

[1901] There was the usual series of minor Acts concerning Ireland passed. A Local Government (Ireland) Act (1901) was passed to deal with certain difficulties that arose from the original Act. A Youthful Offenders Act (1901) gave to the managers of industrial schools control over past pupils for two years after they left the school (Barnes, *Irish Industrial Schools*, 83). The Catholic bishops were still not satisfied with the Royal University. There was now a very successful Catholic College, University College, Dublin under their control, but they were still hankering for a Catholic University paid for by the Government. Earl Cadogan established a commission to study university education (*Irish Teachers' Journal* 30 Nov 1901).

The most important event of the years 1901 was the death of Queen Victoria after sixty three years on the throne. She was succeeded by her eldest son, Edward VII. Unlike his mother, he was very fond of the Irish, and he became a special friend of the Countess of Fingall. All the ladies were delighted with him and Queen Alexandra for the Court came to life again after the dreariness of Victoria's later years.

Another great event of 1901 was that Guglielmo Marconi who was half-Irish managed to transmit a single letter S (three dots) across the Atlantic. He then established a transmitting station at Clifden in Galway.

In 1901 a case was brought by a butcher in Belfast named Leatham against a trade union official of the North of Ireland Butchers' society named Quinn, who in the course of a trade dispute organised a boycott of the Leatham's butchers shop. Leatham brought an action for damages against Quinn, won, and was awarded £250 damages. The case was upheld in the House of Lords who ruled that 'if two or more persons combine together, without legal justification, to injure another and by doing so cause him damage, they are liable to an action for conspiracy' (Boyd, *Irish Trade Unions*, 71). In the same year the Taff Vale Railway Company won against a trade union, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, for damages to the company caused by a strike called by the said union. The union believed that its funds were protected by the Trade Union Act (1871). An appeal reached the House of Lords which ruled that a trade union could be considered a corporate body which could be sued for damages. This ruling meant that no future strike would be possible (Briggs and Jordan, *Economic History*, 442).

[1902] Peace was concluded with the Boers on 31 May 1902 and on 11 July 1902 Salisbury, aged 72, tendered his resignation to the king and he died a year later. He recommended that the Conservatives should choose his nephew Arthur Balfour as his successor, and this was done

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The Ministry July 1902 to December 1905 (Conservative)

Prime Minister	Arthur Balfour
Home Secretary	Aretas Akers-Douglas
Lord Lieutenant	Earl of Dudley
Chief Secretary	George Wyndham; March 1905 Walter Long
Under Secretary	David Harrell; November 1902 Sir Anthony MacDonnell

[July 1902] Aretas Akers-Douglas was a barrister from Kent, with no connection with Ireland. William Humble Ward, second Earl of Dudley, son of the first earl, had been elected Mayor of Dudley in 1895 and 1896 and served with the Imperial Yeomanry on Lord Roberts' staff in South Africa. Walter Hume Long's mother was from County Wicklow. He had a long career in Parliament, and sat for South Bristol from 1900 to 1906 and for South County Dublin (Horace Plunkett's old constituency) from 1906 to 1910. Anthony Patrick MacDonnell (Anthony Pat) was a Catholic from County Mayo. He was educated in the Queen's College, Galway, a tiny college with little more than 100 students but well-regarded academically, and then joined the Indian Civil Service in 1864, serving in Calcutta. He was much involved in Land Reform in Bengal and was strongly opposed by the local landlords. He had a long career in India in various posts before he was asked by George Wyndham if he would accept the office of Under Secretary in Ireland. He got Wyndham's agreement on a policy of land purchase, the establishment of some kind of order to the various Boards by which Ireland was governed, the

promotion of education, economic reform, and opportunity to influence policy, and with these conditions Wyndham agreed.

A Board was a group of persons, who normally sat around a table or board, having managerial, supervisory, investigatory, or advisory powers. The members could be called commissioners, directors, guardians, etc. This meant responsibility, especially financial responsibility, was spread over several persons. Boards, unlike Government Departments, were normally not directly responsible to Parliament, though some like the Treasury Board, the Board of Trade, or the Board of Control of India were. (Ireland, it was once observed, had enough boards to make its coffin.) The office was a step down for MacDonnell, and he may have been asked directly by the king to undertake it (Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 277). The king, the Prime Minister, and the Chief Secretary wished to see a constructive policy of development to which Irishmen of all parties could agree. But like Plunkett, he came to be detested by both parties.

Unlike Earl Cadogan the Dudleys were young, rich, and beautiful. They were determined to do their best for Ireland, and also to maintain a magnificent court. The salary of a Lord Lieutenant was sufficient for ordinary purposes, but if the office was held by a wealthy nobleman he could put on magnificent displays from his own pocket. Lord Dudley was the first Lord Lieutenant to use a motor car, and he used to drive to the golf links nine miles away. This caused difficulties for his police escort who had only bicycles, so they had to be provided with motorcycles. He drove the twenty miles to Killeen Castle, the Fingalls' home, in County Meath in two hours. The Countess of Fingall has an amusing story about how Lady Dudley extracted more money for Ireland from Charles Ritchie, by then Balfour's Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lady Dudley mapped out a route where the Vice-regal car would pass the worst looking cottages, outside of which the parish priest had been instructed to assemble the most ragged children. They even drove past the same cottage twice, and the chauffeur was instructed to slow down when passing. Ritchie was appalled, and George Wyndham got £12 million (Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 281-2). Lady Dudley devoted herself to helping the poor in Ireland, and her scheme for Dudley nurses brought trained district nurses and midwives to parts of the West which never had them. Lady Dudley's committee continued to meet under her successor the Countess of Aberdeen. She also took a close interest in the Countess of Mayo's School of Art Needlework. On a motor tour of the West the wives of the Maamtrasna prisoners begged Lady Dudley during the Lord Lieutenant's tour of the West to secure their release. Lord Dudley said he would carefully consider the petition. Three men, Martin Joyce, Patrick Joyce, and Thomas Joyce were sentenced in 1882 to penal servitude for life; none of the convicted had in fact inflicted any of the fatal wounds, but were present with common consent to commit the murder; the death penalty was commuted to penal servitude for life. The men were released (Warder 11 Oct 1902).

The new century opened in 1900 and the Irish Times marked it with a lengthy article on the position of women in 1900 which is worth quoting at length. 'Woman and the New Century' by Lady Violet Greville paid tribute to the great women of the preceding century Mary Woolstonecraft, Hannah More, Elizabeth Fry, and Jane Austen. She noted that Jane Austen's novels conveyed a very accurate description of the restricted middle class life of that day; long hours of needlework, dull domestic duties, short walks taken in thin shoes and white stockings, the subjection of all natural desires to lady-like behaviour.

She noted the immense changes, and great openings now for women. A woman now has her own latchkey, her bicycle, her hansom, her trips abroad by herself or with another woman; a large part of this is due to the more ordered state of society which allowed a woman to go without male escort. Early in Victoria's reign a woman never went abroad even to walk in the park unless accompanied by a maid, but now a woman can walk alone in respectable streets. Nowadays women are allowed to do almost anything, go to the play and the opera, stay in hotels, dine in a restaurant, belong to a club, without male escort or approval. Foreigners are astonished at young ladies walking, climbing mountains, boating, cycling, sightseeing, accompanied only by one of her own sex. Much of this can be attributed to athletics where a young girl can take part in tennis, croquet, golf, and hockey in their clubs, go to skating rinks, and gymkhanas without mother or chaperone. The result is well-developed, physically-fit young women; though some women exercise excessively, on the whole habits of early rising and healthy exercise stand to them well in the rest of their lives.

The education of women too is now highly developed; at one time Lady Mary Wortley Montague noted that women were not allowed serious books, and educated women of that century educated themselves. Dr. More prevented his daughter Hannah from pursuing her studies of Latin and mathematics; Mrs Elizabeth Carter and Mrs Montague and her set were nicknamed bluestockings. The Queen's College was founded in 1848, having grown out of the Governesses' Benevolent Institution; in 1869, a college was founded in Hitchin from which derived Girton in 1872, quickly followed by Newham in 1875, and new schools were provided by people like Miss Buss to improve girls' education.

Women flocked into new careers in medicine, science, nursing, bookbinding, printing, and all the branches of art; women competed for the highest prizes; they became doctors in medicine, members of the School Board, factory inspectors, and teachers of a wide variety of subjects. Girls of the class who formerly became domestic servants now prefer to be shop assistants and clerks. Long hours, unfair agreements, capricious and vexatious deductions of salary, unsanitary surroundings and poor living count for nothing compared with increased liberty. The women of the poorer classes are still confined to making shirts, mantels, and trousers, and making matchboxes invariably at a lower wage than for men; women's work is considered as supplementary to the man's earnings. Gentlewomen have been driven by the vicissitudes of fortune into trade. The Post Office Savings Bank and the Telegraph employ many women; type writers and shorthand secretaries find ready employment; shops for dresses, millinery, and bric-a-brac employ women; some women keep tea-shops; others take up journalism; while the stage is no longer considered immoral or degrading.

The first women's' trade union was founded in 1874 by Emma Pattison, and women's leagues have been formed, among them the Primrose League [formed in honour of Beaconsfield] and the Women's Liberal Foundation. The vast schemes in connection with religion, temperance, and social regeneration of all kinds, are presided over by women of rank; every great lady toils as well as the poorest.

There have been losses as well as gains; manners have suffered; politeness and elegance of manners has disappeared; the modern girl is brusque, angular, rude in speech, and self-assertive. There is less respect for parents; less regard for duties in the concrete while subscribing to a vague humanitarianism. The lives of factory women are ruined by the conditions in the factories, and they have sickly children, the health of the children in the manufacturing towns being very poor (Weekly Irish Times 27 January 1900).

As far as women were concerned the previous fifty years had brought about remarkable advances. Lady Violet could also have mentioned married women getting a large control over their own property, and properly qualified women getting the vote in local elections. Journalism was regarded as a suitable career for daughters of impoverished gentlemen who had to earn their own living. It was far better than that of governess or paid companion. With regard to journalism for women Mrs Belloc-Loundes, sister of Hilaire Belloc, thought that a young woman considering a career in journalism should know a little of everything rather than one subject thoroughly; she must make up her mind to keep herself au courant with what is happening. She will commence with local papers before trying the larger cities. The Society of Women Journalists, in the Strand, subscription a guinea a year, offers much help (Weekly Irish Times 19 April 1902).

Belfast in the second half of the nineteenth century it grew to be a great world-class industrial and manufacturing city, becoming the world centre of the linen industry. Machinery powered by coal and steam enabled the British Isles to temporarily wreck the traditional hand-spinning and weaving industries around the world, aided by the fact that ever-larger steam-powered iron ships could transport raw materials and finished products around the world. Alongside the spinning and weaving grew the chemical industry to produce ever-better bleaches and dyes. Ulster manufacturers imported flax from Northern Europe, manufactured linen, and exported around the world, maintaining their own sales force in the different countries. The Jacquard loom enabled the weavers to weave complicated patterns into the cloth. Technical advances in the manufacture of machinery meant that machine-woven cloth was as good as the best hand-woven cloth and much cheaper. Bleaching and finishing the cloth were brought to perfection. Sir James Craig in 1924 claimed that seven of the largest industries in the world were in Ulster: the largest linen manufacturing concern, the largest firm of linen thread, twine and netting; the largest rope and cable works, the largest shipbuilding firm, the largest single tobacco works, the largest single flax spinning mill, and the largest single linen export trade of any comparable area (Weekly Northern Whig 1 March 1924).

With regard to ship-building, Belfast like its great rival Glasgow, was built on a relatively small river, the estuary of which could be dredged to accommodate ships of almost any size. It was also within easy reach of supplies of coal and iron which were found just across the Irish Sea. Harland and Wolff and Workman and Clark were two of the largest shipbuilding firms in the world. Sir Edward Harland realised that iron ships could be designed on totally different lines from wooden ships. He used a design like a box girder to make a longer ship giving increased speed; he flattened the bottom to make the 'Belfast bottom' increasing capacity; he increased manoeuvrability by making their stems almost vertical. Though it was predicted that they would break their backs in a storm they proved robust, and the yard got extra work by lengthening other ships. Longer thinner ships were more economical to run (Jeremy, Dictionary of Business Biography "Harland, Sir Edward James Harland", 1831-95, pp36-41).

When the first White Star liner Oceanic was launched in 1870 he broke with tradition by placing the first class accommodation amidships instead of in the stern because movement was less, and he extended the saloon area across the width of the vessel; these features were soon copied by the other lines. The firm furnished the cabins and common rooms with the most extraordinary luxury with a view to capturing the richest market in the world, those who wished to travel between New York and London. The Irish Government secured that these would halt at Queenstown in Cork harbour. The firm not only built the ships but the engines as well, triple and quadruple expansion steam engines. (A marine engine on a ship lent itself to the economical use of steam, the high-pressure steam from the boiler being expanded progressively into larger cylinders, and finally condensed into a vacuum by means of sea-water. The cylinders were set in line along the length of the ship. The pistons in each cylinder drove directly down on to cranks on the driveshaft which ran above the keel. The same principle was used by Parsons as the steam was expanded into progressively wider sections of the turbine.)

Brunel's Great Western weighed 1,320 tons in 1838. By the end of the nineteenth century 10,000 ton ships were being built. In 1899 under James Pirrie Harland and Wolff began to build ever-larger ships beginning with the 17,040 ton Oceanic and at 705 feet the first to exceed Brunel's Great Eastern. In 1900, the 20,000 ton Celtic was launched, 3,000 tons more than its predecessor the Oceanic. The series culminated with the Olympic and Titanic 46,400 tons (1912) and the Britannic 50,000 tons (DNB Pirrie). The spectacle of these monsters towering over the little rows of two-storey houses was impressive, and was a source of enormous pride to the shipyard workers. Places in the shipyards were highly prized and often handed on from father to son. Workman and Clarke built rather smaller vessels but more of them. In 1902 Workman and Clark built the largest tonnage of any yard in the United Kingdom with 12 vessels with a total displacement of 86,711 tons. In 1903 Harland and Wolff's total tonnage was 110,463 tons. In 1909 Workman and Clarke held the world record for any shipyard, and in 1910 it was held by Harland and Wolff. The latter firm then had 12,000 workmen (Weekly Irish Times 30 July; 24 Dec 1910). During the First World War a riveter in Harland and Wolff's won the world record by driving 7,841 rivets in 9 hours; he was however soon beaten by a man in Workman and Clark's. J.W. Moir MBE, the world's champion riveter on June 5th 1918 drove 11,209 rivets in 9 hours using 2½ tons of metal; his best speed was 26 rivets in a minute Weekly Northern Whig 9 Feb 1924).

The Sirocco works was established to make tea-drying machinery, and it specialised in making industrial fans, some of which were used in German battleships. Another firm was Mackie's which specialised in making machinery for the linen industry.

This was Ulster's heyday. In 1913 a writer in the London Express noted that Belfast paid one half of all Irish taxation. Ulster had 35% of Ireland's population, and 35% of its property value. 70% of all Irish exports went from Belfast, and half of all Irish trade passed through it. Of the customs duty paid in Ireland in 1911-12 Ulster paid £2,273,000 while the rest of Ireland paid £914,000 (Weekly Irish Times 20 Sept 1913). It was a point Home Rulers and anti-Home Rulers were not likely to overlook. (Whether these particular statistics were accurate is immaterial; the people at the time considered they were.)

Dublin was also a fast-growing city, being the administrative, intellectual, artistic and financial capital of Ireland. It was the centre of the rail system, and had a great port which handled a great deal of the imports and exports of Ireland. It was a great export centre for the live cattle trade. It had many traditional industries which were always under threat from British factories. Two of its greatest firms were Arthur Guinness the brewers, and Jacob's the biscuit manufacturer. Jacob's factory belonged to an old Quaker family settled in Ireland for two centuries. In 1851 William B. Jacob decided to add biscuit-making to the output of his bakery in Waterford, and a few years later opened a factory in Dublin concentrating on making 'cream crackers' which became a great commercial success. The firm maintained a welfare department; teeth extractions were free; a doctor called every day, and gave advice free. The welfare secretary was a certificated nurse, and she had two assistants. There was a food hall where meals were served at cost price. All the tableware was sterilized after every meal. The girls could spend the rest of their lunch break at the piano, in the library, or playing games in the gardens on the roof. There was also a large hall, a gymnasium, a works choir, spray baths (showers), and sewing classes. For the men there was a forty foot long plunge bath; the men had to wash thoroughly in the spray baths before using it; it was much appreciated in hot weather, and some have learned to swim in it (Weekly Irish Times 29 Nov 1913). One of the most important was Grubb's, originally a maker of instruments. They specialised in making astronomical instruments, and helped the Parsons family in Birr to make their giant telescopes. The firm developed an optical gunsight (Warder 31 March 1900). Sir Charles Parsons was also interested in optical instruments and purchased Grubb's in 1925 and built a new works in England. It should be noted that most of the firms in Dublin, large and small were owned by Protestants.

There was one strange difference between Belfast and Dublin. Belfast was not short of land on which to build working-class houses. Many of the houses were small, with a small backyard which held the privy, and, in houses built after 1878, there was an alleyway between the backyards for the removal of rubbish and night soil

(Collins in Beckett, Belfast, the Making of the City 171). In Dublin, on the contrary landlords tended to buy up mansions in the city centre and let them out room by room with minimal provision for sanitation. It was estimated that 100,000 persons, or a third of the population, was living in single rooms (Weekly Irish Times 20 Dec 1902).

