May 1900). Under the Housing (Ireland) Act (1899) a local authority could advance £400 per house for the provision of working class houses with a re-payment period of 30 years (Weekly Irish Times 4 June 1927).

There was a partial failure of the potato crop in the autumn of 1897 so that the numbers in the poorhouses and on outdoor relief increased the following spring. The daily average number in workhouses April 1898 to March 1899 was 42,728 and on outdoor relief 64,104 making a total of 106,832 or 1 in 41 of the population[2.44.%]. The highest number relieved was on 11 June 1898 when 2.88% were relieved. In industrial societies a slump in trade gives rise to special relief measures, but in Ireland it was the existing of tiny croft holdings which could not support the holder unless he grew potatoes. The number on outdoor relief reached maximum of 87,630 on 18 June; this was followed by a rapid decrease and the special measures were discontinued in July. At this date however the special measures allowing outdoor relief devised by the government following the failure of the potato harvest in 1897 were in operation. Under the emergency relief schemes £23,886 was voted by Parliament for relief in 11 Unions where the potato crop had badly failed. In some Poor Law Unions applicants were employed on public works by the Guardians as labour tests; these were also given a free supply of seed potatoes. Loans were also approved to the Guardians under the Seed Supply and Potato Spraying (Ireland) Act (1898). The repayment of loans under the Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Act (1895), and the similar Acts of 1880, 1890 and 1891 was good: loans amounting to £598,306 were advanced to 153 Unions under the 1880 Act and £588,497 was repaid (County Councils Gazette 9 March 1900). (These figures are given as specimens of typical figures, and as indicating the kind of measures the Government undertook.)

The Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society was established in 1897 and in 1899 it employed about 10 people, and in 1920 167. The number of societies federated to it in 1899 was 27, and in 1920 was 448. It was started to sell fertiliser, seeds, and feeding stuffs, but went on to deal with banking, seeds, marketing of butter, eggs, wool, agricultural machinery, bee appliances and honey, groceries and provisions, dairy

engineering, fertilizers, feeding stuffs and coal; drapery, boots and shoes; printing and stationery, milling and general engineering, and hardware (Irish Homestead 20 March 1920). With the foundation of the Killeshandra Co-op in County Cavan the movement made its break into Ulster. The region of mixed farming and small farms along the Ulster border became one of the most important in the movement.

Short films were first shown at fairs in Ireland in 1897. The first cinema exhibition in Ireland was in 1897 by Professor le Clair the travelling showman. He was quickly followed by others, one of whom, Mr Sylvester, who started the same year, was still exhibiting in 1917. They were all touring showmen; the first showing in Dublin was by Original Irish Animated Film Company of Messrs Jameson (Irish Limelight August 1917). During the First World War, films dealing with the Western Front like 'The Battle of the Ancre' were very popular in Ireland as elsewhere, but there was also a great demand for short newsreels about Ireland. In 1917 the release of the Sinn Fein prisoners was captured on film. There arose a great demand for films on Irish subjects; films of Irish Volunteers' and National Volunteers' demonstrations were snapped up, and also the funeral O'Donovan Rossa the former Fenian; Mr Whitten of the General Film Supply Service was not political; he just met the demand. There were criticisms of attempts to make propaganda films about Ireland, such as one about 1798, while the makers of the film version of the Fenian leader Charles Kickham's Knocknagow could not decide what period it was supposed to be situated in (Limelight Feb, May 1917). An Irish film producing company, the Film Company of Ireland, was started in 1916. (Some Irish nationalist propaganda films were as crude as those of their Nazi counterparts.) [TOP]

[1898] The great Act of 1898, and one of the most important in modern Ireland, was the Local Government (Ireland) Act (1898). Irish Chief Secretaries had to suddenly acquire a knowledge of complex issues in Irish law; Mr Gerald Balfour, in piloting the Local Government (Ireland) Act (1898) through the Commons displayed a complex knowledge of the intricacies of the Irish Grand Jury Acts, the Poor Law Acts, and the Towns Acts which was the despair of industrious lawyers who were working in those subjects all their lives (New Irish Jurist 4 Mar 1902). As in the earlier Act in England, the various powers previously granted at various times, to various bodies to do various things had to be sorted and some kind of rational order imposed, which would be uniform over Ireland. Not only were there Acts dealing with county Grand Juries, and the county sheriffs and other county officials, but powers were given to Poor Law Boards, dispensary districts, and sanitary districts as well as overlapping powers given to cities and towns under the various Towns Acts as well as private Acts.

Since the Middle Ages counties in Great Britain and Ireland were controlled by a sheriff and other officers like the surveyor, the coroner, the treasurer etc. These officers had offices and staff to carry out their assigned duties. Their activities and expenditure were controlled in England by benches of magistrates, and Ireland by Grand Juries. Each county had grand and petty juries. In the larger (corporate) towns dating from the Middle Ages, the chief executive officer was called the mayor, who was assisted by one or more sheriffs. Their administration was overseen by corporations elected by trade guilds. The mayor and sheriffs had judicial functions as well. The duties of a sub-sheriff were

- 1) Summoning and empanelling all jurors, civil and criminal;
- 2) The execution of practically all writs, orders, and attachments of the High Court of Justice;
- 3) Presiding over parliamentary elections;
- 4) Presiding over enquiries for assessing damages;
- 5) The execution of all county court decrees, and orders, including ejections;
- 6) The execution of capital punishments.

These are attached to the office of the High Sheriff, but were carried out by his deputy (Warder 22 Nov 1902).

Juries selected from ordinary people with taxable freehold property of at least forty shillings a year. (In the course of the nineteenth century some urban officers were made magistrates while in office, but when women became eligible to those offices they could not sit as magistrates until a later Act enabled them so to do.) The petty juries had, and still have, the important function of deciding guilt in the more important cases. After 1832 members of Grand Juries had to be worth Ten Pounds per annum. The manner of selecting was fairly haphazard. The sheriff had to keep a list of those with the required qualification, and summon a panel of jurors for both petty and Grand Juries for the quarterly judicial and administrative sessions. For the Grand Jury the leading property owners were summoned, and many of them came. So in theory, four different sets of jurors could compose the Grand Jury in the course of a year. The two chief functions of the Grand Jury were to



examine affidavits in criminal cases to see if there was sufficient evidence to put before a petty jury. This inspection was always cursory for the affidavits, along with other witnesses, would be thoroughly scrutinised by barristers for the prosecution and defence when the actual trial came. The real function of the Grand Jury was to approve expenditure and set the county cess or rate. Presentments were put before them by the sheriff or others with estimates of the costs, and they either approved or disapproved before striking the rate. It was realised that much of the money approved for particular presentments, for a new road for example, was never spent on it, but the Government was not worried for they knew that the Grand Jurors were only cheating each other. Otherwise, there was little control over the county officials, and any inspection of their conduct had to come from the central Government in Dublin (Keenan, *Pre-Famine Ireland*, 206-230). Besides the general expenses of the county the most important services for which the Grand Juries were authorised to raise money for were: roads and bridges, lunatic asylums, county infirmaries, hospitals, reformatory and industrial schools, and guarantees for railways. Besides relief of the poor, the Poor Rate in the Poor Law Unions was drawn on for expenses connected with Medical Charities, Dispensary Acts, Public Health Acts, Labourers Acts, and other minor services. In addition to the county cess and the poor rate, municipal rates were levied in 120 Irish towns (New Irish Jurist 20 March 1903). They were no longer responsible for maintaining gaols, nor for local courts which were still based on the counties and boroughs.

