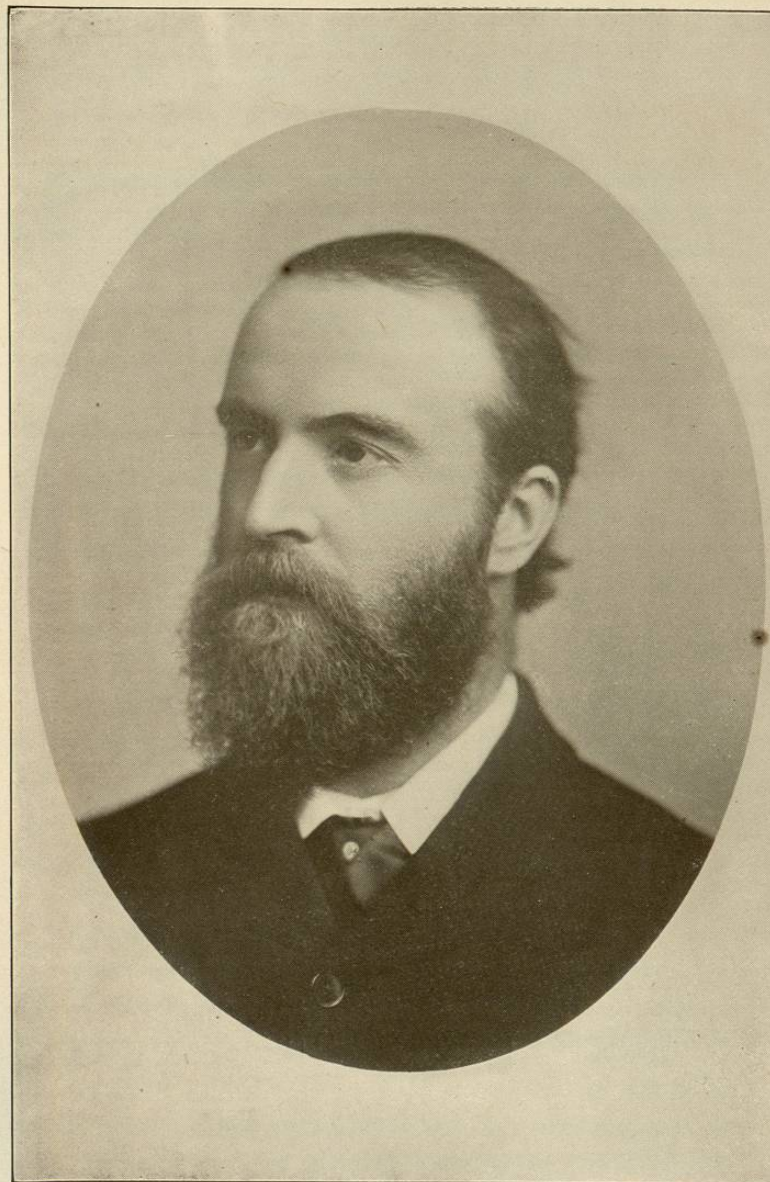


CHARLES S. PARNELL



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL, M. P., great Irish statesman and leader of the Parnellite party in British politics, was born at Avondale, County Wicklow, Ireland, June 28, 1846, and died at Brighton, Sussex, Oct. 6, 1891. His father was a country gentleman of good estate, belonging to an old and well-known Protestant family. Through his mother, C. S. Parnell was a grandson of Commodore Stewart of the United States Navy. He was educated at Magdalene College, Cambridge, and in 1875, entered Parliament as a supporter of the Home Rule movement, which was at that time directed by Mr. Isaac Butt. Mr. Parnell soon became convinced that Mr. Butt's method of furthering the agitation was futile, and that Englishmen would never listen to Irish claims until they should be compelled to do so by the stoppage of the whole machinery of legislation through parliamentary obstruction. He consequently offered this obstruction, and with such effect as presently to compel Englishmen as well as Irishmen to admit that he had discovered an almost irresistible instrument of constitutional propaganda. In 1879, he was chosen President of the Irish Land League, and under the Coercion Act of 1881-82 he was temporarily imprisoned. Thereafter he so thoroughly had his countrymen with him that at the general election of December, 1885, he succeeded in returning to the House of Commons a compact band of 86 Home Rulers, and thus acquired the balance of power in that body, where the Liberals and the Conservatives were nearly equal in respect of numbers. The outcome of this *impasse* was an alliance between Mr. Parnell and Mr. Gladstone and the latter's introduction of the first Home Rule Bill, which, however, was defeated by the secession of the Unionist-Liberals. Some years later, Mr. Parnell was deposed from the leadership of the Irish Nationalist Party by a majority of his followers, owing to his implication in the O'Shea divorce case as co-respondent. He was shattered in body as well as in spirit by the blow, and died in his forty-sixth year. Had Parnell lived and remained the head of an undivided Nationalist party, the second Home Rule Bill, notwithstanding the opposition which it encountered in the House of Lords, would probably have become law. He is known in English and Irish affairs as the originator of the system of "boycotting." After its great leader's death, Parnellism continued to be a force in British politics, but it was a waning force, and suffered by division in its ranks—the majority of the anti-Parnellists or Irish Nationalists choosing Justin McCarthy as their leader, while the minority were led by John Redmond. Before this, Parnell's career had been bound up with the history of the Home Rule movement, a movement which, despite the fact that Mr. Parnell was a Protestant, the Irish priesthood had encouraged and sustained until the church opposed him at the polls as a violator of the marriage sacrament arising out of the O'Shea divorce case. From the London "Times" accusations that he and the Nationalists were responsible for the outbreak of organized outrage, such as the Phoenix Park murders and other assassinations, Mr. Parnell personally was able to free himself and to bring and recover heavy damages from that journal. This the Parliamentary committee, charged with investigating the case, emphatically proved, though Mr. Parnell's party were declared to have been guilty of incitements to intimidation, out of which had grown crimes which they had failed to denounce. See the "Parnell Movement," by T. P. O'Connor.