Some of the owners of slum property in Dublin were members of Dublin Corporation who had no intention of seeing their rental diminished by the building of new housing. In the Dublin tenements tenants paid one week in advance, or maybe two; then they paid no more until they were evicted, a process which took three weeks. All water and everything else had to be carried up flights of stairs, and all rubbish and waste carried down again; more often it was thrown out the window. Sanitary facilities of the poorest condition were in the yards, and it was not uncommon for homeless people to sleep on the stairs; such were often drunk and fighting. There were only open fires so there was little cooking; the poor lived on bread and tea, and the women did not know how to make soup or porridge. They slept 4 or 5 to a bed, and a lodger might pay 1/6 a week for a quarter share of a bed. Because of drying washing and crying children the men spent their time in the public house. The people lived from hand to mouth, and pawned their goods and clothes on a Monday and got them out on a Saturday.

'It matters nothing to what particular brand of Nationalism the Corporation owes its allegiance if its municipal policy is to remain rotten and unchanged'. The editor suggested that Municipal Reform candidates should be put up, chosen from people with no municipal interest. All the other candidates should be asked their views on municipal reform. Ownership of slum housing should be regarded as a disqualification, as also for any publican for the problems of the slums are closely connected with the problems of drunkenness; slum publicans cannot be slum reformers (Weekly Irish Times 3 Jan 1914).

In 1905 the Irish Times commented on the vast extent of pawnbroking among the weekly wage earners in Dublin, and most workers in Dublin were now paid weekly. Pawnbroking was made legal in Ireland in 1786, and at least 5 million tickets were being issued by pawnshops in Ireland. The interest was fixed at one halfpenny on every two shillings or part of two shillings for each month or part of a month, i.e. 25% p.a. at simple interest. However as most pledges among the weekly earners are for weeks or less than a week the actual interest is 108%. Also as the pawnbrokers were not mentioned in the Currency Act 1826, for interest purposes 2/- is counted as 2/2 Irish; the effect of this is to invoke the clause 'part of 2/-' which allows the pawnbroker to charge for 4/- instead of 2/- ; in Britain the legal interest on pawns was 108% (Weekly Irish Times 19 Aug 1905). Pawnbroking and money lending was by no means confined to Dublin. Indeed indebtedness of the very poor to moneylenders is an almost universal phenomenon.

In England a great improvement was wrought in primary education by the Education Act (1902), 'Balfour's Act'. School Boards were abolished, and the county or borough Council was made the Local Education Authority. Secondary (Intermediate) Education was also placed under the local councils, and financed from local taxation. In England, Catholic schools benefited, but some extreme Nonconformists raised a cry about 'Rome on the Rates', which was to pre-occupy Cardinal Bourne of Westminster. It was to be a burning topic for the next twelve years. More public money was poured into education and England rapidly overtook Ireland. The schools run by religious bodies were taken under public control and raised to the same standard as the others. The religious societies met all costs for buildings, and appointed teachers, and the Councils met all other expenses from the rates. The Councils were also enabled to build their own secondary or intermediate schools, as well as assisting existing voluntary schools. The primary and secondary schools were still not integrated into a system, but in 1907 secondary schools receiving public money were obliged to reserve 25% of their places free to pupils from the primary schools. In 1908 free school meals were prepared for the poorest children and a compulsory free medical examination. The incidence of ill-health especially with regard to eyes and ears proved horrifying. In 1899 Margaret McMillan organised the first medical inspection of schools in Bradford, and this was later taken up by the London County Council.

There was not the slightest chance that the Irish Catholic bishops would consent to a similar Act in Ireland. In 1920 at the Congress of the INTO (Irish National Teachers Organisation) the out-going president, Mr T.J. Nunan commented that the Catholic schools in England came under the county councils in 1902 and there were no ill-effects, but there was great improvement in pay and conditions; in Scotland too it was found possible to get every advantage for Catholic schools and Catholic teachers with no interference with the authority of the Catholic priest, and only Catholic teachers could be appointed in Catholic schools. These things took place in England and Scotland where the Departments and local councils were composed almost exclusively of non-Catholics (Irish School Weekly 10 April 1920). The trenches for the trench warfare which Archbishop MacHale had marked out in 1837 with his appeal to Rome were to remain forever inviolate. And it did not matter that Rome had in fact rejected MacHale's appeal.

The Public Libraries Act (1902) extended the Act of 1855 (the principal Act) to rural districts, subject to the conditions of the Public Libraries Act (1894). Oddly enough, the counties themselves were not then made Library Authorities (New Irish Jurist 26 June 1903; Weekly Northern Whig 29 March 1924).

The terrorists connected with the United Irish League stepped up their nocturnal activities in 1902. The Lord Lieutenant made various proclamations under the Crimes Act in 1902, a total of 26 urban or rural districts of which 8 were in Clare, 2 in Limerick, 10 in Tipperary, 1 in Roscommon and 5 in Sligo. They were revoked in July 1903 (Weekly Irish Times 18 July 1903).

The Postmaster General found it too expensive for the moment to extend the telephone system to the leading towns in the south of Ireland. However if the chambers of commerce, or other bodies, would guarantee specified returns between the various towns and Cork for seven years he would extend the system (Weekly Irish Times 18 Jan 1902). However by 1903 there was telephonic communication from Dublin with the Earl of Dunraven at Adare, Co. Limerick. Originally there were several telephone companies in Britain, the National, the Mutual, and the New Telephone Company as well as many local city companies. After 1901 the Post Office was integrating the various local services which had operated under the general oversight of the National Telephone Company; by 1912 the lines for a full national telephone system were in place. The Government got complete control of it when National Telephone Company was purchased under the Telegraph Arbitration Act (1909). [TOP]

[1903] Wyndham Thomas Wyndham-Quin, 4th Earl of Dunraven, from Adare Co. Limerick, had been an officer in the army and a war correspondent. He reported on the ending of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871 and the ending of the Great War in 1918, being the only person present at both. He was a noted sportsman and big-game hunter, chiefly in North America. He bred horses and had a famous stud farm at Adare. But he was chiefly famous for his yachts. In 1893 and 1895 he had yachts specially built to contest for the America's Cup. The challenge was later taken up by another Irishman, Sir Thomas Lipton, about whom the Kaiser is once supposed to have said, 'The King of England goes sailing with his grocer'.

In 1902, during the outbreak of agrarian terrorism, a gentleman from Galway named Captain John Shaw Taylor, a nephew of Lady Gregory, in a public letter suggested a conference between representatives of the landlord and the tenant interest. The Nationalist leaders he invited, and who accepted, were John Redmond, William O'Brien, Timothy Harrington, and Thomas Wallace Russell, a Unionist MP who turned Liberal. They welcomed the suggestion but the Irish Landowners' Convention did not. Lord Dudley and Wyndham however pursued the scheme, and they were joined by Lord Dunraven. After more efforts, Dunraven, the Earl of Mayo, Col. Sir Hutchinson Poe, and Co. Nugent Everard were chosen as the landlords' representatives. Dunraven was asked to act as Chairman. O'Brien later observed that he, Redmond and Harrington had taken their lives in their hands by taking part in unauthorised discussion with the landlords, but with the success of the Conference not one branch of the United Irish League objected (Weekly Irish Times 3 Jan 1903). Their Report was unanimous and formed the basis of the Land Act (1903) (DNB Quin; Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, 218). Russell, who came from the Tenant Right Movement in Ulster, had long been agitating for compulsory purchase. (Sir Thomas Wallace Russell was originally from Cupar in Fife in Scotland and was much involved in the temperance movement. In 1886 he stood as a Unionist in South Tyrone against Parnell's nominee, William O'Brien and defeated him. He split with the Conservatives in 1899 over Land Reform. From 1895 to 1900 he was Secretary of the Local Government Board, and he was appointed by the Liberals Vice President of the Department of Agriculture in 1907 after the dismissal of Sir Horace Plunkett. (Obit Weekly Irish Times 8 May 1920)

Resolutions agreed to the sale of the land to the tenants, with tenant ownership replacing the present dual-ownership. That as far as possible, the sale should be made directly by the landlord to the tenant. That it was not desirable that landlords, through this measure, should be driven out of Ireland, and that they should be enabled, as far as possible, to continue in Ireland. That an equitable price based on income should be paid to the landlords. That the purchase be made by a capital sum being paid to the landlords to produce a revenue of 3%, or 3¼ if guaranteed by the state (Weekly Irish Times 10 Jan 1903).

It is obvious why many landlords agreed to sell when they succeeded in getting good terms for the sale. The way the previous Land Act (1881) was being interpreted by the courts meant that already low rents were being forced down every fifteen years. Nor had the previous Act produced a benefit for the landlord in the form of better farming, improved fencing, drainage and buildings, but it encouraged the tenants to neglect them. The drains could be neglected for nineteen years out of a twenty year lease. Then in the twentieth year they could be partially cleared out and claimed as a 'tenant improvement'. The opportunities for cheating by the tenant were

built in, so the Nationalists would strongly oppose any attempts to amend the Act. Though the incidence of agrarian attacks was not great no Irish landowner felt free from the threat.

But it is not clear why the Nationalists accepted the Resolutions. As the whole point of the Land League and the United Irish League was to smash the landlords and to drive them out of all places of influence in Ireland, the Resolutions made the landlords better off. The return from land was falling steadily, and the landowners were being handed capital sums which could be invested in mining or industrial shares much more profitably. The social position of the landowners was still secure, even if the Local Government (Ireland) Act (1898) made it easier for people of lower social standing to be elected as local councillors. It should be remembered that in 1902 many of the Nationalist leaders who had followed Parnell and Davitt when they were young were now middle-aged. Nor was it easy to keep up narrow intense feelings of revanchism all one's life. Nor did they know that within ten years there would be a Liberal Party with a totally unscrupulous young leader prepared to barter Home Rule for assistance against the House of Lords. Nor did they know that the original Fenianism, determined to settle all Ireland's problems with guns would revive. In any case the Nationalists who felt the time was ripe for a rapprochement with the Unionist and landlords were a minority. And O'Brien clearly felt that he might be assassinated merely for talking to landlords. But when the deed was done, and the tenants were enabled to buy their farms at the cost of a small annuity stretched over sixty years or more the hard-liners in the United Irish League found it difficult to oppose even if it meant weakening the case for Home Rule.

The basic principle of the Land Act (1903) or Wyndham Act was that Government offered a bonus to landlords who would sell, and tenants would make repayments over 68 years. Landlords were paid in guaranteed Land Stock, saleable on the Stock Exchange. Landlords were to be encouraged to sell all their land leased to tenants at the same time, and the sale could proceed if three quarters of the tenants on an estate agreed. The price of each farm was to be within a band of from 18½ years purchase to 24½ years purchase on farms with first term rents under the Land Act (1881) and from 21½ to 27²/₃ years purchase for second term rents fixed after 1896. The money was to be advanced by the Government to the purchasers and the repayments over 68½ years meant a return of 3½% to the owners of the Land Stock (Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine*, 219). (The price of commercial property is normally valued by multiplying the annual return, for example the rent, by a number of years).

Wyndham, introducing his Bill in March 1903, mentioned that the tenancy system militated against land improvement for the tenant runs down his land in the last years of his lease. Irish agriculture was starved of capital while the tax-payer was paying £140,000 a year for the Land Commission and £1,400,000 for the police who are largely occupied in dealing with agrarian crime. He referred to the success of the earlier Acts; nearly 80,000 tenants had purchased and the state had not lost a penny. The Griffith Valuations were brought up to date annually in the Department of Valuation, and since the Local Government Act 1898 placed the rates on the holders they are anxious for a correct valuation; there were 490,301 holdings valued in these returns, of which 56% were valued at £10 and under; 69% being £15 and under. With regard to the total cost there must be subtracted items like the 80,000 tenants who have already bought, the grassland farms which will never be sold, urban plots, etc, and farms over £2,000 in value which is the limit in this Act as in preceding Acts. He dealt with the question of landlords who were themselves tenants of superior landlords to whom they had to make regular payments, and of tenants in bankrupt estates. As he said, the complications of landholding had been building up for 800 years.

An estate was not to mean all the property of the landowner; it meant the tenanted land and such other amounts which must be added to make the holding a sound security for the advancement of money. The value should be based on the value of fixed second rents, of which only about 80,000 have been fixed a second time. So he outlined the complicated procedures about how he proposed to deal with all the others. There were two dangers in creating a peasant proprietary, the subdivision of property and mortgaging it. The policy would be frustrated if a local money lender could buy up 10, 15, or 20 holdings, group them together, and repay the money outstanding to the Treasury. The only safeguard was to make a portion of the annuity permanent, and if he buys a holding he too is subject to the provisions against sub-division. [As in most peasant societies the poorer people were in perpetual debt to the moneylender. Much of the land in Southern Italy distributed after the Second World War ended up in the hands of the moneylenders] Untenanted land must be added to uneconomical holdings; these holdings may be sold to tenants on the estate, their sons, or the tenants on neighbouring estates, or to any person who in the previous 2 years had been a tenant (Loud Irish cheers). For these newly manufactured holdings the limit will be £500 advance; this provision had created expectations among holders of untenanted land in the West; so a limit of £500 is placed on any holding which has been created since 1 March this year. The cheers were due to the fact that the Land League and the United Irish League had promised that those evicted for withholding their rents would get their land back. (Untenanted land was composed of individual farms from which the tenants had been evicted but which had not, for whatever reason, chiefly intimidation, been re-let. The tenants who had been evicted for withholding rent on the

instructions of the United Irish League, hoped to be re-instated, hence the cheers.) Obviously, untenanted land could more easily be added to small holdings to make them viable.

For the landlord, advances would be made in cash; this money would be raised by the Treasury by a new capital stock to be called 2 ¾ % guaranteed Stock, redeemable after 30 years. He did not expect to have to raise more the £5 millions in the City in any one year; indeed it would be impossible to do so (Weekly Irish Times 28 March 1903).

Lady Fingall noted that there were two kinds of landlords who would be unwilling to sell, the wealthy landlords who did not need the money, and the poor whose estates were mortgaged to the hilt so they would get nothing for them. The solution was to give a bonus to the landlords and to persuade Ritchies, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to pay it. (How Lady Dudley achieved has been described above.) Shortly after she describes how Wyndham met a formerly penniless Irish marquis in the casino at Monte Carlo enjoying himself with his bonus. He pointed at his chips and called out 'George, George, The Bonus' (Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 282). The Act proved very successful, and at least achieved its aim of allowing tenant farmers to purchase their farms.

Writing in 1904 Mr T.W. Russell noted that many important people all over Ireland were attacking the Land Act (1903) but tenants were getting on and taking advantage of it. A lot of criticisms were regarding the prices, and he had no doubt that the landlords were making a good deal out of the transactions. Those tenants, numerous in Ulster, who were paying second term rents had got a 20% reduction in the eighties, a further 22% reduction in the nineties, and further discount on purchase. Those with first term rents obviously did not get such a good bargain. With regard to those paying non-judicial rents he hoped that the Estates Commissioners would take the competitive nature of rents into consideration. (Obviously he meant by comparison with the judicial rents, not with market rents which would be far higher.)

There were also the problems of the Congested Districts, and the evicted tenants. But he was convinced Parliament would not have passed the Act if they did not think it contained a solution to these problems. With regard to the Congested Districts, the only solution was more land, and this could only come from the sale of the grasslands which were being let out at fancy [i.e. commercial] rents. With regard to the evicted tenants surely some arrangement could be arrived at on the Lansdowne and Massareene estates similar to that arrived at on the Coolgreaney estate, but so far little has been done on this matter. Some landlords in Ulster refused to sell under any terms. In 1901 the Liberal party had voted for compulsory purchase, and would do so as soon as it came into power, as it shortly would (Weekly Irish Times 15 October 1904). In 1907 a Bill for Compulsory Purchase was introduced and Mr T. W. Russell stated that the landlords had breached the agreement of the Landlord's Conference, where it was agreed that whatever agreement was arrived at, it should be secured on the second term rents; but the landlords were advancing that to 27½ purchase and a three year bonus, making the purchase price 31½ years; in his own constituency there was an estate with 900 tenants, who wished to buy, but not at the price the landlord was asking; there must be compulsion (Weekly Irish Times 27 April 1907). The Marquis of Clanrickarde famously refused to sell any land to his tenants despite pressure from Liberals, Conservatives, and Nationalists, and it was to force him to sell that the Land Act (1909) allowing compulsory purchase by the Congested Districts Board was passed, but even then it was not until 1915 that the Land Court managed to acquire his lands (except the demesne). His rents were in fact low, but he just objected to being forced to sell his land (DNB Burgh Canning).

The tenants on many, but not all, estates purchased their lands. Between 1903 and 1920 nine million acres had changed hands, and negotiations were continuing with regard to a further 2 million acres. But it is interesting that so many tenants did not purchase the farms they were renting. In 1923 the Free State Government passed a further Act Land Purchase Act (1923) to deal with 70,000 unpurchased tenants still under the Land Act (1881) and a rent-roll between £0.8 and £1 million and to cost £25 million. The lands were to pass immediately to the Land Commission which would oversee the sale (Weekly Irish Times 2 June 1923; Lyons, *op.cit.*, 606). The Northern Ireland Government got an Act passed at Westminster in 1924 amending the 1903 Act. In both these later Acts the dual system under the 1881 Act was ended compulsorily and the Land Courts were regarded as an expensive anachronism (Weekly Northern Whig 12 July 1924; Lyons, *op.cit.* 708).