The system worked for centuries, but feeling in Government circles in the nineteenth century was that two reforms were needed. The first was that there should be democratic control on the same franchise as for parliamentary elections, and the other was that there should be more permanent inspection and control of the county and municipal officers. The old framework had proved adequate for most purposes. When however a Poor Law had to be introduced for Ireland it was seen to be impossible to base it on the parish as in England, so it had to be based on unions of several parishes. These were called Poor Law Unions, and were governed by democratically elected Boards of Guardians, the first democratically elected local authorities in Ireland. The Poor Law Unions were limited to the relief of the destitute, but in some cases, schools and medical care had to be provided but only within the confines of the workhouses. To complement the system, dispensary districts were established to provide some medical assistance to the destitute poor outside the workhouses. To these dispensary districts were added such duties as vaccinating against infectious diseases and providing some sanitary services. The county at large was responsible for maintaining at least one county infirmary, largely it would seem for surgical cases of the poor, fever hospitals when required, and lunatic asylums.

The system proved inadequate when sanitary and public health issues came to the fore with the need to provide, among other things, a supply of clean water, and to dispose of the dirty water and sewage. This was especially urgent in the Dublin suburbs, heavily built-up areas outside the city limits. Urban Sanitary Authorities could be made Road Authorities. From 1888 to 1898 grants-in-aid for the maintenance of pauper lunatics, Poor Law medical officers, and other specified items continued to be paid to Ireland by Parliamentary vote, and the proceeds of the excise licences continued to be paid into the Exchequer. But because England and Scotland gained by the exchange a compensatory Exchequer contribution of £40,000 year was voted for Ireland, and in 1891 this was charged on the Consolidated Fund. In 1888 local taxation licences were assigned to the new local authorities in England and Scotland in lieu of the old grants, but not to Ireland which did not get new councils. Also in 1888 Goschen, Chancellor of the Exchequer, began a series of special transfers of particular taxes such as probate duty and surtax to Ireland based on a proportion of 9% of the total, the 'Goschen ratio', as Ireland was assumed to contribute 9% of the total revenue (New Irish Jurist 27 March 1903).

Cities and towns were reorganised as boroughs and urban districts with elected councils. Counties were taken away from the Grand Juries and placed under elected county councils, and the counties themselves were divided into urban and rural districts each with their elected councillors. Parish councils scarcely existed in Ireland, and where they existed their duties concerned only the parish church. (The rural districts proved an unnecessary complication and were eventually dispensed with, but in the meantime had to be assigned responsibilities. They remained in Northern Ireland until 1973.) The franchise was the same as the parliamentary franchise, but was extended to include women. Women were eligible to be elected as Poor Law guardians, urban and rural district councillors, and town commissioners. They were not eligible for the office of county councillor in either counties or boroughs, nor to be justices of the peace in virtue of their office, nor to be poor rate collectors (Constabulary Gazette 19 May 1900). From 1911 they could be county councillors.

The borough, urban, county, and rural district councils were the local rating authority, though the Poor Law rate was not abolished but added to the local rate. However the Grand Juries and Boards of Poor Law Guardians ceased to be assessing and rating authorities so their powers had to be transferred to the new councils. It involved shifting the burden of the rates to occupiers, which was popular with nobody, as it now included tenants of property whose rents are under £4 p.a. These formerly paid the rates into the rent weekly, but now had to save half-yearly sums. The rate collector had to collect these small sums twice a year (County Councils Gazette 30 March 1900).

The whole system of rate collection was simplified. There would now be only a single collection of rates or cesses in any town or county. By the Act the county cess was abolished and there remained only two charges; the Poor Law rate, and municipal rates; from the latter charges for paving, lighting, sewerage, and municipal administration were allowed and in Ireland these sums were quite small. From the new Poor Rate all other local charges were defrayed, not merely poor relief, but also all county expenditure, and all rural district expenditure. (Obviously, this was largely a change of name, for the Poor Rate became the County cess.)

The rate was collected by the county councils, who then transferred appropriate amounts to the rural districts and the Poor Law Unions. In urban districts, other than the county boroughs, the Urban District Council collected the Poor Rate and handed over to the County Council the sums required for the county charges and the Poor Law Union. In county boroughs the Borough Council collected the Poor Rate, and handed over to the Poor Law Unions the necessary sum.

There were two sets of collectors, collectors for rural districts, and collectors for urban districts; the rural collectors were appointed by the County Council with the approval and under the terms and conditions of the Local Government Board; to each collector there was assigned a district, there being normally two collectors for each rural district. Urban collectors were appointed by the urban councils and collected all rates within the urban district; the town rates, the sanitary rates; poor rates, etc, and the Urban Council remitted each half-year to the County Council the amount collected on their behalf.

The part of the new poor rate required to meet county charges was raised off the whole county, the part to meet Union charges off the Union, and the part to meet rural district charges off the rural district. The county charge was ascertained as follows: the county expenditure was ascertained, and from it is deducted any Government grants other than the fixed agricultural grant; the balance was levied over the whole county in proportion to its rateable value, but the fixed agricultural grant is deducted from the amount levied off agricultural land. A similar course was followed with regard to union charges, the rural district charges, and the urban charges, if any. If there were separate charges they were levied off the appropriate area which might be the whole or part of a rural district.

Basically, the whole system was simplified. In any given area there was only one pair of collectors, appointed either by the county or the urban district authorities, who collected the standard rate for the county based on the Poor Law Valuation, and the other rates as assessed by the urban districts, the rural districts, and the Poor Law Unions. Each of these drew up a budget of expenses for the common services each year, and the county officials allocated to them their proper proportion of the total taxes collected. If a rural district had charged an extra penny in the pound for a particular purpose, that was collected in its district and paid to it. Big cities like Dublin and Belfast were treated as counties in themselves, and called county boroughs.