(30)



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

AGAINST NON-RESIDENT LANDLORDS

FROM THE SPEECH DELIVERED IN ST. LOUIS, MARCH 4, 1880

MR. PRESIDENT AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I thank you for this magnificent meeting—a splendid token of your sympathy and appreciation for the cause of suffering Ireland. It is a remarkable fact that while America, throughout the length and breadth of her country, does her very utmost to show her sympathy and send her practical help to our people; while there is scarcely any hand ^{save} America's between the starvation of large masses of the western peasantry, England alone of almost all the civilized nations does scarcely anything, although close beside Ireland, to help the terrible suffering and famine which now oppress that country. I speak a fact when I say that if it had not been for the help which has gone from America during the last two months among these, our people would have perished ere now of starvation.

We are asked: "Why do you not recommend emigration to America?" and we are told that the lands of Ireland are too crowded. The lands of Ireland are not too crowded; they are less thickly populated than those of any civilized country in the world; they are far less thickly populated—the rich lands of Ireland—than any of your Western States. It is only on the barren hillsides of Connemara and along the west Atlantic coast that we have too thick a population, and it is only on the unfertile lands that our people are allowed to live. They are not allowed to occupy and till the rich lands; these rich lands are

retained as preserves for landlords, and as vast grazing tracts for cattle. And although emigration might be a temporary alleviation of the trouble in Ireland, it would be a cowardly step on our part; it would be running away from our difficulties in Ireland, and it would be an acknowledgement of the complete conquest of Ireland by England, an acknowledgment which, please God! Ireland shall never make.

No! we will stand by our country, and whether we are exterminated by famine to-day, or decimated by English bayonets to-morrow, the people of Ireland are determined to uphold the God-given right of Ireland—to take her place among the nations of the world. Our tenantry are engaged in a struggle of life and death with the Irish landlords. It is no use to attempt to conceal the issues which have been made there. The landlords say that there is not room for both tenants and landlords, and that the people must go and the people have said that landlords must go. But it may—it may, and it undoubtedly will happen in this struggle that some of our gallant tenantry will be driven from their homes and evicted. In that case we will use some of the money with which you are intrusting us in this country for the purpose of finding happier homes in this far western land for those of our expatriated people, and it will place us in a position of great power, and give our people renewed confidence in their struggle, if they are assured that any of them who are evicted in their attempts to stand by their rights will get one hundred and fifty good acres of land in Minnesota, Illinois, or some of your fine Western States.

Now the cable announces to us to-day that the government is about to attempt to renew the famous Irish Coercion acts which expired this year. Let me explain to you

what these Coercion acts are. Under them the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is entitled at any time to proclaim in any Irish county, forbidding any inhabitant of that county to go outside of his door after dark, and subjecting him to a long term of imprisonment with hard labor if he is found outside his door after dark. No man is permitted to carry a gun, or to handle arms in his house; and the farmers of Ireland are not even permitted to shoot at the birds when they eat the seed corn on their freshly sowed land. Under these acts it is also possible for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to have any man arrested and consigned to prison without charge, and without bringing him to trial; to keep him in prison as long as he pleases; and circumstances have been known where the government has arrested prisoners under these Coercion acts, and has kept them in solitary confinement for two years and not allowed them to see a single relative or to communicate with a friend during all that period, and has finally forgotten the existence of the helpless prisoners. And this is the infamous code which England is now seeking to re-enact. I tell you, when I read this despatch, strongly impressed as I am with the magnitude and vast importance of the work in which we are engaged in this country, that I felt strongly tempted to hurry back to Westminster in order to show this English Government whether it shall dare, in this year 1880, to renew this odious code with as much facility as it has done in former years. We shall then be able to put to a test the newly-forged gagging rules that they have invented for the purpose of depriving the Irish members of freedom of speech. And I wish to express my belief, my firm conviction, that if the Irish members do their duty that it will be impossible that this infamous statute can be re-enacted; and if it again

finds its place upon the statute book, I say that the day upon which the royal assent is given to that Coercion Act will sound the knell of the political future of the Irish people. . . .