As to whether the purchase of the land by the tenants did any good to the country or to anybody most people are sceptical. Lyons, though he did not intend so, was rather damning. It had been the contention of Charles Kickham, eloquently expressed in his famous novel *Knocknagow*, that a long secure lease was essential if an Irish tenant was to exert himself. After 1903 agriculture stagnated, and slightly declined despite the great efforts of Horace Plunkett. Consolidation of the uneconomic holdings proceeded, but slowly, and with little change in output. The Danes did not drive the Irish out of the British market; instead they developed the market. Farmers were not investing in their farms. Any extra cash was spent on improving houses and life-style. More and more money was hoarded to pay ever-increasing dowries. A dowry, as soon as it was obtained, was used to

marry off a daughter, so the sum was taken out of circulation for all practical purposes. There was no stimulus of a higher rent to force farmers to improve their production or their marketing. The farming population steadily grew older. By 1946 a third of all farmers were over sixty five, and many of these were widows (Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine, 602-610*, writing about the 1930's). The drive to improve agriculture when the landowners were trying to improve their estates, and also when co-operatives were try to improve agricultural methods seems to have vanished.

An alternative policy of raising rents, encouraging consolidation of properties, with assisted emigration, aimed at driving down the population to around 3 million for the whole of Ireland (about the same as New Zealand) would have raised production and the taxable capacity of Ireland, increased standards of technical education, and might have brought about economic development similar to those in the Nordic countries. Given the long history of nationalist propaganda where everything was blamed on 'The British Government' this was unlikely ever to be accepted. So when the Irish Republic joined the European Community it was one of the most backward economies in Western Europe and attracted an enormous influx of development funds. Even such an economically literate person as Dr Garrett Fitzgerald had no difficulty in attributing the backwardness to centuries of 'British misrule'. There can be little doubt that the long struggle over land, like the similar struggle over education, was just an expensive mistake.

The King, Edward VII, who much liked the Irish people, came to Ireland especially to see the people in the Congested Districts. The flag on the royal yacht was flown at half-mast because of the death of Pope Leo XIII. He was made very welcome, though extreme nationalists like Maud Gonne succeeded in preventing an address of welcome from the Dublin Corporation presented. The streets of Dublin were decorated and lined with cheering crowds. The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Walsh attended a levee. The Irish nationalist bishops were no longer boycotting the Castle. The king then went to the Royal College of Maynooth in Co. Kildare where he was welcomed by the Catholic hierarchy, and received a loyal address from the staff. He then went north to visit Belfast, and to stay with the Marquis of Londonderry at Mount Stewart in Co. Down.

The royal yacht took him then to the West Coast where the king was to visit the Congested Districts by motor car. As Horace Plunkett was regarded as the expert on matters concerning the motor car he was asked to organise the expedition for the king and queen. His Majesty wished to see the conditions of his poorest subjects for himself. It was very likely that the king frequently exceeded the speed limit in his 22 h.p. Daimler. Nine motor cars met at Leenaun at the head of Killery Harbour on the Galway-Mayo border to greet the king. The Lord Lieutenant and the Countess of Dudley were also there. The king and queen drove round the head of Killery Harbour and entered several small cottages; a high stone damaged part of the radiator, but this was soon mended; this was the only accident His Majesty sustained; bonfires lit on the neighbouring mountains and fireworks set off.

The royal party then went to Galway and on to Kenmare on the south coast where they were the guests of Lord Lansdowne. The king made Horace Plunkett a Knight Commander of the Victorian Order (KCVO) which conferred the title of 'Sir'. Sir Horace piloted the royal party in his seven horsepower Panhard (Motor News 1, 20 August 1903).

Another motoring event in 1903 was the Gordon Bennett motor race. The reason it was held in Ireland was that it had to run at least 100 miles on public roads, and this would require that the speed limit would have to be raised. Dudley, a motoring enthusiast, could issue the necessary Orders.

The Motor Car Act (1903) raised the speed limit to 20 mph for vehicles under 3 tons and regulated motoring. Vehicles over 3 tons were still restricted to 4 mph. The Local Government Board made the necessary regulations to apply the Act to Ireland. Every car must be registered in a county and carry a number plate, and the rear number plate must be illuminated. Ireland was assigned a letter for each county in alphabetical order preceded or followed by the letter I. So Antrim was IA, Armagh IB, Carlow IC, Cavan ID. Mayo was IZ followed by Meath as AI. Belfast city was given OI, Dublin city RI, Londonderry city UI. Road signs were to be erected. The total number of motor vehicles registered in Ireland up to 1 April 1904 was 1,445 of which 897 were motor cycles and 548 were for other cars. The total number of drivers licences registered was 1594 of which 342 were for motor cycles only. Of the vehicles registered 654 were in the county boroughs and Dublin county, and 791 in the counties which was an average of almost 25 per county. Taxation was imposed in the shape of an annual fee of 5 shillings p.a. for a driving licence, and a registration fee for the vehicle of £1. The Act was passed for three years, and a royal commission was appointed to investigate; since 1906 the Act was renewed annually (New Irish Jurist 7 Oct 1904; Weekly Irish Times 29 February 1908).

In North Carolina, at the Kill Devil hills, the Wright brothers succeeded in making brief powered flights with a heavier-than-air machine in December 1903.

In 1903 the first of the colleges in the Gaeltacht (the surviving Gaelic-speaking areas) which were to become a part of the youthful experience of young Catholics for many years to come was started. The idea was to promote total immersion in traditional Gaelic culture, to learn to speak the language, learn the songs, music and dances, and participate in the native sports. Gaelic-speaking areas were shrinking fast. In 1851 Irish was spoken over large parts of Munster and Connaught, and in Donegal in Ulster. By 1900 the Gaelic-speaking areas had shrunk to areas along the West Coast with isolated patches elsewhere like at Ring, Co. Waterford and Omeath in the Cooley peninsula in Co. Louth.

Trinity College Dublin voted 74 to 11 admit women to degrees. The cost of a degree at TCD was £83 compared with £6 at the Royal University. At the Royal in the past 8 years only 541 have taken degrees, though far more than that matriculated; only a quarter of those who matriculated took degrees. The reason for the 75% drop-out rate for women students was not obvious, but it would seem that girls' secondary schools were not of the same standard as those of boys (Warder 13 June 1903). [TOP]

[1904] In 1904, Belfast finally got its electric trams. The old contract for the horse-drawn trams expired and was not renewed. The Corporation itself took over the running, and installed electric traction. The installation was carried out by William Martin Murphy who also installed the system in Cork city. The Great Western Railway of England opened up the fastest route between Dublin and London when it began running packet boats between Fishguard in Wales and Rosslare in Co. Wexford. It was certainly useful for those wishing to travel to southern parts of Ireland

The king returned for another visit to Ireland in 1904. The royal party went to the races at Punchestown, the centre for steeplechasing, and the principal meet was a very important one in the social calendar. The king's visit was a private one.

Wyndham introduced the Irish Labourers' Act (1904) again aiming at providing suitable cottages for Irish labourers. He had been asked to increase the size of the allotments but those in England were limited to 3/5ths of an acre, and he had no wish to add to congestion (Weekly Irish Times 19 May 1904).

In January 1904 there occurred the only pogrom against Jews. It followed sermons by a local priest Father John Creagh against the Jews. Arthur Griffith, who was to found or revive the Sinn Fein party the following year, supported the priest, who went on to organise a boycott of Jewish businesses (Encyclopaedia of Ireland 631). The Irish had the same contempt for the Jews that other countries in Western Europe had. Irish Truth in 1900 commented on the Russian Jewish peddlers in Dublin: they travel widely despite the prejudice of men against their race, and they sell their chromo-lithographs and packets of needles to housewives when the menfolk are gone to work. Presumably the men would have set the dogs on them. Not all Jews are rich; this is a popular fancy. The humble packman who never replies to the jeers he receives on the road, earns only a few shillings a week. The Russian Jew will eventually govern Dublin and perhaps the whole of Ireland, because of his industry and his thrift (Irish Truth 14 July 1900). (Pogroms against the Russian Jews commenced in 1881 following the assassination of the Tsar Alexander II. The spurious work, The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion about a Jewish Conspiracy to take over the world was published in Russia in 1903, and described an alleged plot by Jews and Freemasons to take over the world. It was recommended to me as a schoolboy to read though it had long been exposed as a hoax).

After his success with the Land Conference, Lord Dunraven tried to revive it as the Irish Reform Committee. In this aim he was supported by William O'Brien who thought a settlement to the Home Rule question could also be negotiated. Sir Anthony MacDonnell was consulted, and a Devolution Scheme was devised by which decisions on purely Irish affairs would be devolved to a semi-elected Council which would be given a budget of £6 million a year. There would also be a substantial measure of legislative control over Irish affairs. The proposals were published on 26 September 1904. This was not what the old Fenians had envisaged; they had wanted a full Catholic Parliament with themselves in charge. They wanted to return, not to the independent Irish Parliament of 1782 but to the independent Catholic Parliament of James II. They wanted full

control of taxation which was paid mostly by Protestants. Above all, they wanted complete control of the political rackets.

Michael Davitt was scathing in his attacks on the landlords, the workings of the Land Act (1903), and the Reform Association. He said that 9/10ths of the Nationalist Party supported him, and no pressure was put on dissenters (Hear hear). He noted the little support the Reform Association was getting from the Unionists. It was hinted that Sir Anthony MacDonnell was behind the Reform Association as he and Wyndham were behind the Landlord's Conference. He looked on the present Under Secretary as the most dangerous man ever to hold that post so far as the aspirations of the nationalists were concerned. A Catholic who took service in the Castle was a more formidable enemy than any open Orangeman. It was an attempt to solve the national claim by halving the spoils of alien and unjust government between Catholics and Protestants; they were continuing the government in the interest of class and not of the people of Ireland (Weekly Irish Times 24 Sept 1904). (That was precisely what the Catholic and Protestant leaders should have been attempting to negotiate. If the Protestants were greater in wealth, and the Catholics greater in numbers, an equal division of the wealth would have been an honourable draw. But the Fenians had always wanted to have exclusive control of the wealth and power.) The Ulster Unionists saw devolution as a stalking horse, or the first breach of the dyke, and claimed that within a week it would be totally under control of the Catholics.

Wyndham replied in the London Times saying that he had no connection with the Reform Association, and that the Government was opposed to devolution in any form. It was clear that MacDonnell, in allowing a copy of the proposals to appear in public without properly clearing the matter with Wyndham and Dudley, had overstepped the mark. Nor did it do any good for O'Brien to point out that the proposals were merely for discussion, and not hard and fast points for a Bill. Wyndham's two successors as Chief Secretary, Long and James Bryce, considered he was not acting *ultra vires*, (beyond the powers of his office) but failure to explain the matter to Wyndham was a grave mistake (DNB MacDonnell). Lyons claims that MacDonnell sent a letter to Wyndham on the subject, which Wyndham mislaid. Wyndham's biographer claims that Wyndham was so utterly opposed to the proposals that he would have stopped MacDonnell if he had known what he was attempting (Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, 221; DNB Wyndham).

The Ulster Unionists met on 2 December 1904 and formed a central Unionist Association which in March 1905 called itself the Ulster Unionist Council UUC. It was composed of the Ulster Unionist MPs, Unionist peers, and representatives of all local Unionist Associations, Unionist Clubs, and Orange lodges. Its delegates were appointed by every polling district and drawn from all classes, and so was truly representative of the Protestant people in Ulster. Its democratic method of election provided a permanent electoral machinery in the constituencies (Buckland, Irish Unionism, 202). [TOP]

[1905] In March 1905 Wyndham resigned. His health was failing, and MacDonnell had pointedly failed to resign. His successor Walter Long's chief duty was to restore the confidence in the Conservative government of the Irish Unionists led by the Earl of Westmeath. In his task he was very successful, and the following year he was elected as a Unionist MP for South County Dublin, and leader of the Irish Unionists in the House of Commons. Nobody at this stage noted the significance of the Ulster Unionist Council which in 1912 was prepared to act for the Ulster Unionists alone.

Boycotting and intimidation continued; near Athenry shots were fired at a man who had offended the United Irish League. There was another outrage on a grazing farm which the members of the League wanted divided among themselves, for the League was a most important factor in the allocation of lands that have been sold to the Estates Commissioners and it generally takes care that its supporters get good farms. The United Irish League was now focussing its attention of the big grassland farms devoted to beef cattle. They wanted them confiscated and divided among small farmers. These small farmers were to become a potent force in Ireland and formed the core of Eamon de Valera's supporters. Numerically, they were numerous, even if economically they contributed little to Ireland's Gross Domestic Product whose calculation excluded produce consumed on the farm. de Valera could pursue any political objective so long as he kept the small farmers contented. (Ireland was not the only country in Europe where small farmers exercised a disproportionate influence over economic policy.) The reason for the continuing lawlessness in the West, around Athenry, was the existence of grass farms which the peasants consider they had a right to. They were supported in this view by the United Irish League which told the graziers that they were standing in the way of a settlement between the landlords and tenants. Some of the graziers have announced that they will give up their leases when they expire in the near future, but most have made no such declaration; these are subjected to threatening letters (Weekly Irish Times 11 March; 15 April 1905). The United Irish League set up courts of summary jurisdiction in the

West; people dare not refuse to attend them because boycotting and intimidation were widespread (Warder 4 March 1905).

There was a legal dispute between the Board of Erin Order of Hibernians, an ancient friendly society spread into many countries, and an off-shoot started in Glasgow in 1897 and registered in Ireland in 1904 on the use of the name Ancient Order of Hibernians and the letters AOH. Joseph Devlin re-founded the AOH in Ireland and was its president from 1905 until his death. He was a Belfast man, and he built up the Irish Ancient Order of Hibernians as an openly sectarian body to give Catholics a counterweight to the Orange Order. Over much of Ulster the Hibernian Hall became the focus of Catholic social and political life. To the Irish party's opponents, both nationalist and unionist, the order was symptomatic of the party's corruption, jobbery, and Catholic exclusivism (Devlin DNB 2004). Devlin was also the organiser of the United Irish League which now controlled constituency affairs for the Irish Nationalists. As in the days of the Land League the connection between Members of Parliament and terrorism was kept suitably vague. Redmond disapproved of their activities but was never in a position to do anything about them. William O'Brien, who had founded the League, had withdrawn from politics in 1904 after he failed to get backing for his policy of conciliation, thus allowing Devlin a free hand. For most Protestants the United Irish League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians were the same thing. (O'Brien's connection with terrorism was much the same as Parnell's)

For once the Catholic bishops came out strongly, clearly, and explicitly against intimidation and cattle-driving. The bishop of Clonfert (Most Rev Dr. O'Dea) for example denounced intimidation: 'There have been instances, I am ashamed to state, in which men and even women have been fired at by cowards from behind a hedge. Houses have been fired into at night. Occasionally there have been threats of murder, or incitements to it, with allusions of approval, more or less veiled, to deeds of blood now happily past....and though your sole object in firing be to frighten, nevertheless by firing you are guilty beyond doubt, of a mortal sin, and of a mortal sin too of exceptional malice. And why? If you fire at another, or into his house, your action implies a clear threat of murder, or of grave personal violence, which God has forbidden under pain of mortal sin; and because also to fire at a man, or into his house, is a grievous violation of the right to security, peace and freedom possessed by everyman, and is utterly destructive of the peace and liberty of the community'.

In the same pastoral letter with regard to bribery the bishop dealt with members of public boards taking bribes to appoint unworthy candidates, or inferior contracts, and insisted he must make restitution. 'If a member of a public Board votes for a bad or dishonest candidate, or for a candidate clearly less worthy than another, he does a wrong not only to the best candidate but also to the community which has a right to the service of the best candidate, and he will be answerable before God for the neglect, the injustice, want of skill, or inferior service of the candidate he supports. And if, because of money or its equivalent, a representative of the people in the taking of a contract supports a wrong tender- a tender higher than others or for worse goods- he not only acts dishonourably and sinfully by taking a bribe, but he robs the ratepayers exactly as if he had put his hand into their pockets; nor can he ever obtain pardon without restitution of what it is possible for him to restore. And this obligation or restitution is also incurred by the person binding' (Weekly Irish Times 7 March 1908). Bishops usually preferred to confine themselves to safer topics like temperance or Catholic education.

With regard to cattle-driving in Clare the trouble began in 1907 when the League passed a resolution requiring 2 eleven-month tenants and 4 yearly tenants to give up their holdings, and the request was not complied with. A warning was then issued to them that if they did not give up the farms their cattle would be driven off; the cattle drivers drove the cattle on to the public road. Then the driving spread to other farms, the animals were often brutally treated. Local landlords attributed the lawlessness to paid agitators. Many of the tenants whose cattle have been driven possess only 25 or 30 acres. The targeted families in this case were tenants who had taken land on eleven-month or twelve-month leases. This was called conacre especially when the land was taken for less than twelve months. Conacre was and remained an important part of the economy even after the tenants had bought their own land. Elderly farmers or their widows would let out their land, a field at a time to younger farmers. In the case mentioned those with the short leases may have taken the land of evicted tenants (Weekly Irish Times 17 Oct 1908).

In September 1906 the Irish Landowners' Convention gave their side of the story. With regard to the cattle trade and the grazier system, the graziers conducted the only successful business in the whole of the West and formed the backbone of its economy. The small tenants depended on them to purchase their young animals. Furthermore if the supply of animals to England were restricted there would soon be a demand for the removal of import restrictions on Canadian and foreign cattle. It should be remembered, too, that much of the land actually being grazed was eminently suitable for cattle-rearing and totally unsuitable for tillage. These lands were being used at present to the best advantage and if handed over to the Congested Districts Board for division

among small holders they could not possibly pay the present rents. There was also the point that dividing the land only put off the problem for a single generation; in 39 years' time the divided holdings would have to be divided again (Warder 8 Sept 1906). They were making the points that if stock rearing was giving the best return from land, tillage would necessarily give a lower return, and that if sub-division were allowed the plots would have to be sub-divided again after a generation.