Agricultural land was not rated at half as in England; it was rated in full subject to the deduction of the amount of the agricultural grant; that grant was a fixed sum equal to half the rates raised on agricultural land in the standard year 1896-7; the result was that if a rate was struck above that standard year the ratepayer paid more; if less, then he paid less. Rating by electoral divisions was abolished; all poor rates were now levied on the Union at large. Following the Agricultural Rates Act (1896) for England and Scotland, assistance to rates on agricultural land was given in Ireland, to a similar but not identical plan by means of the agricultural grant under the 1898 Act.

Municipal rates, in addition to the poor rate were levied by county boroughs, other municipal borough councils, urban district councils, and town commissions of towns not urban districts. The powers of these bodies to raise municipal rates were not substantially altered by the 1898 Act except for the provision for consolidating the poor rate with the other rates. The Report on the subject by the Local Government Board in 1897 showed the extraordinary variety and complexity of the rating arrangements in towns; rates were raised under several general Acts, and a large number of local Acts; they were all based on the same valuation as the poor rate, [the last Griffith valuation] for no other valuation existed in Ireland, but they showed great diversity in the rates imposed on different kinds of property (New Irish Jurist 20 March 1903). No re-valuation of Irish property was ordered though it was recognised that this was overdue.

The Grand Juries of counties were not abolished, and they retained their judicial functions at assizes and quarter sessions. Nor were the Sanitary Districts. Nor was the system of appointing sheriffs or other officers changed. The officers and their offices continued to function as heretofore, the only difference being that they were now subjected directly to elected bodies. The sheriffs and sub-sheriffs lost all responsibility for administration, though retaining their powers with regard to the administration of justice and the conduct of elections as described above. Nor were the Lieutenants of counties abolished, and they retained a few functions concerning the appointment of those officers who were still appointed by the Lord Lieutenant.

On the changeover, Lyons notes 'Once they began to act they were, of course, dominated by the Catholic and nationalist majority found in them, an invaluable training ground in self-government'. Without irony, writing about a period when the councils had been in existence for twenty five years he noted 'it is not always possible to root out incompetence, corruption and simple self-interest from the local administration' (Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine*, 212, 482). The Protestants could have told him that for the beginning. They quickly noticed that Nationalist-controlled Councils gave all jobs to Catholics, and drew their conclusions regarding Home Rule.

On the occasion of the American presidential election in 1900 a Belfast paper noted the activities of Richard Croker and Tammany Hall; this latter began as a patriotic body but has long been corrupt; it has been a political machine controlling all possible public offices in New York, and exacting a toll for its treasury from every public office holder from constable upwards (Belfast Weekly News 10 Nov 1900). Tammany Hall is usually regarded as the epitome and focus of corruption in American politics, municipal and national. Its grip is found everywhere. It 'bosses' everything, and Richard Croker is the boss of the bosses'. He does not drink, and detests drunks; the result is that the Democratic club is unusually abstemious. He would give all he had to his friends and party followers. He would enrich his friends and scowl defiance at his enemies. The spoils to the victor, that is his idea (Warder 17 Nov 1900). The Protestants knew what to expect, for the men behind the Land League and Tammany Hall could even be blood brothers. (When Croker retired and settled in Dublin he used to visit Horace Plunkett whose work he admired to talk politics).

More immediately ominous for the Protestants was the formation of the United Irish League in 1898. Like the Land League it was ostensibly a peaceful movement, but immediately land outrages and atrocities recommenced. It was organised at first by William O'Brien, one of the most extreme leaders of the Land League and Home Rule movements. Its object was to take the land away from grazier farmers who had extensive holdings of land and break them up into smaller holdings to give to supporters of the movement. 1898 was also the centenary year of the attempted revolution in 1798 by the United Irishmen. Monuments were erected in various places, the shame at the atrocities they committed was forgotten and their leaders glorified as national heroes and an example to youth.

[1899] The great Act of 1899 was the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (1899) Act which established a Department of Agriculture in Ireland with particular responsibility for agricultural and technical instruction, the inspiration for which was Horace Plunkett and the Recess Committee. The Countess of Fingall said that Gerald Balfour perhaps did not fully believe that the idea would work, but was prepared to let Plunkett have a try (Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 232). In 1897 the Government prepared a Bill and presented it to the Recess committee; they rejected it out of hand as totally inadequate, so the Government then prepared a new Act closely following the Report of the Committee. There was to be a Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. Also an Agricultural Board composed of two members selected by provincial committees and by appointees of the Department. There was also to be a Board of Technical Instruction to which each provincial committee appointed one member. The Agricultural Board and the Technical Board would each appoint a member to the Consultative Committee on Education. A County Council could appoint a committee of agriculture consisting of members of their own body and co-opted persons (County Councils Gazette 9 Mar 1900). The Act was intended to promote all the industries of Ireland. Urban industries were to be promoted by technical instruction alone; but the Department was to promote agriculture in all its aspects, and it was to have a free hand in how to do this, and might establish colleges and experimental farms, keep plots in every parish, employ itinerant instructors. Its total budget was fixed at £166,000 a year, but was not to be under Treasury control. A novel feature was the provision for bringing the Department into contact with local bodies. To this end a Council of Agriculture would be formed consisting of about 100 members, two thirds of whom would be elected by the county councils, and the remainder nominated by the Department (Weekly Irish Times 27 January 1900).

The Department of Agriculture was charged with the duties of the Veterinary Department in Ireland, the Inspectors of Irish fisheries, the Science and Art Department and those of the Commissioners of National Education with respect to the Albert and Munster Institutions. It also took over certain duties appertaining to the Land Commission and Registrar General. The Lord Lieutenant was empowered to transfer to it the work of other departments of an analogous character (Church of Ireland Gazette 12 January 1900). Under it too came the Royal College of Science, the National Library, the Science and Art Museum, the Natural History collection, the Botanical collection, the Mineral collection, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin (Whitaker's Almanac 1903). (This was the first attempt to rationalise the system of Boards under which Ireland was increasingly governed.) Powers to levy rates for technical instruction were given to local councils; they might charge a rate of 1 penny in the pound on all rural and urban districts within their bounds for the promotion of agriculture and industries, covering the whole field of agriculture and fisheries; and for the enforcing of by-laws to regulate the same, as well as for technical instruction in the principles of science and art applicable to

industries; this included modern languages and commercial subjects (County Councils' Gazette 9 March 1900). Up to 1898 an equivalent grant proportionate to the sum allocated to the English Technical Instruction Department was paid to the Commissioners for National Education as there was no corresponding Department in Ireland; they used it to improve the salaries of Irish teachers. The sum of £78,000 p. a. was then given to the new Department instead, the income of the national teachers being reduced by that amount. The Nationalist MPs, in particular Tim Healy, secured an equivalent sum to the national teachers from imperial sources (Irish School Weekly 27 July 1930).

The Chief Secretary was ex officio the President of the Board of Agriculture. The actual head of the Department was its Vice-President Horace Plunkett, a Unionist MP. The office was a ministerial one held at the pleasure of the crown whose tenure depended on the existence of the Government of which the holder was a member; a parliamentary seat was vacated on taking the office, and re-election to Parliament sought. Plunkett however retained his position as Vice-President even after he lost his seat in Parliament (New Irish Jurist 8 July 1904). His plain language from the start did not endear him to Nationalists. In his annual address in 1902 he said 'If you ask an English industrialist why he does not take advantage of the cheapness of labour in Ireland to manufacture here he will reply that low-cost labour is not cheap. Our workers are not at present as efficient as English and Scotch workers, their industrial education is inferior, they do not understand the punctuality and regularity modern industry requires. They have neither what I may call the mood or the habits of industrial life. Do not let us therefore waste time in pretending that we are endowed with qualities which we have had no opportunity of developing. We have lived in a fools' paradise long enough, and it is time that we honestly and boldly faced the facts; I know well it will take some courage (Farmers' Gazette 22 February 1902). This did not go down well with those who were taught that all that was wrong with Ireland was British oppression, and the sole remedy necessary was Home Rule.

The Nationalist Party hated Plunkett. If the Department was a success it would redound to the credit of Unionism. On the other hand, if it were a success under a Nationalist MP it could be claimed as a Nationalist success. The Countess of Fingall also recounts how in 1903, Plunkett and John Dillon met on board Harland and Wolff's great new liner the Celtic on the journey back from the United States. Plunkett very much wanted to discuss differences with Dillon, to have some influence, as he put it, on Dillon's narrow mind, but Dillon refused to discuss controversial topics. Plunkett considered that he was an insecure person who did not dare risk losing an argument (Fingall, Seventy Years' Young, 311-12) Thomas Patrick Gill, a Nationalist who had been Secretary of the Recess Committee was made Secretary of the Department and held that post until his retirement in 1920.

To ascertain local needs the Department of Agriculture sent a circular query sheet to all urban and rural councils requesting information regarding suitable proposals for the development of agriculture, or suggestions regarding afforestation, fisheries, reclamation of waste land, technical institutes, agricultural education, experimental farms, and the economic condition of the county. In the opinion of the County Down Agricultural Committee the backward state of agriculture and other industries was attributable:

- a) to the defective and backward system of agricultural and commercial education among the farming classes;
- b) the out-of-date systems of agriculture, dairying, stock-breeding etc;
- c) the lack of all organisation and combination for trading purposes.

It recommended that alterations must be made in the education system of the country:

- a) national teachers in the training colleges should be thoroughly trained in practical agriculture;
- b) more attention should be give to instruction in manual and technical instruction in primary schools. At present the study of the theory of agriculture is compulsory in all rural schools for boys and is encouraged by fees; but our enquiry has shown that this largely consists of committing a text-book to memory and is of little practical value.

It is a great pity that the Department of Agriculture and the Board of National Education did not collaborate more closely.

The County Down committee went on: with regard to fishery development, it noted this was an important industry in the county, and recommended that steps be taken to get part of the £10,000 voted under that head, regarding the supply of fishing boats, instruction in fishing methods, the encouragement of industries connected with fishing, the protection of fishing grounds, and that a committee of the County Council be appointed to collect the necessary statistics. County Down went on to be perhaps the greatest sea-fishing county in Ireland (County Councils' Gazette 3March 1900).

Writing of Betty Balfour, Gerald Balfour's wife, the Countess of Fingall wrote, 'She was an enthusiast. And she came to Ireland at just the right time. A letter to her from T.P. Gill, all otherwise about Agriculture and the Department, begins with a note of reminder that The Heather Field is being played at the Abbey [Theatre]. The new Irish drama was in the air, too. Yeats was giving us his poetry; A.E. poetry, philosophy, and strange-coloured dreams. Lady Gregory, Yeats, and Edward Martyn had founded the Irish theatre. A.E. had joined Horace's Co-operative movement, and was editing the Irish Homestead and putting his best writing into wisdom about creameries and pigs and potatoes and such things (Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 233).

Ireland had a tradition of theatre going back to the period before Cromwell. It had its ups and downs in the period after the Restoration, and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but it was difficult for anyone to make a profit out of it. Most Irish playwrights had to go to London, and at this period Shaw and Wilde were writing plays in London. In 1898 Isabella Augusta Gregory, Lady Gregory, the wife of Sir William Henry Gregory who had been Governor of Ceylon, met W. B. Yeats. He had been one of the Adullamites, but generally supported Gladstone. He was noted for his interest in the arts. On his estate at Coole Park, immortalised by Yeats, he had no trouble from his tenants even in the worst days of the Land League. He died in 1892 leaving his wife and one son. Lady Gregory had a nephew called Hugh Percy Lane who strove to promote modern art in Ireland. Lane became a picture dealer who wished to establish a gallery for modern art. He also assisted the Countess of Fingall to re-decorate her home, the vast ramshackle Killeen Castle in County Meath. She in turn had to give parties and collect money for his Gallery. Like every other Unionist he had trouble with the Nationalists, in particular the Nationalist-controlled Corporation of Dublin. He was to become the Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, and his collection of paintings became the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Art in Dublin.

At this time too Thomas O'Neill Russell, one of the founders of the Gaelic League, founded the Feis Ceoil (Fesh Kyol, Festival of Music) to develop music in Ireland which was then at a low ebb. Though the Gaelic name would seem to imply that this was only for Irish music, this was not the case. Indeed the Feis Ceoil, unlike the Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association never fell into the grip of fanatical narrow-minded Nationalists or Republicans. Miss Edith Oldham the Honourable Secretary of the Feis Ceoil Association was associated with the movement from its inception (Weekly Irish Times 19 May 1906). The Association was sufficiently broad-minded to enlist the sympathies of all sections of the community. 'This Society is so admirably conducted at the present day that almost every musician, and lover of Irish music, is interested in, and sympathises with, the movement' (Talk 2 Nov 1901).