In 1903 Mrs Emmiline Pankhurst along with her daughter Christabel and some friends founded the Women's Social and Political Union seeking women's suffrage. As the Government did not take them seriously, they began in 1905 to take more militant action. As in England there had long been a women's suffrage movement in Ireland which had already won considerable success. Pankhurst's Suffragette Movement had little following in Ireland, but one tactic she pioneered, the hunger-strike, was eagerly adopted by fanatical republicans.

In 1905 too Arthur Griffith the journalist started his political party which he called Sinn Fein (We Ourselves). (There is some disagreement regarding the precise year in which it could be said that Sinn Fein as a distinct political party, with a distinct political programme, rather than a society was formed. What is commonly called Sinn Fein is a fusion of Griffith's ideas and those of the revived IRB.) He was not a man of any great knowledge or ability, but his party was important because it could be used as a stalking-horse by those intent on using violence to achieve political ends. Though Sinn Fein was not a republican party little attempt was made to start such a party as the ostensibly peaceful Sinn Fein party sufficed. Griffith's theory was that parliamentary tactics such as those of Redmond to achieve Home Rule would not succeed, while on the other hand open revolutionary tactics would probably fail. But all that was necessary was what he called the 'Hungarian option' namely, to elect Sinn Fein councillors in Local Authorities and Sinn Fein MPs. The Sinn Fein MPs would not go to Westminster, but would establish their own parliament in Dublin. The Sinn Fein councillors would collect the taxes and send them to the parliament in Dublin, which would then take over the administration of the country. Griffith was a journalist who had been educated at a Christian Brothers' school in Dublin, and apprenticed to a printer. He had no deep knowledge of Hungarian history or anything else, but he believed he was following in the footsteps of Kossuth in 1848. When, in 1919, an attempt to put the plan into practice was attempted it utterly failed for the Government just seized the money from the counties and other bodies. However, Sinn Fein was useful to other more capable plotters. It was also useful in that those who felt scrupulous about shedding blood could say they were voting for non-violent methods. (Many years later the Irish Times published a famous cartoon of a voter explaining to his parish priest 'Meself, Father, I joined Sinn Fein for the flower-arranging'.) Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, and other dictators also had ostensibly non-violent political parties to support them and give them political legitimacy. Griffith was not opposed to revolutionary violence in principle, and had joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood, but he always remained on the fringe of the secret society.

The Irish Republican Brotherhood, those old Fenians who did not believe in the 'New Departure' and looked only to raising and drilling an army with the help of money raised in America, had never totally faded away. Arthur Griffith joined them as a young man, and W.B. Yeats was introduced to the Brotherhood by John O'Leary and Maud Gonne. The revival of the secret society, usually called the IRB may be dated to 1904 when a sworn member in Belfast named Denis McCullough admitted another young man called Bulmer Hobson. In 1905 they started Dungannon Clubs which later merged with Sinn Fein. In 1906 they admitted John (Sean) MacDermott. Hobson and MacDermott became active organisers of Sinn Fein, while MacCullough remained in Belfast building up the IRB and in 1908 he was elected to the Supreme Council of the Brotherhood. The immediate object of the young revolutionaries was to purge the old leadership and they received a great boost when they got the support in 1907 of an old Fenian named Tom Clarke (Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, 315-8). It was not for several years that either Sinn Fein or the IRB were able to make much impact. In this year too 1907 the young barrister and language enthusiast, Patrick Pearse, lost his case in court while trying to defend a farmer who had written his name in Irish on his cart (Weekly Irish Times 27 May 1907). It was several years before he joined the IRB.

It should be noted that there were very few differences either in policy or in tactics between the Nationalist Party and Sinn Fein. Both recruited from the whole spectrum of Catholic nationalist opinion. At the more respectable end, leaders like John Redmond and William Cosgrave could have swapped parties. At the terrorist end, the actual terrorists probably switched parties according to their perception of which was likely to succeed. In neither party had the Parliamentary leaders much control over what was being done at local level. It was to be one of the major successes of William Cosgrave's Free State Government that it was, after a long and violent struggle, able to impose the authority of the Minister of Defence and the Cabinet over dissident local units.

In both the leadership depended on political dogma not on argument or precedent. The dogma was based on anachronistic interpretations of Irish history. Ireland was a separate kingdom based on a separate race. There once had been a high king of Ireland who ruled over the whole island, therefore Home Rulers should rule over the whole island. Ancient laws, treaties, or submissions had no force and could be abrogated. Ireland had been conquered by England, so the only right the English had in Ireland was the right of might. The English had robbed the Irish of their property, so all the wealth of Ireland really belonged to the descendants of the ancient Celts. By judicious selection and interpretation it was always possible to find bits of ancient texts to support these alleged 'facts'. Sinn Fein added that it was lawful to start a war and to kill people to attain the objectives of the separatists. Any group of people could declare that they represented 'Ireland' and declare war in its name. Such a war would be a 'just war'; killing would not be murder; robbery or destruction of property would not be theft; no restitution would have to be paid to those injured in any way.

Yet there were some differences, especially in image. Like its Continental counterparts, the Nazis, the Fascists, and the Bolsheviks Sinn Fein presented a more modern, progressive, brasher and aggressive image more likely to appeal to the young. Dialogue with people like Yeats or Synge was not on the agenda; disrupting their meetings was. Reviving the use of the 'native' language and 'native' games was not to depend on persuasion but on compulsion. Opting out of an independent Ireland was not an option; the Ulster Unionists would be crushed by force if necessary.

An article appeared in a newspaper suggesting that the Gaelic Leaguers, instead of agitating for Irish to be taught in the schools might more profitably agitate for the following desirable improvements in schools:

- 1) a sanitary water-closet in every school,
- 2) a playground for every school,
- 3) a warm fire, not paid for by the teacher, in every school,
- 4) a proper system of lighting in every school,
- 5) a proper system of ventilation for every school,
- 6) adequate apparatus, not supplied by the teacher, for each school,
- 7) a system of prizes, not paid for by teacher, in each school,
- 8) pay and conditions equals to the minimum in Britain (Weekly Irish Times 7 Oct 1905).

In Parliament, Balfour's ministry was getting into increasing difficulties over the question of Tariff Reform, an issue and division that kept the Conservatives out of office from 1906 to 1922. The final phase of the Home Rule movement was therefore entirely under the Liberals. The idea of Joseph Chamberlain was that to unite the British Empire it should be formed into a large custom's union or Zollverein on the German model, the members of which would trade among each other without any tariff barriers. There would be a common external tariff against all others. This meant the abandoning the principle of Free Trade. The Party divided into Free Traders and Tariff Reformers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Ritchie, was a fanatical Free Trader. Chamberlain was defeated in cabinet so he resigned from the ministry, and in 1903 formed the Tariff Reform League. Many Conservatives supported the idea, because with more of the taxation coming from tariffs paid by foreigners, the lower would be the taxation on land. The industrialists were totally opposed for they were doing very well from free trade. The divisions in the Tory ranks benefited the Liberals who could cover over the divisions in their own ranks by supporting free trade. As England was now importing much of its food, the prices of some foods would have to be raised, an idea many voters were likely to reject.

Among the projects which occupied Arthur Balfour at this time was the procuring of a new eighteen-pounder gun for the army, and establishing a consultative body with full secretarial staff called the Committee of Imperial Defence. Both of these were to prove their usefulness ten years later. In 1904 he reached an agreement with the French called the Entente Cordial which meant consulting the French without binding Britain to anything. It was not a treaty; it was 'an understanding'. However, it led to increasing co-operation with the French against the Germans. As there was no agreement within his own party, he resigned on 4 December 1905. The Leader of the Liberals, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman accepted office as Prime Minister and immediately asked the king for a General Election. [TOP]

The Ministry December 1905 to April 1908 (Liberal)

Prime Minister Henry Campbell-Bannerman

Home Secretary Herbert Gladstone

Lord Lieutenant	Earl of Aberdeen
Chief Secretary	James Bryce; Jan 1907 Augustine Birrell
Under Secretary	Sir Anthony MacDonnell

[December 1905] Campbell-Bannerman brought into his ministry two youngish men who were to have great futures, Winston Churchill who became Under Secretary for the Colonies and David Lloyd George who became President of the Board of Trade. Both would have much to do with Irish affairs over the next fifteen or sixteen years. Herbert Gladstone, William's youngest son, was made Home Secretary, and was given charge of making arrangements for the General Election. He proved an active Home Secretary in matters of domestic policy during his three years in the office. Henry Asquith became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Campbell-Bannerman was in favour of Home Rule, but many of the leading figures in the party were unwilling to face the country on an issue on which they had been so signally defeated in 1895. He was opposed by Lord Rosebery, Sir Edward Grey, Herbert Asquith, and James Bryce. It was agreed to postpone the issue, and not to make it part of the programme for the forthcoming General Election. (In fact, after William Gladstone's disastrous attempt in 1895, it never again featured in a General Election, though the Conservatives later wanted to fight a General Election precisely on that issue. Almost certainly they would have won, which was why the Liberals never allowed it.)

The Earl of Aberdeen had been briefly Lord Lieutenant in 1886, and after 1893 he was appointed Governor General of Canada. He was Lord Lieutenant again from 1906 to 1915 the longest term of any Lord Lieutenant in modern times. The earl seems to have been a self-effacing man, and nearly all newspaper reports are about the activities of his energetic wife, Lady Aberdeen. He does not appear in the Countess of Fingall's book, but she notes with regard to James Bryce that one did not associate with a Liberal Chief Secretary. Nor did she associate with Birrell, who rarely came to Ireland, though she was to become very friendly with Sir Matthew Nathan, the Under Secretary. This is strange because she was veering towards an acceptance of Home Rule when it became inevitable. James Bryce was a Scotsman but spent the first eight years of his life in Belfast, his mother being from Co. Antrim. After leaving Glasgow University and Oxford he worked in England.

Augustine Birrell came to Ireland in January 1907 and was removed after the debacle in 1916. He was born near Liverpool, the son of a Nonconformist minister, and was educated at Cambridge and the Inner Temple in London, after which he practised in the Chancery courts. He was very interested in literature. Campbell-Bannerman appointed him President of the Board of Education where he had to deal with the attempts of the Nonconformists to alter the clauses in the Education Act (1902) which they deemed to favour the Established Church and Popery. Looking back, it is clear that Birrell, a retiring literary man, was a hopeless choice for the position of Chief Secretary. The Countess of Fingall said 'He was usually in England making epigrams about Ireland', though she admitted he was a wonderful speaker. When three years later, Ireland became a pawn in Lloyd George's battle with the House of Lords it was obviously useful to keep the Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary in place in position as pliant doormats.

[1906] The General Election in January 1906 resulted in a Liberal 'landslide'. The result was that the Liberals got 377 MPs, the Conservatives 157, the Irish Nationalists 83, while Labour and similar groups got 53. Balfour lost his seat in Parliament by 2,000 votes, but a safe seat in the City of London was found for him and he returned to Parliament on 12 March 1906. The total Conservative loss was 214. It was the greatest Liberal majority since 1832. Campbell-Bannerman promised changes to the Education Act, and some measure for involving the Irish Members in the conduct of their own affairs. The parliamentary session of 1906 was taken up with the Education Bill (1906), a Trades' Disputes Act (1906), and a Plural Voting Bill which aimed at ending the custom by which a person could vote more than once, for example where his residence was situated and where his business was situated, or as a graduate of a university for university seats in the three ancient universities. Only the Trades Disputes Act, which was designed to reverse the Taff Vale judgement, got past the House of Lords. All the demands of the trade unions were conceded, and the unions were made immune from civil actions for damages as they had been made immune from criminal actions by the 1871 Act. In future, no company involved in a strike, nor any company or individual not involved in the dispute, but which suffered financial loss because of the strike could sue the union for damages. It made the sympathy strike possible.

There was a delegation of Labour and Liberal members to the Prime Minister and Mr Asquith regarding state, non-contributory, universal old age pensions; both promised Government support.

Birrell, as President of the Board of Education, introduced his Bill to try to remedy the grievances of the Nonconformists. The Catholics had benefited from the 1902 Act and so opposed the Bill. The Irish Nationalist MPs were against it. The Provision of Meals Act (1906) allowed Local Authorities to provide free school meals to necessitous children, but this Act could not apply to Ireland because of the determined resistance of the Catholic bishops to any role by Local Authorities in education. Similarly, an Act in 1907 which imposed on Local Authorities the obligation of providing free medical care to children in elementary schools could not apply either.

Bryce knew that the Government was unwilling to introduce a Home Rule Bill and told this to John Redmond. He also let him know that the perpetual Crimes Act (1881) would not be repealed. However the Government would not renew the Arms Act (1881) which prohibited the importation of firearms. Sir Neville Chamberlain, Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary protested to Bryce at the time, but his advice was ignored (Weekly Irish Times 3 June 1916). So too was his advice that the Pistols Act (1903) regulating the use of handguns should be extended to Ireland was ignored. All Bryce was willing to do was to introduce the devolution proposals of Anthony MacDonnell. This idea was acceptable to William O'Brien and it seems to Redmond personally. But most of the Home Rulers were unwilling to accept any watering down of their objectives. Redmond and Dillon set about getting rid of Bryce, and in December he was made ambassador to the United States. Redmond had to go with the flow of the majority of his Party. He was perched uneasily at the top of the Party but was never in control of it. When Michael Davitt died in 1906 Bryce sent a letter of sympathy to his widow.

A vice-regal commission in 1906 on the working of the Poor Law concluded that the system imposed in 1838 was no longer suitable. In England the system of poor houses had been devised to force lazy persons to seek work; in Ireland the problem was always to find work for the poor to do. At present one third of the inmates were sick, and another third were aged and infirm. Those who were sick were not really destitute but tradesmen and other humble earners who, in the cities, were accommodated in the voluntary hospitals. But because of the tradition of the poor houses these sick were housed in unplastered and unceiled rooms, with the roughest beds, and were attended by the other inmates as nurses, and were in general treated much worse than lunatics. Similarly, outdoor relief was given to those who were by no means destitute, but was provided as an additional support. 'The boundary line has in practice been extended from destitution to poverty, with the result that the number of possible recipients is much increased'. The Report added that this was not what had been intended but the system was popular and appeared to have taken root. As was usual in Ireland there was a majority Report and a minority Report, unanimous Reports being rarities. They recommended that poor houses should be phased out, and the different categories housed in them placed in different institutions and that a state medical service should be instituted funded by Parliament, seeing the extent by which poverty was caused by ill-health, and the benefits of getting medical treatment at an early stage (General Advertiser 26 February 1910). The old age pension was brought in very quickly to deal with the aged poor, and most of the other recommendations were gradually adopted.

The Department of Agriculture published statistics of Ireland's important and exports, the first to be taken for 80 years. (In 1826 the transition period allowed by the Act of Union (1800) was deemed over. All duties were equalised, and no imports and exports between parts of the United Kingdom were counted.) It was admitted that the classification was not ideal. Total aggregated trade was £101,754,638, but as the quantities of manufactured goods, both imports and exports, are imperfectly registered the total may have exceeded £105 million; imports total £55,148,611 and exports £46,606,420 (Weekly Irish Times 17 Nov 1906).

In the House of Commons in December 1906 the Chief Secretary commented on the local potato failure in Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Galway, Clare, Kerry, and the West Riding of Cork. Between two thirds and three quarters of the crop failed, caused partly by bad weather which was favourable to blight, and neglect of spraying, or bad spraying. The supply of potatoes, except in the Belmullet peninsula, should last until January; the Government would take measures to ensure a supply of seed potatoes for the following year. Relief was a matter for the Unions and the County councils (Weekly Irish Times 15 Dec 1906).

The borstal system was introduced to Ireland in 1906. The name was derived from a village near Rochester in Kent. After 1903 young people between the ages of 16 and 23 convicted of criminal offences could be sent to a borstal institution for a period of reformatory training, usually for three years, after which they were released subject to supervision by the Borstal Association (OED). Borstals were made an official part of the penal system in 1908. Under the Prevention of Crime Act (1908) a judge might sentence juveniles to sentences of not less than one year's detention and not more than three in these institutions, so producing a great change in the system. They are now called inmates, not prisoners. That part of Clonmel prison which formerly held juvenile prisoners now was changed to a detention centre. The number there detained was now 54 and it became

necessary to set aside the whole of Clonmel gaol to hold them (Weekly Irish Times 6 Aug 1910). The first reformatory was established in 1788 by the Philanthropic Society. In 1854 young offenders could be sentenced to reformatories by the courts, but only after a prison sentence of 14 days had been served first. Industrial schools were started in 1857 for children who were homeless, begging, or beyond control, and in 1861 they were allowed to accept delinquent children of under 12. They all came under the Home Office in 1908.

In August 1906 the Catholic Archbishop Walsh of Dublin protested to the Lord Mayor at the Sunday showing of moving pictures of the Johnson-Jeffries fight; the mayor said he had not licensed the show.

The great Dublin sewage scheme which had been half a century in planning, design, gaining authorisation, and raising the necessary cash was finally completed in 1906. Two main sewers linked by a siphon ran along the quays on either side of the Liffey. There were four main pumps at the pumping station each of which could lift 15 million gallons in 24 hours; three constantly working and one in reserve. There were 18 precipitation tanks to which lime was added to precipitate nearly all solid matter. The sludge from these tanks was to be dumped at sea at least 6 miles out, a special sludge vessel making a daily trip (Warder 26 Sept 1906).