Even in 1923 the Irish Times commented on the low state of music in Dublin. Dublin had no concert hall, no permanent orchestra, no symphony orchestra, and little chamber music. Music was at a very low level despite considerable efforts in some quarters such as the Feis Ceoil. The cause of the low standard of music lay in poor music teaching in the primary and secondary schools. A girl entering a secondary school was taught two pieces a year for the examinations, and just drilled in them; at the end that was all she knew. There was no reading at sight, and no theory of music, and the standard of the school orchestra was as poor as that of the school choir (Weekly Irish Times 10 November 1923). There was a Royal Irish Academy of Music but it had limited influence. But in 1900 the Irish Times praised it: the Royal Irish Academy of Music; founded in 1856 under royal patronage, had unostentatiously educated the young for half a century; children from the age of seven might be enrolled. Its instrumental teaching is second to none in the United Kingdom; but its vocalic training less esteemed (Weekly Irish Times 12 May 1900).

A Chair of Music was established in University College, Cork in 1908, and in University College, Dublin in 1914. The Church of Ireland Gazette commended the Feis Ceoil for giving better examples of Irish music than the popular music hall ballads which delight in portraying the average Irishman as a maudlin drunkard (10 May 1901). But it may be it was the gramophone which introduced most Irish people to high quality music. The Church of Ireland Gazette in 1920 noted that there were few Northerners attending the Dublin Feis Ceoil in recent years; the meetings in Derry, Ballymena, Sligo, and Coleraine have become so important that competitors prefer to compete there rather than in Dublin. The Belfast Musical Festival had done wonders for music in the city; the choirs, especially the shipyard choirs, reach a very high standard. The Belfast Telegraph choir and the Belfast Co-operative Store also had excellent choirs (21 May 1920).

Lady Gregory brought together William Butler Yeats, Edward Martyn and George Moore, the son of George Henry Moore the politician. Edward Martyn of Tillyra was a promoter of the Co-operative movement in the West, and a pillar of the Gaelic movement and of the Feis Ceoil. He was best known as a dramatist in connection with the Irish Literary Theatre of 1899. He founded the Palestrina Choir in Dublin in 1899 for the

reform of liturgical music, promoted the development of church architecture, stained glass etc. He was President of Sinn Fein from 1904 to 1908 when he resigned. In 1914 he founded the Irish Theatre for the performance of plays in Irish whether native written or translated from Continental sources (Irish Homestead 29 Sept 1900). The Irish Literary Movement is regarded as having commenced in 1899 with the performance of Yeats' verse-play *The Countess Cathleen*, which offended some Catholics. John O'Leary the Fenian writer told Yeats that to succeed in Ireland he had to have the backing of either the Fenians or the Catholic Church. Yeats managed to offend both (Yeats DNB). The real success of the Dublin theatre came when they got the powerful assistance of Annie Horniman who was Yeats' secretary for five years. She was a woman of considerable wealth, and interested in the theatre, and is chiefly remembered for her promotion of repertory theatre. [Repertory: system of play production in which a resident acting company keeps a repertory of plays that are always ready for performance, often presenting a different one each night of the week, supplemented by the preparation and rehearsal of new plays.] She was involved in the production of George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, which involved her in considerable loss. In 1904 she took over the old theatre of the Mechanics' Institute in Abbey Street, Dublin and lent it for six years to Lady Gregory's Irish National Theatre Society, and it became known as the Abbey Theatre. The most famous writer for the Abbey Theatre in the early days was John Millington Synge. His *Playboy of the Western World* performed in 1907 caused rioting by supporters of Sinn Fein whose rose-tinted vision of the Gaelic-speaking crofters in the West of Ireland was somewhat different from his. Nowadays, it is performed around the world, gives amusement to all, and offence to none, and is regarded as the most typical Irish play of the period. [TOP]

[1900] There were three major points of interest in 1900. The first was the New School Programme (1900), the change in the curriculum of the National Board. In the House of Commons Mr Jebb MP moved the approbation of the New Code of Regulations issued by the Board of Education. [It is interesting to observe that the Commissioners of National Education were largely free to carry out the duties assigned to them. But in this case, where a new code of regulations was being adopted, apparently the 'approbation' of Parliament had to be sought.] The central point in the New Code, he explained, was the block grant which removed from primary education the mercenary motive which made the education of children subservient to making ends meet; it would also give greater stability to a school's income. Mr Gray MP welcomed the end of the payment system which had hindered education since 1862 (Portadown Recorder 12 May 1900) The National Board of Education had for several years been considering how best to improve on payment by results, while at the same time making the curriculum more in line with contemporary needs. The chief financial point was that the managers of each school would be given a block grant, while standards would be monitored by the school inspectors who would have a wider, but also more subjective, remit when evaluating a school's performance.

In school examinations under the Results System the teacher was informed a year before hand when the examinations would be; every child who had 100 days attendance was eligible to be examined. There were three scores; the child who had more than three correct sums worked out got a score of 2, those who got only 3 got a score of 1, and all others got 0; failure in the three Rs meant failing the examination. The teacher was paid so much per pass per subject; extra subjects like geometry, mensuration, drawing and music were also examined and paid for. The job of the inspector was easy; he had simply to fill in the scores. The inspectors got their positions by passing an examination perhaps the most difficult in the world. They liked the system and the teachers hated it, but it worked.

In the New School Programme (1900) teachers were given more scope; they could select the reading books, and promote or retard the pupils. The inspection was as much about the teacher's method of work as the results of the examinations. Science, music, drawing, drill, and history, became compulsory subjects, but other features like paper folding and wire-bending did not suit Irish schools. Teachers were placed in grades corresponding to the salaries they were receiving at the time of the change and triennial increments awarded for good service; some teachers and inspectors found they could not cope, but most adapted reasonably well. At first the awards were low but as they began to improve and salaries with them there came a call for economy from HQ and marks were deliberately lowered. The Commissioners in fact never spent their full allocation from the Treasury.

The Article continued: the third system, the present one (1932), is the worst of all with compulsory Irish, an overloaded programme, and an unsympathetic Department and inspectorate; in English-speaking districts only a handful of pupils in each school can keep up with the demands; the main problem was trying to make children bi-lingual in a single decade (Irish School Weekly 26 March 1932; it was referring to the attempt of the Free State Government to enforce compulsory Irish, which the teachers described as making the children illiterate in two languages).

The main complaints in 1900 were about the 'hand and eye co-ordination' lessons. Groups of teachers had to be hastily taught these techniques, and then they had to go home and teach other teachers.

Only 47.8% of teachers on the Board's list had a formal training, 5,790 against 6,318 [12,108]. Although there was a progressive increase in trained teachers it amounted to only 10% in the past decade, and it was not easy to see how this could be quickly remedied as training colleges cost too much. The Church of Ireland Gazette hoped that in future the school managers would take more interest in the development of their schools than they did in the past. The manager could promote the kindergarten, the teaching of music, drill, cookery, washing, etc, and how to make the home clean and comfortable, to promote an interest in music and drawing, and reduce the temptations of the public house. The clerical school managers were more interested in politics (Church of Ireland Gazette 24 August 1900).

The Irish Teachers' Journal described the new education curriculum 1900 as follows. Compulsory educational subjects were nine in Ireland against England where they were six in number: (1) English, including geography and history, (2) arithmetic, (3) drawing for both boys and girls, (4) kindergarten and manual training, (5) object lessons and elementary science (6) singing, (7) discipline and physical drill, (8) cookery and laundry work (girls), and (9) needlework (girls), while in England they were: (1) English, (2) arithmetic, (3) drawing (boys), needlework (girls), (4) object lessons in geography, history, and common things, (5) singing, and (6) physical drill. The three extra subjects were kindergarten and manual, cookery and laundry, and drawing for girls. Boys and girls, in boys' schools and girls' schools on the same site, were taught separately. The article noted this rational system has been in use in England for many years. If one compares the curriculums for the extra subjects of algebra, arithmetic, geometry, and mensuration for Ireland, England and Scotland one could wish for a practical teacher on the Board. With regard to needlework, hitherto the Commissioners have insisted on 5 hours a week for girls, yet the standards were so low that Lady Gore-Booth of Lissadell herself established a class to teach plain needlework; yet the Commissioners want it reduced to three hours a week (Irish Teachers' Journal 27 Oct 1900).

On object lessons in schools; these were formerly confined to infant schools, and not much was expected and not much done. The publishers rushed to prepare objects, like a piece of a skin of a horse, and a work sheet to accompany it, containing a lot of useless information; the chief use for these is to feed the school fire. In the object lesson each pupil should have specimen in his own hand, and he should be asked what he notices about it, be it plants, animals, or pebbles; but when water is used, it is often better to have it on the teacher's table; this is useful for demonstrating transparency (Irish Teachers' Journal 24 Nov 1900).

The following were the extra and optional subjects examined by the National Board:

vocal music, instrumental music, drawing, kindergarten work, girls reading book & domestic economy, sewing machine and advanced dressmaking, cookery, poultry management, dairy management, handicraft weaving, net mending, hygiene, geometry/mensuration [geometry applied to the computation of lengths, areas, or volumes from given dimensions or angles], algebra, trigonometry, magnetism, electricity, physiology, light/sound, physical geography, botany, French, Irish, Latin, Greek, bee-keeping, inorganic chemistry, shorthand, typewriting, laundrywork, wool-spinning.

There were eight grades examined: infants, first class, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth (1st stage), sixth (2nd stage) Irish Teachers' Journal 24 Nov 1900). There were 8670 schools under the Board. Vocal music was taught in 1475 primary schools, while instrumental music was taught in 180. Drawing was taught in 2146 schools, while 448 schools had kindergartens, probably mostly in convent schools. Surprisingly Latin and or Greek were taught in 1357 schools. Clearly even under the old system there was unexpected room for local initiative, but it is likely that most depended on having a local teacher who could teach those subjects, and so increase the cash income to the school. It would seem too that most girls were given a basic instruction in sewing and needlework. The making of lace was taught in 65 schools, 61 of which were in connection with convents. There were as many views of the old system as there were commentators. Most children in Ireland received only primary education, and at that only half the time. But if any child's parents kept the child at school all through the eight grades until they reached the age of thirteen or fourteen they received a good basic literary and moral education. Physical training, army drill, soon to be replaced for boys at least by football, was a timely addition.

The weakest point in the new curriculum was the hand and eye training. With proper care it could have proved a useful subject. It was well-known in England, and was introduced to Ireland under the direction of Prof. Alfred W. Bevis of the Birmingham School Board. A demonstration was given in Carlisle School, Derry. This consisted of a demonstration of paper folding into all shapes and sizes, with accuracy unsurpassed; there was also 'brick work', 'wire work' and 'cardboard modelling'. Great credit was due to the teacher, Mrs Patterson, who

pioneered this method of teaching in Ireland. Some people thought that the idea was to teach a trade; it was not. It was to teach co-ordination of hand and eye; to train the hand to be neat and the eye to be accurate; the system was widely used in schools in New York (National Teacher 13 July 1900). Already in 1900, demands were being made that the teaching of the Irish language should be made compulsory, but apart from a few extreme Nationalists nobody wanted it.

About this time efforts to invent a 'Gaelic' or 'Celtic' identity for Ireland were increasing as they were too in Germany. The theory of different European races was accepted as fact, as well as the superiority of one's own race. In Ireland and in Germany, archaeologists strove to find evidence of their racial past. Eamon de Valera's son spent his life investigating Ireland's 'Celtic' past. But by the end of the twentieth century, archaeologists had to admit that there was no archaeological confirmation that Ireland had any connection with Celtic-speaking groups on the Continent. There is no evidence that any 'Celtic' invaders came to Ireland, and how a Celtic language came to be spoken in Ireland remains a mystery. But in the early twentieth century racial motivation was powerful.

There was of course a traditional Irish identity, an inclusive one which embraced all the people of Ireland. One of the pleasures of reading the memoirs of the Countess of Fingall is seeing how she was able to relate to people as different as the Marquis of Londonderry, the King of England, Parnell and Michael Collins. But those who wanted to construct Romantic 'Gaelic' identity were against those who opposed them. Games labelled 'foreign' were not only banned but denigrated. The same was true of dances and songs. Music hall songs were one of the points criticized by Douglas Hyde, especially when carried back to the west of Ireland by returning emigrant workers. (A charge of hypocrisy was made against Douglas Hyde, for as an Irish scholar, he knew that Irish songs and stories contained far more sexually explicit material than would ever have been tolerated in an English music hall).

The manufacture of a bogus 'Gaelic' identity for Nationalists involved the manufacture of an equally bogus 'Anglo-Irish' identity for Unionists, and a bogus 'history' of Ireland describing the oppression of one by the other.

Horace Plunkett's Co-operative Movement had to fight off the efforts to make it 'Gaelic'. Members of the Gaelic League wanted books in Gaelic in the libraries of the co-ops. Plunkett had no objection so long as there were sufficient books for other readers (Homestead 10 Nov 1900). Another lady wanted all recreations to be Gaelic and not of an 'Anglicising' in character. 'Miss Butler says that it is now universally recognised among all nationalists and unionists, that progress must take place along native lines; that native inspiration is the only vivifying one, and that we must make Ireland once more Irish if she is ever to be great, ever to achieve worthy things in the intellectual, industrial, or any other sphere' (Homestead 1 Dec 1900). Someone wrote in a reply saying that there was no need for these to be exclusive; after all the Irish don't object to tea, nor is hurling suitable to winter. (Miss Butler's theory was precisely the same as that expounded in Mein Kampf which was not written for another 23 years.)