The Catholic bishops forbade Catholic students to attend residential training colleges in technical instruction where both Catholics and Protestants attend; the last Synod of Maynooth allowed Catholics to attend classes in technical education where the classes were mixed, but not to reside with non-Catholics in such schools (Warder 13 Oct 1906).

In 1906 the Admiralty launched the Dreadnought which displaced 18,000 tons (more than 20,000 tons full load), was 526 feet (160 m) long, and carried a crew of about 800. Its four propeller shafts, powered by steam turbines instead of the traditional steam pistons, gave it an unprecedented top speed of 21 knots. Because recent improvements in naval gunnery had made it unnecessary to prepare for short-range battle, Dreadnought carried no guns of secondary calibre. Instead, it mounted a single-calibre main armament of 10 12-inch guns in five twin turrets. In addition, 24 3-inch quick-firing guns, 5 Maxim machine guns, and 4 torpedo tubes were added for fighting off destroyers and torpedo boats. Thus there were no guns of intermediate range between 3-inch and 12-inch. All other navies that could afford it followed suit. [TOP]

[1907] In 1907, the Army followed suit with the 'Haldane reforms'. The chief aim again of these was to create an army reserve like those of the Continental powers. The militia, yeomanry and volunteer units were abolished and replaced with what was called the Territorial Army. In Ireland, where the militia battalions formed a kind of reserve to the line battalions with which they were linked, they were left in place, but were no longer officially called the militia. Provision was made for organising them into divisions. The Imperial General Staff produced training manuals which were to be used everywhere in the Empire. So when the Great War came, armies from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and India all fitted easily under Imperial command. In Ireland, there was a handful of the new nationalist extremists associated with Sinn Fein who campaigned against recruitment for what they regarded as the 'British' Army.

For some obscure reason, though the navy was called the Royal Navy and the new air force the Royal Air Force, the army, though it was the royal army, was never called the Royal Army. This curious fact allowed nationalist extremists to claim that the army in Ireland was a British 'army of occupation' in Ireland. Some of the Irish regiments were among the most ancient in the British Army, but until the Act of Union (1800) for fiscal reasons, those regiments stationed in Ireland were regarded as being the Irish Army. The earliest regiments were those who had supported William III and were Protestant. The Catholic regiments who supported James II went to France in 1693 and returned to England at the time of the French Revolution. By that time, regiments which were largely Catholic, like the Connaught Rangers, were being raised. In the early part of the nineteenth century Irish Catholics composed up to a third of the British Army.

The United Kingdom patched up ancient differences with Russia and the Triple Entente was formed. Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy had earlier formed the Triple Alliance. The path towards the Great War was forming.

The Holy See issued the decree *Ne temere* in 1907 with regard to mixed marriages between a Catholic and a Protestant. By this decree all marriages everywhere in the Latin Church between Catholics and non-Catholics are invalid unless they took place in the presence of an accredited priest and two witnesses, and this

even in countries where the Tridentine law was not binding. By the decree Tametsi of the Council of Trent all marriages of Catholics had to be celebrated before a parish priest and two witnesses. Even in countries where the Tametsi decree had been published, serious difficulties arose. As a consequence Pope Benedict XIV, choosing the lesser of two evils, issued a declaration concerning marriages in Holland and Belgium (Nov. 4, 1741), in which he declared mixed unions to be valid, provided they were according to the civil laws, even if the Tridentine prescriptions had not been observed. A similar declaration was made concerning mixed marriages in Ireland by Pope Pius, in 1785, and gradually the "Benedictine dispensation" was extended to various localities (W. Fanning, 'Mixed Marriages', Catholic Encyclopaedia). The effect of the Ne Temere decree was to force all Protestants in Ireland, if they wished to marry a Catholic, to have the wedding celebrated in the Catholic church, not the Protestant one. This aroused much indignation among the Protestants especially in Ulster, where it was regarded as another encroachment by the Church of Rome.

In January 1907 Augustine Birrell became Chief Secretary of Ireland. Redmond rather liked him for he relied, rather unwisely, on him for advice. Birrell knew that there was no chance of a Home Rule Bill being put forward, but he hoped to do something about higher education. The only thing wrong about higher education was that the Catholic bishops felt that they should be in charge of it. If Birrell had any achievement in Ireland it was that he preserved the non-sectarian principle in higher education while persuading the Catholic bishops that they were really in charge of it. (It should be remembered, that neither the Free State Government nor the Northern Ireland Government gave way on this point either, and both in fact placed all education directly under Ministries or Departments of Education.)

There were disturbances in the Abbey Theatre when Mr Synge's play, *The Playboy of the Western World* was performed; it was preceded by the writer's one-act play, *The Riders to the Sea* which was received with general applause. In view of the disturbances on preceding nights Mr W. B. Yeats came on the stage at the interval and addressed the crowd, saying he would discuss the play the following Monday but asked them to at least listen to it first. It was clear however that a faction had merely come to disrupt; the police had to be called to restore order. The actors went on with the play while the audience watched what went on in the audience. The national anthem [God Save the King] was drowned out by *A Nation Once Again* [unofficial anthem of the Home Rulers]. Much of the disturbance seems to have been caused by students. The leader of the attack on Synge was Mr Sheehy-Skeffington followed by Mr Cruise O'Brien. The general idea was that the play was not national. One speaker who handed in his name in Irish which the chairman could not pronounce said that the play was an insult to the people of Ireland and protested at the bringing in of the forces of the British Law to remove those who protested against the insult. Mr Yeats was told to be ashamed of himself when as a Connaughtman he did not know a word of Irish (Warder 9 Feb 1907; Weekly Irish Times 2 Feb 1907).

There was another outbreak of agrarian crime, and by August five counties, Roscommon, Longford, Leitrim, Galway, and King's County were proclaimed. In December Mr Lawrence Ginnell MP was sentenced to six month's imprisonment for contempt of the Land Court, for inciting to boycotting, cattle-driving, and offering to wrong-doers the best bits of the land secured. Sir Anthony MacDonnell wanted the Government to take firm steps against the renewal of disorder, but Birrell claimed that the country was more peaceful than it had been in 600 years.

The Nationalists demanded the removal of Sir Horace Plunkett from his post as Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction on the grounds that he was a Unionist and opposed to nationalism. They maintained he should have resigned or been dismissed when the Liberals took office. Sir F. Channing said that the motion was to procure the humiliation and resignation of a man who had been the best friend of Ireland (Nationalist denials); a man who had tried to bring together the best minds in Ireland without reference to political or religious creed. Dillon charged Plunkett with being a unionist politician and an implacable enemy of the nationalist party. Professor Butcher noted that he had been retained because he was the best man for the job; his unpopularity with his own party showed how impartial he had been. Redmond also spoke trying to prove the motion was a matter of lofty principle. Campbell-Bannerman defended Bryce, and said that no political consideration had arisen in connection with Plunkett's appointment; a motion contrary defeated 247 to 108, and the nationalist censure passed without a vote. Plunkett wrote to Birrell tendering his resignation, who refused to accept it until the commission of enquiry had reported (Weekly Irish Times 4 May 1907). In view of the vote by his own party, Birrell had to accept the resignation. T.W Russell was appointed to the post. One of the reasons Plunkett was detested by the Nationalists was that he believed in self-help and co-operation above all. The Nationalists wanted protectionism and public works (Weekly Irish Times 8 January 1908).

It may very well be that this was a blessing in disguise for Plunkett who returned to his first love, the Co-operative Movement, to which he devoted the rest of his life. He was an inspired choice for setting up the Department in the first place, being a man of wide vision and prepared to try almost anything to bring diversification and value-added to Irish agricultural output. He was convinced that Ireland could grow first-class tobacco, and perhaps it could in selected areas. But after him the scheme was neglected. He was convinced too that the soil in Co. Meath would produce first-class cider which Fr Finlay hoped to call the 'The Bottle of the Boyne'. [The Battle of the Boyne between the Catholic King James and the Protestant pretender William of Orange was fought in 1690] The gentlemen in the county planted orchards, but were defeated by pests and frosts. Later Co. Tipperary became the cider-making county. Had Home Rule not been attained, his wide-ranging Department might have been all that Ireland needed. Perhaps it was better that a more conservative administrator was now appointed. After 1921, the Department was split into two, one for Northern Ireland and one for the Irish Free State, and both continued to develop the work of the Recess Committee (DNB Plunkett; Fingall, *Seventy Years Young*, 254-256). The then dowager countess added a wry observation, when she was told about the remark of an old woman who lived near Killeen Castle. 'Th' ould one [countess] was always pestering us to have gardens and hens and ducks...and she had us destroyed with goats. So our great efforts and thirty years of work are remembered by those who endured them'.

Birrell in May 1907 proceeded with the introduction of MacDonnell's devolution scheme with his Irish Council Bill (1907). He proposed a council to administer the statutes, rules, and regulations which direct the control of purely Irish affairs within Ireland herself, but it would not be able to impose any rates or taxes. Over legislation the Irish have had long a considerable measure of control; now they needed also to control the exercise of those laws, to control the administration of the officials, conveniently if inaccurately called Dublin Castle (Weekly Irish Times 7 May 1907). Birrell continued: some of the Irish officials are under the control of the Irish Secretary for the time being; other are independent of him; some departments are wholly on the votes, some are partly on the votes, and some have independent endowments; the Board of Intermediate Education is totally independent. The total number of Irish Boards is a matter of controversy; excluding the Admiralty and War Office, there were, he was told, 45 Boards, 10 of which were directly under the control of the Irish Government, The Royal Irish Constabulary, the Dublin Metropolitan Police, the General Prisons Board, Reformatories and Industrial Schools, the Inspector of Lunatics, the General Register Office, the Department of the Registrar of Petty Sessions Clerks, the Resident Magistrates, the Crown Solicitors, and the clerks of the Crown and the Peace.

Under partial control of the Irish government were the Land Commission, the Commissioners of Charitable Bequests, and the Public Records Office; not at all under the control of the Irish Government except as regarding appointments and the framing of rules were five; the Board of National Education; the Board of Intermediate Education, the Commissioners of Endowed Schools, the National Gallery, and the Hibernian Academy.

Not under the control of the Irish Government but with the Chief Secretary as President ex officio were the Local Government Board, the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and the Congested Districts Board. There were four boards exercising statutory authority in Ireland and not under Government control: the Public Loan Fund Board, the Commissioners of Irish Lights, the Royal University, and the Queen's Colleges. Also not controlled by the Government were eight more, including the Supreme Court of Judicature and its offices, the Registrar of Deeds, the Local Registration of Titles, and the Railway and Canal Committee being the most important. There were also 12 English Boards working in Ireland, not under the control of the Irish Government, of which it is sufficient to mention the Customs, the Inland Revenue, and the Board of Trade.

Birrell then outlined the scheme. Outside the control of the Council would be the Customs, the Inland Revenue, the General Post Office, the Supreme Court of Judicature and its offices, the RIC and DMP, the Land Commission and the General Prisons board. The following eight departments would be under the Council: the Local Government Board, the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, the Congested Districts Board, the Commissioners of Public Works, the Commissioners of National Education, the Intermediate Education Board, the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and the Registrar General; it would be possible for the Lord Lieutenant by Order in Council to add others like the Irish Lights and the Lunatic asylums.

He proposed a council of 82 elected members and 24 appointed members and the Under Secretary ex officio. The franchise would be that of the Local Government elections- that is the same as the parliamentary franchise except that it would include women and peers; he was glad that women would be allowed to participate in working for the good of their country.

The powers vested in the various Boards or in the Lord Lieutenant or Chief Secretary would be under their control; they would proceed by passing resolutions which would be confirmed by the Lord Lieutenant. Any decisions he made would be subject to parliamentary scrutiny in this House. It would be authorised to establish as many committees as it thought fit, but should at least have a finance committee, a local government committee, and an education committee. It was proposed furthermore to erect a new Education Department to which the powers of the various commissioners would be referred and which would control all primary and secondary education.

For financial purposes a new fund would be established to be called the Irish Fund; there would be an Irish Treasury, with a Treasurer for Ireland at its head. Every five years sums would be fixed, as a charge on the Consolidated Fund, for the expenses. The total costs of the eight departments came to a little over £2 millions annually, but as nobody expects that figure to be maintained, he would propose an additional sum of £650,000 a year; this figure was based on the calculation of the additional costs needed over the next five years; £300,000 of it would however be earmarked to provide a sum for capital development in Ireland. (The Consolidated Fund was maintained by the Treasury of the United Kingdom into which all taxes were paid, and out of which all payments were made; there would therefore be so separate Irish taxation)(Weekly Irish Times 11 May 1907).

These proposals were eminently sensible, and there was no reason why the Nationalists could not accept them, at least as an interim measure. But the Nationalist leaders were always terrified that if good legislation were introduced people might not vote for Home Rule. Home Rule might be killed by kindness. Therefore every remedial measure had to be opposed. Similarly, Horace Plunkett had to go in case he succeeded. The Catholic bishops were also entirely opposed to a Department of Education, feeling that if the powers of the Government were increased their power would be decreased.

The Bill did not get far as it was opposed by the Nationalist MPs, Sinn Fein, the Unionists, and the United Irish League, though Redmond and Dillon considered accepting it. The Unionists felt it unduly favoured the Catholics, which it undoubtedly did, for they formed the democratic majority in the whole of Ireland.

Belfast was disturbed both by labour troubles and serious sectarian rioting. James Larkin, the labour leader was born in Liverpool but spent part of his childhood in Newry at his grandparents' home. He became an organiser of the National Union of Dock Labourers under James Sexton, and came to Belfast in 1907. Dock Labour was casual labour; any unemployed person could just turn up at the dock gate, and the foreman picked only those he wanted. The foremen had a good idea who was a good worker and who was not. A major point in forming a union was to reduce the numbers of those who applied for work, by restricting work to members of a particular union. It is not the purpose of this book to discuss the pros and cons of trade unionism. But it must be pointed out that many unions had a regime of intimidation and terrorism similar to that of the agrarian terrorists. It was inevitable too that trade unions involved themselves in politics, though the only Irish union to dabble in revolutionary politics was that of James Connolly. It did not help peaceful trade unionism in Belfast that prominent members of the labour movement in England supported Home Rule for Ireland at a time when most of the workers in Belfast were members of Orange lodges (Boyd, Irish Trade Unions, 76-84). Other members of the labour movement considered that Home Rule for Ireland was not the answer, and that workers should unite against capitalists. Larkin tried to organise a common front among Catholic and Protestant workers.

The dock strike began when union men refused to work alongside non-union labour, and were promptly locked out. Strike-breakers were imported from Liverpool and motor vans were used instead of carters to bring goods to and from the docks. The vans and the strike-breakers were attacked. Inevitably the police were stoned and Larkin was arrested. Troops and more police were drafted to Belfast, and the police complained that they had to escort carts for several miles on foot and got no extra pay. The police were persuaded to continue, but announced that they would pursue their claim for higher pay later.

While this was going on, serious riots broke out on the Catholic Falls Road, the worst since 1886. Joseph Devlin, the Nationalist MP for West Belfast, went about trying to persuade the rioters to disperse. It was noted that Protestant workmen were not involved. The Riot Act was read, and some soldiers were ordered to fire at the crowd. The Nationalist Irish News blamed the police. (Boyd recounts the episode in full, but asserts gratuitously, that the Protestant businessmen deliberately tried to stoke up sectarianism. This is extremely unlikely as businessmen do not like any disturbances.) It was a period of violence in trade unionism, and the strikes organised by Larkin and Connolly were notorious for their use of violence. Thomas Sexton and others leaders of the National Union of Dock Workers came to Belfast, negotiated some pay increases, and agreed to the use of non-union labour. With strike pay withdrawn the dockers returned to work.

Marconi sent a wireless message across the Atlantic from Cape Breton Nova Scotia to Ballyconeely, Clifden, Galway, to the Editor of the Irish Times; Marconi's mother was Irish, and his wife was too. Only press messages, arranged by contract, were being sent. A description of the Irish station was given; just a few sheds and eight tall masts facing seaward with interlaced wires. The message was tapped out of an ordinary telegraphic instrument, and amid thunderous noise and flashing of sparks which were repeated on the wire outside, the message jumped the Atlantic. The power was produced by a 300 horsepower steam engine and several batteries; the engine being fired with coal and local peat. The current was first sent to the condenser where metallic plates intensified its transmission and reception power a thousand fold; the receiver had a telephone attached to both as to enable him to hear the dots and dashes (Weekly Irish Times 26 Oct 1907).

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The Ministry April 1908 to December 1910 (Liberal)

Prime Minister	Herbert Asquith
Home Secretary	Herbert Gladstone Feb 1910 Winston Churchill; Oct 1911 Reginald McKenna
Lord Lieutenant	Earl of Aberdeen
Chief Secretary	Augustine Birrell
Under Secretary	Sir Anthony MacDonnell; July 1908 Sir James Dougherty

[April 1908] Winston Churchill was an extraordinary figure. He was the grandson of the Duke of Marlborough, and American on his mother's side. His father Lord Randolph Churchill was a younger son of the third Duke of Marlborough, the Lord Lieutenant, and lived on an allowance from his father. Members of Parliament were not paid, and he devoted his life to politics. He married Jennie Jerome, daughter of Leonard Jerome of New York City. He died from tertiary syphilis, leaving his widow virtually penniless. Winston joined the army, while his mother pulled strings in London to advance his career. To pay his mess fees, Winston took up journalism. He was retained by newspapers to report on the Malakand Field Force on the North West Frontier of India in 1897, and his mother got him assigned to Kitchener's expedition to the Sudan in 1898. Having left the army in 1899 he went to South Africa to report on the war, was captured by the Boers, escaped, and returned as a hero to England where he was immediately elected a Conservative MP at the age of 26. In his maiden speech he announced that if he had been a Boer, he would have fought on their side. His literary sales had amassed a respectable sum. Great things were expected of him because of his father and grandfather. He quarrelled with his party over Tariff Reform, joined the Liberals, and was given the junior post of parliamentary Under Secretary for the Colonies.