By 1904 the politicisation of the Gaelic League was even more marked. The editor of the Church of Ireland Gazette supported the Irish revival and the Irish language, and noted that Protestant clergymen took a leading part in its preservation. Despite its use by political movements it deserved support. 'The worst aspect of the Gaelic League was its unremitting teaching of hatred of England and English things. As Dr Mahaffy noted, the League was carefully fostering the view that everyone had to be either anti-English or anti-Irish; not only the revival of Irish industries but the cutting off of commercial relations with England; the fostering of Irish games and the exclusion of English ones; the idea that joining the armed forces was to become traitor to Ireland'.

Dr Douglas Hyde now admits that the League was seen as a preparation for separatism; that the Gaelic revival was wanted to eradicate English ideas. 'Intolerance of any sort of criticism is one of the League's most pronounced characteristics'. The worst aspect of the League was the enormous expense and waste of money which the League, backed by the Catholic clergy, are causing the country; in County Wexford 53 out of 56 priests decided that no schoolmaster should be appointed in the county who was not an Irish speaker; in County Cork it was decided that no appointment was to be made in County Council offices except to Irish speakers; the same decision was made in Mayo and Dublin city. The League is now trying to force the same policy in the Post Office. It should be observed that most people do not particularly want to speak Irish, and that every such victory is hailed as a victory over "England"; every concession by the Government is regarded as a blow struck at English Government in Ireland (Church of Ireland Gazette 20 May 1904).

There followed a long correspondence by the Rev James Owen Hannay ( whose pen-name was George Birmingham) the Protestant rector of Westport, Co. Mayo defending the Gaelic League, but the editor, and



apparently most of the readers were unconvinced. (For period background George Birmingham's novels are recommended.) Up to about 1904 many of the educated classes both Catholic and Protestant, rather liked the idea of being able to speak a little Irish or to sing a few Irish songs, if only to show that the Irish had a culture as distinctive as that of the English, Scots, and Welsh. But from 1904 onwards the movement was being hijacked by would be separatists and revolutionaries, and those who wished to compel everyone to speak Irish.

With the foundation of the Sinn Fein Party in 1904-5 and the revival of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in 1907 these trends in the Gaelic League became more marked. The Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association became the hotbeds of what was later to be called racist-fascism.

The next great point of interest in 1900 was the South African War or Boer War. The war began on Oct. 11, 1899, following a Boer ultimatum directed against the reinforcement of the British garrison in South Africa. The crisis was caused by the refusal of the South African Republic, under President Paul Kruger, to grant political rights to the Uitlander (foreigners; i.e., non-Dutch and mainly English) population of the mining areas of the Witwatersrand, and by the aggressive attitudes of Alfred Milner, 1st Viscount Milner, the British High Commissioner, and of Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain, in response to this obduracy. An underlying cause of the war was the presence in the Transvaal of the largest gold-mining complex in the world, beyond direct British control, at a time when the world's monetary systems, pre-eminently the British, were increasingly dependent upon gold' (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

There was certainly some support for the Boers in extreme Nationalist circles in Ireland, at least on the principle, 'My enemy's enemy is my friend'. But the enthusiasm for the war was widespread. There were first of all the various Irish regiments in the Army. Then there were the militia regiments. There were no volunteer or yeomanry regiments, and the Act allowing those in England to volunteer for service in South Africa in their own units did not apply to Ireland. Many individual Irish regular army officers rushed to volunteer for service in South Africa. There came a search around Ireland for cavalry horses to be sent to the Cape. In January 1900 the 9th battalion King's Royal Rifles, better known as the North Cork militia, sailed for South Africa.

Lord Iveagh's Irish Hospital for South Africa was ready to sail. Lord Iveagh provided a field hospital for the army in South Africa, equipped in the best way; four Irish doctors were appointed, Dr William Thompson being in command. As the hospital was worked in connection with the Red Cross an army medical officer was also appointed. The hospital was given training at the Royal Barracks, and was composed of 70 volunteers. Several RIC mounted men assisted with the training, and were allowed to return to the police afterwards. Training was provided in the handling of mules. It had all the requirements of a self-contained field hospital from surgeons to the blacksmith and wheelwright.

Several other battalions of the Irish militia which were embodied to serve in South Africa were disembodied and sent home. They included the Galway militia, (4th battalion Connaught Rangers); the Louth militia (6th battalion Royal Irish Rifles); Roscommon militia (5th battalion Connaught Rangers); Mayo militia (3rd battalion Connaught Rangers; Wexford militia (3rd Royal Irish Regiment); Fermanagh militia (3rd Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers). The Irish militiamen were in fact volunteers, but the Lord Lieutenant still had powers under the Militia Act (1809) to order a ballot of all eligible men (Irish Law Times(10 February 1900). In March, the Prince of Wales's Donegal Artillery, a militia artillery company, departed for the front; mostly seasoned soldiers some of whom already served in South Africa. The total embodied militia infantry in Ireland was 13,750, and militia artillery 5,440.

After the call for volunteers from all parts of the empire to fight in South Africa, the Government allowed the raising of Irish yeomanry companies. These were to be formed from young Irishmen who could ride a horse and shoot a gun. They were used actually as mounted infantry rather than as cavalry. As most of the Boer farmers were also mounted foot, there was a great need for the same kind of troops. Altogether, six companies were sent to the front, four companies forming a complete Irish battalion, while two other companies were added to a British battalion (Harris, *The Irish Regiments*, 232) After the War they were formed into the North Irish Horse and the South Irish Horse. In the Second World War the North Irish Horse fought in North Africa and Italy as a tank regiment. The South Irish Horse fought on the Western Front in the First World War but was disbanded in 1922.

In February 1900, following the actions of the Irish regiments like the Inniskilling Fusiliers, the Dublin Fusiliers, and the Connaught Rangers leading towards the relief of Ladysmith, Queen Victoria authorised the raising of another regiment of Household Troops, the Foot Guards, to be called the Irish Guards. Field Marshal

Lord Roberts, now Commander-in-Chief in South Africa was made its colonel. (The actual commanding officer of a battalion is a lieutenant colonel.) The Irish Guards distinguished themselves in the two World Wars. The 1st battalion fought in Tunisia and at Anzio. The 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion led the dash of the Guards armoured division to reach the paratroops at Arnhem (Harris, op. cit. 89-106).

The Countess of Fingall has an amusing story of the twenty-six year old Winston Churchill who was lecturing in Dublin on his war experiences and his escape from Pretoria. The clapping at the end was rather subdued, and Churchill mentioned this to the Countess, and she said 'You forgot to mention the Irish regiments'. Her husband, the Earl of Fingall had gone out with the Yeomanry, and escaped injury, though his horse was shot under him. Many of the Volunteers died of dysentery, enteric, and malaria. (Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 275, 251). The Irish contingent in the Imperial Yeomanry is chiefly remembered for being captured by the Boers. The 13th battalion of the Imperial Yeomanry included some Masters of Fox Hounds like the Earl of Longford and Viscount Ennismore, two companies of Ulster Protestant Unionists including the Earl of Leitrim, a whiskey distiller Sir John Power, and Captain James Craig (later Viscount Craigavon), and a company raised by the Earl of Donoughmore. The regular army officer placed in command of them proved incompetent. He blundered into a place held by the Boers, and instead of hastily retreating encamped and waited to be rescued. The Boers surrounded them and brought up artillery, and the contingent suffered 80 casualties before they were forced to surrender. 530 were taken prisoners (Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 436-7).

Three Irish battalions, the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers, the 1st Inniskilling Fusiliers, and the 1st Connaught Rangers along with a battalion of the Border Regiment were brigaded as the 5th (Irish) Brigade under Major General Fitzroy Hart. They were placed on the left flank for the attack on the Boer position on Colenso on the Tugela River. Hart made them march in close, parade ground order, and then missed the ford over which they were to cross the river. They were caught in a storm of artillery and rifle fire. They had to be withdrawn, having achieved nothing for their heavy casualties. The brigade went with the army to Spion Kop but was not involved in that battle. They were involved in a head-on attack on a Boer position outside Ladysmith which became to be known as Hart's Hill. Hart knew only one way to attack: go straight ahead. But despite the heavy casualties of 500 men a way was forced through to the besieged garrison in Ladysmith. The British army was chiefly used for defence of the empire. Before going to South Africa it had learned in India to abandon its bright red coats and glittering brass fittings and used khaki, the first army in the world to use a camouflage uniform. In South Africa, where it came up against the repeating rifle, it learned the value of trenches.

Queen Victoria came to Ireland for the fourth and last time and stayed at the Vice-regal Lodge, the Cadogans moving into the Castle. She was received enthusiastically. The Countess of Fingall went to be presented to her. She noted that the Queen did not like the Irish. She was then eighty one. She stayed from the 4th to the 25th April 1900. She visited the Catholic Mater Misericordiae hospital and Mount Anville convent school where she was received by Mother Janet Erskine Stewart, the Artane industrial school run by the Irish Christian Brothers, the Masonic Girl's school, Castleknock College, and Saint Vincent's hospital. She met a crowd of 52,000 schoolchildren in the Phoenix Park.

There were some sour notes. One was from an Englishwoman, Miss Maud Gonne, the daughter of an army officer who had fallen in love with a married French politician and she bore him two children. She became a fiery apologist for the Irish National League who got her to write about evictions. She married 'Major' John MacBride whose rank was in the Boer Army, and separated from him after two years. (Their son Sean MacBride later became Chief of Staff of the IRA and won a Nobel Peace Prize!). A journalist named Arthur Griffith was fined one pound in a police court for assaulting another journalist who had made disparaging remarks about Miss Gonne. W. B. Yeats fell in love with her, and she made him the exponent of 'Romantic Nationalism'. 'Romantic Ireland's dead and gone; it's with O'Leary in the grave' (September 1913). Yeats was one of the poets who covered the essential grubbiness, personal ambition and mercenary motives of the nationalist movement with an air of Romance.

In the autumn of 1900 a General Election was held, the 'Khaki' election, and the Conservatives were returned with a majority of 138. When the ministry was reconstructed in November 1900, Gerald Balfour was moved to the Board of Trade, and was succeeded as Chief Secretary by George Wyndham.

Horace Plunkett lost his seat in Parliament but was kept on as Vice-President of the Department. He was likened to a dog on a tennis court where both opponents combined to drive him off. He did not improve his

popularity with the Catholics, and especially with the Catholic clergy, when he wrote in his book, Ireland and the New Century, that the Catholic clergy would have done more for Ireland if they had put the people's money into developing local industries than in building chapels. After that, as far as the Catholic clergy were concerned, Plunkett could do no good. He offended the Language Movement too. He had spoken of a need for practical policies devised by Irishmen for Ireland, but not necessarily the restoration of the Gaelic language, to which some looked for national regeneration. Though, in fact, Horace Plunkett strongly believed in the Gaelic League. The Church of Ireland Gazette reviewed the book and noted the storm of abuse being poured on Horace Plunkett's head for daring to make even the most mild and well-intentioned criticism of the Catholics. His motto 'more work and less politics' was not likely to endear him to nationalist politicians, and Cardinal Logue singled him out for abuse. Later the editor deplored the total lack of proper public debate in Ireland; if a person like Horace Plunkett expressed an honest criticism he was immediately howled down (Church of Ireland Gazette 11 March, 11 Nov 1904). The Westmeath Guardian said that many of the clergy who rushed to condemn it did so after having read only excerpts. As it was reprinted cheaply for one shilling it was open to all to read and study it. Those who take the trouble to do so will see that he has taken the trouble to go to the root of the matter, and has told the general truth with a brutal frankness which has provoked the susceptibilities of a certain number (Westmeath Guardian 5 May 1905).

Plunkett was one of the first Irishmen to take up motoring. The first motor car was exhibited in Ireland in 1896. Another early motorist was Lord Iveagh. The first motoring event held in Ireland was a trip from Dublin to Killaloe, Co. Clare organised by the Shannon Development Company in which 11 cars participated. Many of the cars which ran in the sensational run to Killaloe were built in Dublin. Various towns were seeking a motor service to Dublin, but still there was no Dublin Motor Car Company (Irish Truth 18 Aug 1900).

With regard to electricity by 1900 there were two systems in Dublin; the old system and the one which was to replace it. Wires had already been laid under the streets, and the overhead wires were being removed. Where permission has been given by the local authorities, as has been in Dublin and Rathgar, the new service will be very efficient (Weekly Irish Times 21 Jan 1900).

The warring factions among the Nationalists came together under John Redmond, a very decent and moderate man, but one totally incapable of controlling the senior members of the Party. This was especially true of those who favoured the renewed terrorist campaign of the United Irish League. Redmond was never strong enough to expel them from the party, but his failure to do so meant he was regarded as a hypocrite by the Unionists.