Churchill knew a lot about Ireland with which his father and grandfather had been connected. Sir John Leslie, second baronet, of Glaslough Co. Monaghan, married Leonie Jerome, Jennie's youngest sister, and their eldest son was Sir Shane Leslie, the third baronet, making Winston a first cousin. Shane became a Catholic and a Nationalist at Cambridge and Churchill introduced him to John Redmond. Shane stood unsuccessfully as a Nationalist candidate in Londonderry in 1910.

Reginald McKenna's father had gone from Co. Monaghan to London and became a Protestant. His son was educated in Cambridge and was elected as a Liberal MP. Asquith made him First Lord of the Admiralty where he supported the 'big ship' policy which was opposed by Churchill and Lloyd George who wished to spend the taxpayers' money on welfare projects. His name was his only connection with Ireland.

David Lloyd George needs to be introduced at this point though he had no direct connection with Ireland until he became Prime Minister in 1916. He was the son of a Welsh schoolmaster called William George and his wife who was born Elizabeth Lloyd. When his father died he was brought up by an uncle, a shoemaker named William Lloyd. Lloyd George became his surname, though hyphenated only in his title Earl Lloyd-George Dwyfor. He was a radical Liberal, and if born a generation or so later would have been a socialist, and indeed still later he would have joined Plaid Cymru. He was against the upper classes, the Established Church and the English, and admired the way the Irish Catholic MPs stuck together in a way the Welsh MPs did not. He and Winston Churchill worked together and he instructed the younger man in the views of the Radicals. He was eleven years

older than Churchill. (Churchill always retained a regard for his old mentor, and offered him a post in his Government in 1940 which was refused.) Lloyd George became Chancellor of the Exchequer in Asquith's cabinet, and this intensified the struggle with the House of Lords. Sir James Brown Dougherty Kt., 1844-1934, born in Garvagh, Co. Londonderry, the son of an Ulster surgeon, was educated at Queen's College, Belfast; he was Professor of Logic and English at Magee College 1879-95, Assistant Under Secretary for Ireland 1895-1908; permanent Under Secretary 1908-1914; Liberal-Pro-Home Rule MP for Londonderry City 1914-1918 Who's Who 1918).

The great Act of 1908 was the Old Age Pension Act (1908). This was a modest Act in itself, but it provided that a sum of 5 shillings a week should be paid to every old person after their seventieth birthday. This was a non-contributory scheme and was paid out of general taxation. The idea of a national old age pension was raised by the philanthropist Charles Booth who had been studying the condition of the poor in the East End of London in the 1880s. He noted that very many old people were being assisted by the parish or poor law union. Booth claimed that old age pensions would not need extra taxation, but simply shifting a burden from the parish to the Exchequer. Also the conditions for receiving the benefit would be the same everywhere instead of varying from parish to parish. Various plans were put forward until Herbert Asquith, as Chancellor of the Exchequer put forward his simple scheme in 1908 (Briggs and Jordan, Economic History, 692-4).

The Act came into force on 1st August 1908 and amounted to 5/- a week or £13 a year and applied to the whole the United Kingdom. There were no conditions or disabilities attached to receiving the pension, which went to all who were British subjects for at least 20 years, over 70 years of age, and whose income from any source did not exceed £31 10/- a year or 12/- a week. Those who were in receipt of Poor Law relief or had received it since 1st January 1908 were disqualified until the end of 1910. Medical or surgical assistance, or any relief which did not disqualify for registration as a parliamentary elector, did not involve the disqualification. There were various disqualifications including those who had failed to support their families, or had been sent to prison without the option of a fine, for 10 years afterwards.

The best evidence of age was a birth certificate, but as compulsory registration of births did not come into force in Ireland until 1863, the best available evidence had to be given including certificate of baptism, certificate of service in the crown forces, certificate of membership of a friendly society or trade union, or certificate of marriage. It was well known that local registers for marriage were very imperfect. Many old people are quite ignorant of their own ages, but it could be established by comparison with others, or by reference to a known event such as the erection of a public building; in some cases middle-aged clergymen would be able to testify that the claimant was old when they were young.

With regard to income this could be very difficult to establish especially on small holdings in Ireland; this was especially so if the applicant possessed a cottage in which he resided which was capable of being let, or a patch of land, though not worked, was capable of being let and worked, or savings which could be invested to produce an income

The machinery of the Act included the local Pensions Committee, the central Pensions Authority, and the pension officers. The local committee was to be appointed by every county or county borough, or by the urban district council in towns of over 10,000 inhabitants; the members of this committee might not belong to the appointing council. On proof of age, it could be established whether the claimant was born on or before the 'Night of the Big Wind', the hurricane which struck the British Isles on 6 Jan 1839 [70 years to 6 Jan 1909]. All applications were to be sent to the pension's officer; 16 different forms had been printed; the first or principal form could be obtained at any Post Office. Committees and sub-committees were set up in the counties and boroughs to the number of 433; Kerry had 22 sub-committees. There were initially 100,000 Irish claimants (Weekly Irish Times 19 Sept; 3, 10 Oct 1908).

It was an historic day when the first pensions were paid on 1st January 1909; 127,309 claims were accepted in Ireland out of 209,136. The Post Office machinery to pay out the pensions worked smoothly. All the pensioners apparently had to go in person, even those who had not been outside for years; however medical certificates could be obtained giving exemption. Later the newspaper commented on the number of people in the West of Ireland who remembered the Night of the Big Wind clearly, and whose non-appearance in the 1841 census was explained by the fact that they were living with an aunt in a different townland, whose name they did not recall at the time! The census returns had been preserved since 1841. The Inland Revenue Board was supposed to check on claims, but gave up after thousands of claims were submitted; nor could the clergy furnish proof, for they said they had no written records. Nobody knew on what grounds the Local Government Board decided on appeals; it had no staff for its own investigations. It was estimated that 108 persons were

receiving the pension in Ireland for every 100 entitled. Several inspectors from Somerset House in London were sent over to investigate. In many parts of England, Wales and Scotland fewer were applying than were entitled, in Ireland much the reverse (Weekly Irish Times 9, 30 Jan; 20 Feb 1909).

The Act had an unexpected effect. Whether or not Ireland had been overtaxed, after 1910 the nett flow of funds was into Ireland, not out of it. Northern Ireland was later to benefit enormously from this effect, which increased with every piece of social legislation.

The principle Act to enable the construction of urban housing was passed in 1890, but it was not until the Clancy Act of 1908 which removed restrictions on borrowing powers by local authorities that much progress was made in providing urban housing. But in fact little was done in the few years before the War (Cork Weekly News 3 Jan 1920). Affordable housing for the working classes was to be one of the great preoccupations of Local Authorities in the twentieth century with a growing realisation that it would have to be subsidised. Clearly there was need for cheap healthy housing for artisans etc, who could only afford a small weekly rent. Legislation on the subject began about 50 years earlier; the ideas were to provide suitable dwellings at not too great a cost to ratepayers. Philanthropists, like the Guinness family, Baron Rowton and George Peabody, who projected such dwellings usually ran into two difficulties which resulted in buildings with rents higher than could be afforded by the people they were intended to benefit; the first was the high price of land for building, and the other was the high rates of interest demanded. The Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Act (1908), Clancy Act, tended to remove these difficulties. It amended the Housing of the Working Classes (1890) Act, which was itself a far-reaching Act consolidating previous legislation. The earlier Act had three main divisions dealing respectively with unhealthy areas, unhealthy dwelling houses and the erection of healthy dwellings and lodging houses. The effects of this earlier Act could be seen in Dublin in the Montgomery Street area where 460 tenements were erected by the Corporation. Under the Labourers Acts country workers could get cheap suitable housing; but the problem in large cities was the lack of money. This was remedied by the Act steered through the House by Mr Clancy. If the local authorities acted on it they could provide many suitable dwellings at little annual cost to the rates. Prior to the Act the Local Authorities could only borrow at the higher rates, and the longer the period of repayment the higher the interest. Also many had reached the limits of their borrowing powers under the Public Health Act (1878) under which the total sum borrowed could not exceed twice the annual value of the rateable premises in the district. Now they would be allowed to borrow money for housing and spread the repayments over 80 years, and the lowest rate of interest would apply regardless of the period of repayment; money could probably be obtained at 3½% instead of 5%. To get round the difficulty of the costs of the sites which were only being sold, if at all, at extortionate prices, authorities would be allowed to acquire land outside their own districts. Dublin's slums were among the worst in the three Kingdoms, a large number of tenements in Dublin being unfit for human habitation. Nor under the provisions of the Clancy Act would investment in slum property be as profitable as before, for under the Act the owner was obliged to keep the properties in habitable condition; if he did not the municipal authority was empowered to demolish the premises (Weekly Irish Times 13 Feb 1909; 10 Dec 1910).

Pontifical decrees were issued in 1908 removing the Churches in Great Britain, Canada, Holland, and the United States from under Propaganda. It was understood that Ireland was included under Great Britain. The practical effect was that ecclesiastical questions from those places would no longer be dealt with by one congregation, but each would go to its proper tribunal. The Congregation of Propaganda was established in 1622 to deal with Eastern Churches and with those churches which were subject to heretical or pagan Governments. In practice it was the Congregation which dealt with foreign missions. For convenience, and because of the distances and expense, Propaganda was given all the powers that were given to the other Roman Congregations. After 1908 priests and bishops in the designated lands would have to deal with a different Office in Rome for each species of case. As the Government had long recognised, the communications with Rome had no political content, but concerned administrative matters like the granting of dispensations in matter like fasting or the degrees of marriage.

Birrell had introduced his Irish University Act (1908) before the resignation of Campbell-Bannerman but this did not affect its progress through the House. He said with regard to the Royal University finances that it was an examining board, but taught nothing. It had an income of £20,000 a year derived from the Irish Church Fund; Belfast College had 390 students and an income of £13,000 a year from the Exchequer; Cork had 261 students and drew £11,000, and Galway 111 students, and getting £10,000 odd, giving a total of 662

students costing £36,500 a year. University College, Stephen's Green, managed by the Jesuits, drew £7,000 a year from the Royal University through a system of fellowships; clearly a federal system was required. He considered the Byrce proposal to include all the colleges including Trinity College Dublin as too large and unwieldy. Also clearly Cork was too small to become a university in its own right. (A final decision on whether the Galway College should be suppressed or not was not taken for some years.) Therefore, besides Trinity College, he proposed two new universities, one in Belfast, and the other comprising the colleges in Dublin, Cork, and Galway.

Dublin University was, and is, one of the great universities of the world. The university had a single college, that of the Holy Trinity, but is more correctly referred to as Dublin University. It was regarded as being on a par with Oxford and Cambridge Universities, though it was sometimes called the 'Silent Sister' because its fellows did not publish their works. During the nineteenth century it produced many outstanding scholars in many disciplines whose research was regarded as equal to any other research in the world. It was the largest college in Ireland having about 1000 students against 2200 for all the others combined. Its doors were opened to Catholic students by the Catholic Relief Act (1793) and a royal letter of 1794 to take degrees but not to receive scholarships or fellowships, so all professors and officers had to be Protestants. In the febrile atmosphere in Ireland regarding education the Catholic bishops imposed an outright ban on Catholic students attending Trinity College. The English Catholics negotiated with Pope Leo XIII for the right to attend Oxford and Cambridge universities. The standards were higher, the degrees were accepted everywhere in the world, and young Catholic gentlemen could mix with their peers and make contacts which would be useful in later life. The Irish Catholic bishops who regarded the Queen's Colleges or 'Godless Colleges' as bad considered Trinity College, a Protestant college, far worse. The ban on Catholics attending Trinity College was not lifted by the bishops until 1970. Once again, the anti-Protestant prejudices of the Catholic bishops ensured that Catholics were not receiving as good an education as they might. Its size, its different traditions, and its Protestant character meant it was unsuitable for incorporation in a new University, and in any case the entire staff of the College was opposed to any such idea. The Presbyterians also had no intention of subjecting themselves to a Church of Ireland university (Dowling, *Irish Education*, 173).

The Royal University would be dissolved and its income divided between the two new universities in Dublin and Belfast. There was to be no religious interest in any of them, and each was to be governed by its own senate. Universities would have powers of affiliation, strictly limited, but he thought that Maynooth and Magee College would qualify. Though in theory the non-denominational principle was enshrined, it in effect made one Catholic University, the National University of Ireland, with three constituent colleges, and one single-college Protestant university in Belfast to be called The Queen's University of Belfast. (Strictly speaking, as Edward VII was on the throne, it should have been The King's College, but the earlier name of The Queen's College was retained. The initial 'The' always is used in official documents but not in popular usage.) The colleges forming the National University were now called University College, Dublin (UCD), University College, Cork (UCC), and University College, Galway (UCG). The President of University College, Dublin could no longer be a Jesuit, but a Catholic layman. By and large the college buildings were already in existence, but the National University was given a capital grant of £170,000 and an annual grant of £74,000. As Lyons remarked, it was a prelude to the partition of Ireland (*Weekly Irish Times* 4 April 1908; Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine*, 98). Ireland, in fact, got three denominational universities, Trinity College for the Church of Ireland, Queen's University for the Presbyterians, and the National University for the Catholics. It was a bad solution but the Government had finally to concede defeat with regard to sectarianism in education. Cardinal Logue made it clear that the National University was to be regarded as a Catholic University despite what the government intended, and the ban on attending Trinity College Dublin remained. He considered that an excellent university for Protestants, and they should stick to their own. He deplored the mixed classes in the colleges of the National University, and considered that there should be a separate female college (*Weekly Irish Times* 29 June 1912).

Archbishop Walsh was elected Chancellor of the National University, and Lord Shaftesbury Lord Chancellor of The Queen's University. These were ceremonial posts. Fittingly, Margaret Byers was made a senator of The Queen's University. There was a long and intense debate whether Irish should be a compulsory subject for matriculation at the colleges of the National University. As County Councils were by this time empowered to grant university scholarships they would in practice be restricted to Catholics. The Irish language was made compulsory in 1913 (Bew *Ideology and the Irish Question* 86-89; Dowling, *op. cit.* 174).

Anthony MacDonnell got no support from Birrell to bring any measures against agrarian crime, though Birrell admitted that the number of incidents recorded was the highest since 1890. The figures reached a peak in 1908 and thereafter declined (Bew, *Ideology and the Irish Question*, 81) In July 1908 MacDonnell resigned and was raised to the peerage as Baron MacDonnell of Swinford.

The Countess of Aberdeen devoted herself to assisting the Irish poor. She is chiefly remembered for her campaign against tuberculosis, then the principal killer in Ireland. Medical statistics showed that consumption was the greatest killer in Ireland accounting for one in six deaths in Ireland, more than all the other infectious diseases put together. The Annual Report of the Registrar General showed higher mortality from tuberculosis in Ireland than in England, Scotland, and Wales. It was a curable disease which had been steadily increasing over the past 40 years at a period when it was steadily declining in England and Scotland. 12,694 died in 1905 almost half and half between males and females. The mortality was quite high among under-fives; fell between 5 and 10 and then rose to a maximum about the age of 35, after which the incidence fell off. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of all deaths were under 45. By far the highest incidence was in Dublin, followed by Belfast and Cork, Kildare, and Limerick, and Londonderry; these indicated that it was an urban disease, Cavan, Clare, and Donegal having low values. Ireland was very poorly provided with sanatoria. The chief sanatorium, and the only one within reach of the poor of Dublin, was the Royal National Hospital for consumption near Newcastle, Co. Wicklow, founded 13 years before with 24 beds, now increased to 100 at a charge of 7/- weekly. During 1905 470 patients were treated with considerable success. The estimated cost of running the hospital was just over £6,000 including the interest paid on the capital; so we can take the cost of 100 bed hospitals at around £7,000 each. If counties grouped themselves into fours or fives they could easily afford them without a great increase in the rates (Weekly Irish Times 6 June 1906).

In 1907 the Countess of Aberdeen organised the beginning of the Women's National Health Association devoted to the welfare of women and children. A local branch was formed by her in Dundalk under Lady Bellingham in 1908. One of the first steps was to secure the appointment of a second district nurse trained in the care of tuberculosis. They also distributed literature on health and cleanliness, and gave prizes for a clean house competition. In addition they directed their attention towards securing a clean milk supply and urged on the Urban District Council the need to have all the dairies and milk shops registered and inspected. Contaminated milk was notorious for spreading the disease. In co-operation with the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction they held simple lessons in cookery. The chief aim of the Association was the care of consumptive patients. Before the passing of the Insurance Act many patients were sent to the preventorium and sanatorium where they were maintained at the expense of the branch, and their families were provided with food and clothing. By 1915 there was an aftercare committee which in conjunction with the Co. Louth Insurance Committee looked after the patients on their return from the sanatorium (Weekly Irish Times 21 Aug 1915)

Most of the effort against the disease at this stage seems to have been directed against the sale of contaminated milk or meat. It was alleged for example that in Newry, if a butcher found that a cow was infected with tuberculosis only after he had bought it, he just cut off the tubercular parts, and displayed the rest to the inspectors.

Lady Aberdeen also worked with the Irish Industries Association, and she established an Irish Lace Depot which marketed lace and crochet work by women in the Congested Districts. Mr W. Walker of the Congested Districts Board developed a very successful crochet industry which used the Depot. Lady Mayo had established a School of Art Needlework. During the War, when the Irish, like the Canadians, wished to fight in all-Irish units, Lady Mayo's School embroidered a flag for an Irish Brigade, it was returned by Lord Kitchener, in what was probably the most stupid decision he made in his life. The gesture was a valuable gift to Sinn Fein which was opposing recruitment. Nor did it prevent the countess's house being burned by the IRA.

Another, perhaps even greater scourge, was intemperance and drunkenness. How many of the slum dwellers in Dublin were there because of the excessive amount of money men spent on alcohol. The Temperance Movement was most strongly established in the Protestant Community. Among the Catholics there had been a great temperance movement in the 1840s led by Fr Theobald Mathew, but it faded after mid-century. In 1898 a Jesuit priest, Fr James Cullen SJ established the Pioneer Total Abstinence Society, whose members pledged themselves to total abstinence for life from alcoholic drinks. By the middle of the twentieth century membership of the Pioneers had reached half a million. The bishops too tried with mixed success to enforce a 'confirmation pledge' which every Irish child being confirmed had to pledge that they would not take alcoholic drink until they were twenty one. The large number of total abstainers distorted national figures for the consumption of alcohol giving misleadingly low figures for consumption by actual drinkers.

But temperance was more strongly entrenched in the Protestant Churches. Many Protestant Churches in the British Isles became teetotal, i.e. total abstainers. Nonconformists especially lobbied for the reduction of the hours of drinking. The Temperance Movement in the United Kingdom never became as politically powerful as in the United States where they succeeded in getting Prohibition established by law. Nevertheless, Liberal Governments were vulnerable to political pressure to bring in laws against drinking.

Margaret Byers of Victoria College, Belfast, who did so much for the education of girls, was also a great promoter of temperance. She was Secretary of the Belfast Women's Temperance Association from its establishment in 1874 until 1895, and was made President of the Irish Women's Temperance Union in 1894. By 1900 the Irish Women's Temperance Union had 87 branches in Ireland. It projected a home for inebriate women, for there were none such in Ireland though there were several in England, where they could get some assistance from the County Councils. Mrs Byers visited one to see how it was run (Irish Presbyterian April 1900; Who was Who 1897-1916). The Movement also spurred the development of the non-alcohol drinks industry and of the great firm of Cantrell and Cochrane, soft drinks manufacturers, prospered. It also stimulated the provision of tea-rooms and coffee-rooms especially in towns which had local fairs. Henry Cochrane in 1867 replied to an advertisement of Thomas Cantrell (fl. 1820-84) a Belfast apothecary who had manufactured aerated waters since 1852. They formed a partnership, Cantrell and Cochrane, and sunk an artesian well in Belfast to tap the pure water underneath. In 1869 a branch was opened in Dublin and Cochrane eventually resided there and became the sole partner. The Temperance Movement favoured the firm and by 1890 the firm had 500 employees; it was bottling 160,000 bottles of table waters a day; they acquired world-wide reputation (Jeremy, Business Biography, 'Cochrane').

Another organisation which was started about this time was the Countess of Fingall's Society of United Irishwomen which was founded by a Devon woman married in Wexford, Anita Lett, who was inspired by Horace Plunkett and George Russell. The name was rather unfortunate for it had not the remotest connection with the revolutionary society of United Irishmen, and it was later changed to the Irish Countrywomen's Association (Encyclopaedia of Ireland, 'Lett'; Weekly Irish Times 7 Dec 1912). Lett resigned after a few years and her place as President was taken by the Countess of Fingall, and it is with the latter the Society is usually associated. In 1921 the Irish Homestead reported: the Society was now 10 years old and was doing excellent work under the presidency of Lady Fingall despite the troubled times. Their objective was to better the social and industrial conditions of women in rural Ireland, the feeding of children and the care of the sick. Their milk-distribution scheme continues to prosper, its five milk depots selling 18,144 gallons of milk. Eight branches carry on a cocoa scheme by which children in the country districts are fed during school hours. Their village nurse scheme is also being developed, not only as a means of tending the sick but of teaching hygiene. They have also been successful in promoting the keeping of goats, not only as a supply of nutritious milk but because the milk was free from TB; they also promote cheese-making, fruit preserving, basket-making, rabbit-keeping, and a library scheme (Irish Homestead 9 April 1921). Despite the value of goat's milk in preventing the spread of TB, the Countess had great problems with the Swiss goats that Horace Plunkett had imported to give a better milk-supply. She said they were livelier and better goats than the native Irish one, but even more destructive. They ate everything before them – hedges, gardens, bark of trees, clothes on clothes-lines and even on occasion climbed onto roofs to eat the thatch. With regard to the United Irishwomen she said they were really united. George Russell said that the Co-operative Society would promote better farming and better business, while the women should promote better living. With the help of Horace Plunkett and money from the Carnegie Trust, they established fifty branches in Ireland. As a secondary aim they tried to promote better social life in rural areas, especially for the young who were fleeing the dullness of life to get to America. They promoted dancing and choral societies, and hurling clubs for boys and camogie clubs for girls, the latter being a milder and more feminine version of dangerous hurling. (Both games are a variation of hockey.) People came from England to see what they were doing, and went home to establish, with Government support, Women's Institutes in every parish in England. The Women's Institute was to become the backbone of social life for women in rural England, and remains so until this day (Fingall, Seventy Years Young, 254, 346).

Boy scouts were introduced into Ireland in 1908 after the model developed by Robert Baden Powell in England after the Boer War. It was an organization of boys from 11 to 14 or 15 years of age that aimed to develop in them good citizenship, chivalrous behaviour, and skill in various outdoor activities. The Boy Scout movement was founded in Great Britain in 1908. Inevitably in Ireland a rival Catholic Boy Scout movement had to be developed in case Catholic and Protestant boys might play together. Another rival Boy Scout movement with a different ethos was founded by the IRB and the Countess Markievicz, the Fianna Eireann, in which boys were to be trained for the revolutionary struggle. They were taught military drill and the use of firearms. It was a forerunner of the Hitler-Jugend (Hitler Youth). Companies of Girl Guides were also established, and by 1917 there were 16 companies of these in Dublin.

There was a long-lived Women's Suffrage Movement in Ireland though it never descended to the militant gestures of Mrs Pankhurst's followers in England. Some demonstrations and crimes were carried out by Englishwomen who came over to Ireland. Mrs. A. M. Haslam was Ireland's leading suffragette. In 1866 she signed the first women's suffrage petition and took a particular interest in the election of women to various local boards and municipalities (Weekly Irish Times 10 Feb 1912). Their first success was in achieving suffrage for women householders in Belfast in 1887.

There was a wide range of women's suffrage organisations, which inevitably included a Church League for Women's Suffrage (Protestant), and a rival Irish Catholic Women's Suffrage Association. Inevitably too, militant members of Sinn Fein started their own association to emulate the more strident English campaigners. Probably because of the prominence of Maud Gonne and the Countess Markievicz in the movement, Sinn Fein and the IRB made more use of women, and the countess was the first woman to be elected to the Parliament of the United Kingdom. As she was elected on an abstention ticket, the honour is usually given to Lady Astor.

By 1910 Lady Arnott, Lady Betty Balfour, and Lady Fingall were leading the campaign in Ireland for women's suffrage. However they got no support from the Irish Nationalist MPs. It is a curious comment on the times, that Winston Churchill opposed a women's enfranchisement Bill of the grounds that a wealthy man could get several votes for himself by making his wife and daughters eligible. He did not however oppose the principle (Weekly Irish Times 2 July 1910). It was to be a long time before a woman would dare differ from her husband on politics.

These various schemes show us how involved the upper classes were in trying to improve the lot of the poor in the days before pensions, sickness and unemployment benefits, cheap public housing and so on. Yet the Catholic middle and working classes found it necessary to depict them as an alien 'Ascendancy' imposing 'landlordism' on the down-trodden Irish.

For the next five years Ireland, like the rest of the United Kingdom, was to be racked by labour disputes, most of them stirred up by two outsiders, James Larkin and James Connolly. These have long been ensconced in the pantheon of Irish nationalist heroes, but their crude bully-boy tactics were far from the norm in Ireland. The Irish National Teachers' Organisation INTO was a classic example of the kind of improvements workers could get without strikes or violence in spite of the combined opposition of Church and State.

In the realm of economics and employment there are certain basic rules known as the laws of supply and demand. The Law of Supply states that an increase in supply brings about a fall of price and vice versa. The Law of Demand states that a fall in price brings about an increase in demand and vice versa. By way of illustration we can give the story of the fishermen supplying the Dublin fishmarket in the eighteenth century. It was said that they discovered that they got exactly the same amount of money if they fished on three nights as they did if they fished on six nights. Fishing on six nights supplied twice the amount of fish, the price fell to half, but twice as many people bought fish and the fishermen were no better off. So they determined to fish on only three nights. To prevent others entering the market they had to form a conspiracy to smash the boats of intruders. Larkin could get the wages of carters to the docks doubled, but only by intimidating and driving off all those prepared to work for less than his negotiated wage. What was good for the carters was bad for other workers. The excess supply of these excluded workers naturally drove down the wages of those in other industries. (Whether trade unions can raise the general level of wages in a whole economy is disputed, but the evidence is against it Lipsey, *Positive Economics* 466-8.) It should be observed that in the cut-throat world of ship building Belfast had one great advantage and that was that unskilled labour was cheaper in Belfast than in Glasgow or Tyneside. If that advantage were to be eroded, and it was Larkin's purpose to erode it, Belfast ships might be no longer competitively priced. This danger was not imaginary, for Workman and Clark survived for scarcely more than another twenty years and went out of business during the Slump.

James Larkin now turned his attention to Dublin. In 1913 a public enquiry under Sir George Askwith was established to enquire into the great strike in that year. (DNB, George Askwith 1861-1942, later Baron Askwith) He was a London barrister who specialized in labour disputes, and worked for the Board of Trade, making his national reputation in the labour disputes before the outbreak of the First World War. Askwith traced the origin of the later dispute to 1908 when the docks and quay workers, the carters and similar classes of workmen were being organised by Mr Larkin, an official of the National Union of Dock Labourers whose headquarters were in Liverpool. Notice was given in that year that after 20th July the union men would not work with non-union men, i.e. in order to reduce the supply of labour. A stoppage of work ensued and as a result of negotiations conducted by Lord [Anthony] MacDonnell an agreement was signed by the representatives of the employers, and by the president and general secretary of the National Union of Dock Labourers, and by the officials of the General Federation of Trade Unions on behalf of the men. By this it was agreed that disputes should be referred to a Conciliation Board consisting of a representative of the employers and the employed, and an umpire. No effective steps were taken to carry out this part of the agreement, and no Conciliation Board was formed. In November 1908 a strike of carters occurred, and as result of the mediation of the Lord Lieutenant and Sir James Dougherty the new Under Secretary who had succeeded Anthony MacDonnell, it was agreed that work should be resumed and the matter in dispute referred to arbitration.

The arbitrators were Sir A. M. Porter, and P. J. O'Neill who recommended that there should be no stoppage of work on either side without a fortnight's notice except in cases of breaches of agreement or misconduct, and also that a permanent Conciliation Court should be set up; this latter part was not acted on. Later the Dublin members of National Union of Dock Labourers broke away under Larkin and formed the ITGWU Irish Transport and General Workers' Union with Larkin as General Secretary (Weekly Irish Times 11 Oct 1913). Larkin was to acquire a good reputation in Irish nationalist and labour circles, but he was not equally esteemed at the time by those in the labour movement either in England or Ireland, who regarded him as a dictator and opportunist. He was unscrupulous and aggressive (Boyd, Irish Trade Unions, 79). Larkin's attitude towards violence was the same as that of the United Irish League; he did not publicly countenance it, but did nothing to prevent it. Larkin also called out men on strike knowing that his union had no funds to support them or their families. Because he was wont to act without the authorisation of the National Union of Dock Labourers he was expelled from it and so had to form his own union.

Neither the employers nor the workers seem to have been particularly anxious to see a Conciliation Court established. The Report of the arbitrators in the labour dispute stated that there was no minimum wage fixed; there was wide variation in conditions and pay; there was no great desire on the part of employers and carters for change. It set out conditions for overtime; did not allow early closing at 3pm on a Saturday, which though desirable, would interfere with the unloading of ships; a fixed one hour mid-day break would also be unworkable. It set out rates of pay for various jobs. There were by now 385 persons receiving police protection (Weekly Irish Times 20 Feb 1908). The Lord Lieutenant, Aberdeen, ordered that several of the strikers imprisoned for breaches of the peace and intimidation should be released from prison. Sexton, the Secretary of the National Union of Dockworkers to which Larkin belonged, and the English Trade Union leaders distanced themselves from Larkin's uninhibited violence and intimidation (DNB, Sexton, Sir James)

The theory of revolutionary Syndicalism was now spreading in Europe. It believed that all workers should be joined into one union. It was not stated that they were to be forced into one union, but this was understood. It was also understood, that the members would overthrow capitalism by seizing the various businesses which would then come under worker's control. The Anarcho-Syndicalists argued that the traditional function of trade unions--to struggle for better wages and working conditions--was not enough. The unions should become militant organizations dedicated to the destruction of capitalism and the state. They should aim to take over factories and utilities, which would then be operated by the workers. In this way the union or syndicate would have a double function--as an organ of struggle under the present dispensation and as an organ of administration after the revolution. To sustain militancy, an atmosphere of incessant conflict should be induced, and the culmination of this strategy should be the general strike. In France, syndicalism is known as syndicalisme révolutionnaire (the word syndicalisme means only "trade unionism") (Encyclopaedia Britannica 'Syndicalism'; 'Anarchism'). The chief exponent in Ireland of revolutionary syndicalism was James Connolly; Larkin seems to have taken from the doctrine only the bits that were useful to himself.

[1909] The year 1909 brought the first of Lloyd George's famous budgets which brought to a head the conflict between the Lords and the Commons, which had been successfully avoided for eighty years. Because of the increased cost of building Dreadnoughts, and the cost of Old Age Pensions and other items Lloyd George had to raise taxes. He increased death duties on large estates, a supertax on incomes over £3,000 p.a., and a tax on unearned increase in value of land, to be paid when land was sold. This last, which would have involved valuing all the land in the kingdom, aroused fierce opposition from the landowners, mostly Conservatives. The Irish Nationalists abstained. The Finance Bill was rejected by the Lords, which meant throwing down the gauntlet to the Commons. Lloyd George was delighted at the rejection, for it was unprecedented for the Lords to reject a Money Bill which was supposed to be the exclusive province of the Commons. The Parliament had to be dissolved and a General Election called for January 1910.

Before the rejection of the budget other pieces of legislation were passed. By the Health Resorts and Watering Places (Ireland) Act (1909), local authorities with all party backing were enabled to strike a rate for advertising. Many Irish resorts had in recent years spent much on improvements, and they should be allowed to advertise them. By an accident in drafting, Blackpool was allowed to advertise on the rates since 1879; the resorts on the Welsh north coast wanted similar facilities.

In 1909 Labour Exchanges were established by Winston Churchill at the Board of Trade and were run by the Government. Private employment agencies had long been established for particular occupations such as domestic servants. In the new exchanges, employers who had vacancies in any occupation would notify the local

exchange, and those who were in a particular line of business would be informed if there were places suitable for them. By March 1910 about 100 local exchanges were open in Ireland. There were great benefits of the labour exchanges, especially in Dublin. Miss Brown, the Lady Supervisor for Ireland of labour exchanges noted their increasing use by employers and employees; some still thought that they were only for casual labour, but in fact the most skilled workers were making use of them (Weekly Irish Times 10 Dec 1910). Before that those seeking work had to tramp around to every shop or factory which might be taking on workers. Churchill also wanted to introduce a compulsory insurance scheme against unemployment, but the idea was taken up by Lloyd George (DNB, Churchill, W.; Sir Hubert Smith).

A Cinematograph Act (1909) was passed giving authority to regulate cinematograph exhibitions. Regulations were issued in 1910 and 1914. Local authorities were made responsible for the contents of films. In 1917 Thomas Power (T.P.) O'Connor was made first President of the British Board of Film Censors, which had been established in 1912. T.P. represented as an Irish Nationalist the Scotland division of Liverpool from 1885, and was made a Privy Councillor in the first Labour Government in 1924.

The Land Act (1909) made compulsory purchase possible in a limited number of cases. This was not always welcome, for it was inclined to raise the price to the purchaser. Sir Horace Plunkett agreed to restricted compulsory purchase of grasslands in Congested Districts. The main argument against compulsory purchase was that there was no logical point at which it would stop. For example, there was no reason why tiny holdings of elderly persons should not be purchased. Also if it was intended that the divided holding should be tilled, tillage brought a lesser return than stock rearing so the total number of those employed would fall, not rise. (The greater the disposable income the more there is to spend on buying food, clothes, housing and many unnecessary articles, and giving employment to servants, shopkeepers, tradesmen, grooms, boatmen, etc. who were not primary producers.) The area under the Congested Districts Board was increased, and new powers were given to it, The Act changed the nature of the work of the Board, which came largely to deal with re-organising estates, gathering scattered plots together, and 'striping' the land. This meant that the small holdings should be re-arranged into strips so that each tenant had a fair share of good and bad land. (Gradually it came to resemble the Land Commission. In 1923 its functions were transferred to the Land Commission and it was suppressed. Plunkett remained a member of the Board until 1918.)

William O'Brien, who had totally changed his political views, launched his All for Ireland League which envisaged Catholics and Protestants co-operating. He got the support of Tim Healy who was backed by Cardinal Logue of Armagh. The idea was promptly denounced by the Nationalist Party as one would expect.

By 1909 Louis Bleriot had settled on a design of an aeroplane, and on July 25 he piloted the Blériot XI, a monoplane with a 28-horsepower engine, across the English Channel from Calais to Dover. This feat won him lasting fame and a prize of 1,000 offered by the London Daily Mail. [TOP]

[1910] The General Election held between 18th and 28th January 1910 saw concerted efforts by the United Irish League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians to unseat Tim Healy in North Louth. Healy, backed by the cardinal in whose diocese the constituency lay was returned as an Independent Nationalist. William O'Brien was returned for Cork City, and drew most of his support from that region. Healy had joined O'Brien's All-for-Ireland Party, so a Nationalist candidate called Hazleton was put up against him. There were vast registration schemes in North Louth to register new voters, there being no fewer than 3,397 new claims, 1,966 of these were of the lodger class, the rest being householders and rated occupiers. From Ravensdale there were 366 claims including 254 lodgers, and 501 from Carlingford including 382 lodgers. These two were regarded as Healy strongholds; of a total of 1900 claims by lodgers 1400 are on the Healy side. (Weekly Irish Times 20 August 1910. Tim remained a folk hero in north Louth where he had held the seat since 1892. (My grandfather and an uncle lived in Ravensdale at the time.) There were wild scenes of disorder as Mr Healy visited Dundalk; a young priest drove off interrupters of the meeting with his stick, but the supporters of Hazleton broke up the meeting. 200 extra police were drafted into Dundalk. (The so-called 'lodger franchise' was given in boroughs in 1867 to persons occupying lodgings at an annual rental of at least £10, which was extended to the counties in 1884 OED.)

The Liberals did not do as well as they had expected, many voters being put off by the proposed higher taxes. Election final results were Unionists 273; Liberals 275; Labour 40; Nationalists 72; Independent Nationalists (O'Brienites) 10. The Return of the number of persons who voted as illiterates showed that nearly 10% of the Irish electorate was illiterate at the election compared with 0.3% in Scotland and the same in England and Wales; in the Irish boroughs the percentage illiteracy was 2.3% and 13.9 % in the counties (Weekly Irish Times 3 Sept 1910).

The Liberals, though the largest party could only form a minority Government, not good for passing controversial legislation. The budget was re-introduced and passed by the Lords with only minor amendments. Nevertheless Asquith brought in his controversial Parliament Bill (1910). It proposed that the House of Lords should lose all power to amend or reject a money bill, that any Bill passed by the Commons in three successive sessions, even though rejected by the Lords should become law, and that the length of a Parliament should be reduced from seven to five years.

At this point the king, Edward VII, an experienced man, died on 6 May 1910. The shock to the nation was immense, for he was a comparatively young man, and well-liked. When the old queen had died, everyone had been expecting it for years. Edward VII had visited Ireland seven times. There was general sorrow in Dublin and the vast majority of Dublin shopkeepers draped their shops.

He was succeeded by his son George V. George was the second son of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. The king's eldest son, Prince Albert Victor Charles Edward (Prince Eddy) was second in line to the throne during Victoria's reign but he died of pneumonia thus making Prince George the next in line. At the age of twelve he had been sent to join the navy, and he became an expert yachtsman and an excellent shot. He also became an enthusiastic collector of stamps. In 1892, he was created Duke of York, Earl of Inverness, and Baron Killarney. In 1893 he married Princess May of Teck, who had been betrothed to his elder brother. She became Queen Mary after whom the famous liner was named. The Duke and Duchess visited Ireland on various occasions. Edward had regularly discussed matter of state with his son, not wishing to exclude him as his own mother had done.

The leaders in Parliament felt that the new king should not be involved, so a conference between four representatives of the Liberals and the Conservatives met to discuss the matter. The meetings lasted from June to November 1910, with both the Irish Nationalists and Ulster Unionists excluded from the discussions. Lloyd George was considering a federal structure which might have been acceptable to the Southern Irish Unionists. Balfour rejected this on the grounds that it would satisfy neither party in Ireland (Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, 268-9). The Nationalist Party put pressure on the Liberals by announcing that they would not be voting on any issues this session until the constitutional question was settled.

James Larkin now appeared in court charged with financial irregularities concerning contributions sent from Cork to the National Union of Dock Labourers. He was found guilty of deceiving the Cork Dockers into believing that they would become members of the NUDL, and sentenced to twelve months in prison with hard labour. Many believed that he was guilty of muddle rather than deception, and that the sentence was too harsh. He was released by Lord Aberdeen after serving three months (Weekly Irish Times 25 June; 6 Aug 1910; Boyd, Irish Trade Unions).

Edward Carson succeeded Walter Long as leader of the Irish Unionists in Parliament. In Claremorris, in Co. Mayo there was a clear attempt to intimidate the Catholic clergy and there was a concerted effort not to pay the Easter stipend, with a resulting loss to the clergy. The same crowd had burned the sodality clubroom with its statuary, its library and its billiard table; they also wrecked tables at the church door, and invaded the church grounds in a tumultuous manner. They also visited people at nights and threatened to burn their homes; daily burnings and destruction of farm implements took place (Weekly Irish Times 23 April 1910).

The Abbey Theatre was struggling after the attacks on it by Sinn Fein. Lennox Robinson was appointed manager. On the king's death, Lady Gregory's instruction to close 'though courtesy' arrived too late, and the Abbey was the only theatre in the United Kingdom that remained open. Though this was unintentional Robinson became a nationalist hero. The incident brought to a head differences between Annie Horniman who was subsidising the little theatre and its directors. She left for Manchester shortly afterwards. The theatre eventually received a state subsidy from the Irish Free State. In the meantime, Robinson, though not a first-class playwright, produced a steady flow of good plays typical of modern Irish drama. Sean O'Casey did not begin writing for the Abbey until 1923.

Winston Churchill became Home Secretary in 1910 and it was he who had to deal with the onslaught of the English suffragettes. His first concern was to improve the state of the prisons, as he had had personal experience of being held in a prison. He considered short terms of imprisonment useless. The Annual Report of the General Prisons Board for Ireland for 1909 laid on the table of the House of Commons referred to a statement by Winston Churchill on the inutility of very short sentences; last year prisoners under sentences less than seven days comprised 41% of the prison population. Nowadays the Report said the punitive side of prison

was being subordinated to the reformatory side, prison life is rather comfortable, and has no deterrent effect. For young people the borstal system was to be preferred. The policy of concentration of prisoners continued because of the decrease in the number of prisons, and the better facilities of communication. Prisoners in handcuffs were moved on the railways. In 1878 there were 4 convict prisons, 38 local prisons, and 95 bridewells ; in 1910 there was 1 convict prison, 1 joint convict and local prison, 15 local prisons, and 6 bridewells; to this list must be added the Borstal Institution at Clonmel (1909) and the state Inebriate Reformatory in Ennis (1899). The local prisons referred to seem to have been the county gaols, while the bridewells were for very short stays. Almost any town would have had one in the early part of the nineteenth century. The consolidation was the work of the General Prisons Board established in 1877 which gradually moved the responsibility for maintaining prisons from the counties to the central government.

The total number in Irish prisons in 1909 was 31,469 or a daily average of 2,305; the number of convicts sentenced in 1909 was 118, and the daily average number in convict prisons was 243; the numbers sentenced for drunkenness remained unchanged at 41%.

With regard to the confined suffragettes Churchill abolished the compulsory bathing and hair-cutting, and allowed them to get their food from outside, to take outside exercise, and to talk with their fellow prisoners. The period of solitary confinement would be reduced from 3 months to one, except in certain cases. The Central Association for the aid of Discharged Prisoners, formed at the instigation of Churchill in 1911, replaced the system of ticket-of-leave men under the supervision of the police, which was a hindrance to getting employment (Weekly Irish Times 30 July, 6 Aug 1910).

A dramatic change in women's dress commenced in 1910 with the introduction of the tight-fitting 'hobble skirts' which it was claimed caused many accidents. From this time onwards the skirts reaching the ground of Victorian times disappeared, and the hemline was to rise throughout the Twenties. The first Irish aviation meeting was held at Leopardstown Monday 29 Aug 1910. Several planes were exhibited and the weather was perfect on the day, though there were several heavy showers and it was slightly squally aloft. In January 1910 Mr Ferguson's aeroplane made the first flight in Ireland at Lord Downshire's park at Hillsborough, flying over 100 yards. The weather conditions were bad with wind of 28 mph. Steering was by wing-warping and some of the time he was actually being blown backwards. When in 1913 Mr Harry Ferguson was forbidden by his wife to fly aeroplanes he began developing tractors (DNB, Ferguson). In September 1910, the first flight was made across the Irish Sea, but the aviator had to wait several days for a favourable wind. It was noted too that many Irish jarvies were retraining as taxi-drivers.

By 1910 wireless telegraphy was established as a profession. The busiest station in the United Kingdom was a remote telegraphy station in Co. Cork 400 feet above the Atlantic. The remote stations had to have their own electricity generators run by steam. The purpose of the station was to keep track of ships which were due. The operator had to tune to various frequencies of the big Cunards or North German ships. In the meantime a continuous stream of messages was being sent from Clifden in Galway, and Poldhu in Cornwall. The messages from the latter were sent to ships and consisted of news for appearance in the ships' newspapers. When the German ships were about 400 miles from Fastnet they begin transmitting, sending about 60 messages, mostly bookings to various hotels in Europe, but also some messages back to America. They all had to be written down and taken by hand to the local Post Office (Weekly Irish Times 15 Oct 1910). Telephone lines had obviously reached these remote places.

October 1910 saw the launch of the world's largest ship in Belfast, the Olympic, whose keel had been laid on 15 Dec 1908, with a launching weight of 27,000 tons the largest ever launched. The Titanic was due to be completed in about six months. With gross registered tonnage 46,300 tons, and displacement fully laden 66,000, she would be twice as large as the Adriatic of the White Star line at 25,000 tons, the Lusitania of 31,550 and the Mauritania 31,938. (The two latter ships were of the Cunard Line, and the Mauritania held the record for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic from 1907 until 1929. The Cunard ships were built in the rival shipyard of John Brown in Glasgow.)

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The Ministry December 1910 to August 1914 (Liberal)

Prime Minister

Herbert Asquith

Home Secretary Herbert Gladstone; Feb 1910 Winston Churchill; Oct 1911 Reginald McKenna

Lord Lieutenant Earl of Aberdeen

Chief Secretary Augustine Birrell

Under Secretary Sir Anthony MacDonnell; July 1908 Sir James Dougherty

[December 1910] Though it could not be foreseen at the time, the electoral pact between the Irish Nationalist Party under John Redmond and the Liberals at the beginning of 1911 over the issue of the House of Lords marked the great turning point in modern Irish history. Almost everything in Irish history afterwards flowed from this agreement.

Following the breakdown of talks between the Liberals and Conservatives a second General Election was held in December 1910. The prolongation of the talks, and the calling of a second election, would seem to indicate that both sides were anxious to get a clear decision on the question of the House of Lords without either of them having to depend on the Irish Nationalists.

The elections in Ireland were stormy. There were riots and wild scenes in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. Mr Dillon was stoned, and there were stone-throwing and revolver shots in Cork. There was mob violence in Louth town between the followers of Healy and Hazleton, and a motor car was wrecked. A drunken mob besieged Healy in the school polling station, but he finally escaped across the fields. There was revolver firing in other constituencies as well; indeed it was very frequent. Hazleton defeated Healy by 488 votes, but Healy resolved to petition against the poll. He accused Hazleton of heavy registration of illiterates, and mass intimidation. The North Infirmary in Cork city treated 1490 casualty cases during the election month. The use of revolvers in Irish elections preceded the rise of the IRA. The North Louth election petition continued with alleged abuses of election funds paid for entirely by the United Irish League or Hazleton's supporters. The court agreed and deplored the resort to long-discredited tactics by the League. Hazleton was unseated and another election was called. A newspaper, reporting, said that Mr Hazleton was not personally responsible for the disgraceful scenes in North Louth, but noted however that the practices condemned are common in Ireland, especially the hiring of mobs and supplying them with free drink. This was common with the United Irish League. Stories of men being stoned and kicked at the polling booth bring shame on Ireland. It would have been better to let Healy sit, but those who direct the United Irish League are not scrupulous. They began by using batons to suppress debate in the National Convention (Enniscorthy Echo 4 March 1911). Cardinal Logue forbade his priests to take part in the new election. In the event Healy was returned unopposed. The Echo said that United Irish League wasted much of their subscriptions in trying to get rid of him, and his defeat in Louth was hailed as a nationalist victory. Tim could not be as bad as Mr Dillon painted him or he would not be supported by Cardinal Logue and Archbishop Walsh (Echo 22 July 1911).

Hazleton was bankrupted by the election. Although electoral reforms had banished certain abuses, such as 'treating' voters, i.e. buying them drink, a candidate was still expected to supply copious amounts of alcohol to his helpers who became very numerous at election time. The charges which led to his disqualification were concerned with registration of those without the legal qualification.

Mention was not made of the most notorious electoral malpractice in Ireland, namely personation of voters. Electoral registers were always out of date, and the officers responsible for the electoral register, the Clerks of the Crown and Peace, never had the staff to make checks. In theory, when a person died, or went to America, their name was supposed to be removed from the register. (The Clerk was the senior paid official in a county.) But the county and borough staff had to rely on information supplied by the public. One only informed the authorities if a known adherent of an opposing party was no longer eligible. [In an extraordinary case in the 1980s, I personally objected to the presence of 60 names in a single residence in South Belfast, on the grounds of non-residence. The names were those who had registered to vote while at Queen's University, and whose names were still on the register twenty years after they had graduated!] It was a point of honour that everyone on the register, dead or alive, should vote, and better still that deceased Unionists or Nationalists should vote for their opponents. To succeed in this, the vote had to be cast early, hence the famous slogan 'Vote early, Vote often'. A workman who failed to vote on his way to work could find his vote had been cast for him when he tried to vote on his way home. Each party provided 'personation agents' who carefully ticked off voters as they voted, but they could not be expected to recognise many people, except in small country areas.

Captain Donelan was unseated in Cork for the same reasons as Captain Hazleton in Louth. The editor said that William O'Brien should be allowed to sit "After all, this is Ireland, Catholic Ireland, and we should not be in a

hurry to introduce here the worst features of corruption, violence, and intimidation from abroad". "No decent nationalist will feel happy when he hears that his subscription has been used either to baton a Healyite or bribe an O'Brienite. We see now that the bishops who in their pastorals condemned these disgraceful practices did not speak a moment too soon".

William O'Brien gave his own account of the election. His opponents set no limit on expenditure, alcohol was freely supplied as a most effective weapon of intimidation, the Molly Maguires [a secret agrarian terrorist organisation also found in the United States; the term was used generically] were in their element. Special trains, free tickets, free luncheons, unlimited refreshments, and ample remuneration, all to exercise a form of terrorism against their opponents, who were to be intimidated into abstaining. Force and fraud were at any cost to prevail; and what was done in East Cork was done in every Irish constituency in which there was a contest. The United Irish League was thrown into a panic when they heard that there was to be judicial investigation, and they burned every scrap of evidence. Mr Devlin was subpoenaed to produce the League books to enable the funds in East Cork to be traced back to source. Not only did he refuse to produce them on the grounds that they had been burned, but he shocked and disgusted the public by swearing that he did not know the name of the bank in which the funds of the organisation of which he had been Secretary for seven years were kept, and on which the cheques for his own salary were drawn (Enniscorthy Echo 27 May 1911). The United Irish League was obviously well-financed; otherwise there was nothing novel about the tactics either in Ireland or America. Nor should one draw the conclusion that similar tactics were not used by Unionist candidates in marginal seats. The IRA was particularly strong in this area a decade later.

The election in December 1910 resulted in a dead heat between the Liberals and Conservatives, each getting 273 seats. Labour got 42, Redmond's Party 73, and O'Brien 10. Sinn Fein did not contest any seats, but Arthur Griffith said they would wait to see what kind of Home Rule the Nationalists were granted before deciding what to do. There was however a clear majority against the House of Lords, which meant that the king had to support the Liberals with a promise to create enough Liberal peers, if necessary to flood the House of Lords. As Redmond's Party was larger than the Labour Party, it was necessary to get his support, and his price was a Home Rule Bill forced through the reformed House of Lords.

This deal, agreed in secret, was the turning point in modern Irish history. It explains, as was pointed out some years later, why the terrorist campaign of the IRA, which was much less formidable than that of the Land League, succeeded where the latter had failed. The point was that the pass had been sold, and there was no point in offending terrorists who might soon form the Government.

Neither Redmond nor Lloyd George could see the future, any more than those who launched the Titanic. It was not so much the unexpectedly strong reaction of the Ulster Protestants, as the fact that the Army would refuse to coerce Ulster. Lloyd George, who had not a single scruple in his body, however regarded Ulster as a problem for Redmond not for himself. (Nor could they foresee that the years ahead would spawn one of the most ruthless terrorist groups in the world.) Despite IRA propaganda that the Irish Volunteers wrested Ireland from England's grasp, after 1911 Lloyd George made no attempt to hold Ireland. It was not his problem any longer. The only difficulty was in handing over power to a terrorist organisation, and when some of the terrorist leaders signed a 'Treaty' that problem was solved.