And now, I thank you in conclusion for the magnificent service that you are doing for the cause of Ireland. Keep up this work; help to destroy the Irish land system which hangs like a millstone around the necks of our people, and when we have killed the Irish land system we shall have done much to kill English misgovernment in Ireland.

We cannot give up the right of Ireland to be a nation, and although we may devote all our energies to remove the deadly upas tree of Irish landlordism, yet still you will trust us and believe that above and before all we recognize and are determined to work for the right of Ireland to regain her lost nationhood. We believe that Ireland is eminently fitted to take her place among the nations of the world. A people who can boast of such a history as ours; who can boast of martyrs like Robert Emmet, whose memory we celebrate to-day; who have had such leaders as Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Wolfe Tone; whose literature has been enriched by a Davis—I say that such a people has shown that although we may be kept down for a time, we cannot long continue deprived of our rights. And I, for one, feel just as convinced that Ireland will be a nation some day or other, as I feel convinced that in a year or two the last vestiges of landlordism will have disappeared from the face of our country.

ON THE COERCION BILL

[In the former part of this speech, delivered in the House of Commons, April 18, 1887, Mr. Parnell denounced as a forgery the letter purporting to have been written by him, as giving countenance to the Phoenix Park murders, and published in facsimile in "The Times" of this date.]

SIR,—The right honorable gentleman [Mr. A. J. Balfour] refrained from answering the speech which I delivered on the first reading of this Bill, and the Government refused to allow the adjournment of the debate, in order that some other member of the Government should have an opportunity of answering it the next day; and now, upon the second reading of this Bill, he goes back to the speech, and he attempts an answer to it, at a time of the night when he knows perfectly well that no reply can be made to him; and, with characteristic unfairness—an unfairness which I suppose we may expect to be continued in the future—he has refused to me the ten or twelve minutes that I should have craved to refer to a villainous and barefaced forgery which appeared in the "Times" of this morning, obviously for the purpose of influencing the Division, and for no other purpose.

I got up when the right honorable gentleman the member for Midlothian [Mr. Gladstone] sat down. I had not intended to have made a speech at all upon the second stage of this Bill. I should not have said more than a very few words in reference to this forgery; but I think I was entitled to have had from the right honorable gentleman an opportunity of exposing this deliberate attempt to blacken my character at some time when there would have been some chance of what I stated reaching the outside world.

I say there is no such chance now. I cannot suppose the right honorable gentleman, in refusing me the ten minutes which I crave, had not in his eye the design of practically preventing my denial of this unblushing calumny having that effect upon public opinion which it would otherwise have had if it had been spoken at a reasonable hour of the night.

It appears that, in addition to the passage of this Coercion Act, the dice are to be loaded—that your great organs of public opinion in this country are to be permitted to pay miserable creatures for the purpose of producing these calumnies. Who will be safe in such circumstances and under such conditions? I do not envy the right honorable gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, this first commencement of suppression of defence—this first commencement of calumny and of forgery which has been made by his supporters.

We have heard of the misdeeds of Mr. Ford, the editor of the "Irish World," but Mr. Ford never did anything half so bad as this.

[Mr. A. J. Balfour.—I do not wish to interrupt the honorable member; but as he makes these accusations, I should like to explain that I intervened between the honorable gentleman and the House simply because I understood that it had been arranged that I should follow the right honorable member for Midlothian, and that the honorable member would follow me. No hint reached me that he was going to confine himself to an explanation of, or deal at all with, the accusation in the "Times" to which he has referred. No hint of that kind reached me, and I conceive that the honorable member might have risen, had he wished, at any time earlier in the evening.]

I was asked officially, at an early hour in the evening, whether I would speak after the right honorable member for Midlothian, and I replied that I would, and that I only

intended to say a few words in reference to this calumny. I think I ought to have been given the opportunity which I desired.

Now, sir, when I first heard of this precious concoction—I heard of it before I saw it, because I do not take in or even read the "Times" usually—when I heard that a letter of this description, bearing my signature, had been published in the "Times," I supposed that some autograph of mine had fallen into the hands of some person for whom it had not been intended, and that it had been made use of in this way.

I supposed that some blank sheet containing my signature, such as many members who are asked for their signature frequently send—I supposed that such a blank sheet had fallen into hands for which it had not been intended, and that it had been misused in this fashion, or that something of that kind had happened.

But when I saw what purported to be my signature, I saw plainly that it was an audacious and unblushing fabrication. Why, sir, many members of this House have seen my signature, and if they will compare it with what purports to be my signature in the "Times" of this morning, they will see that there are only two letters in the whole name which bear any resemblance to letters in my own signature as I write it.

I cannot understand how the conductors of a responsible, and what used to be a respectable, journal, could have been so hoodwinked, so hoaxed, so bamboozled, and that is the most charitable interpretation which I can place on it, as to publish such a production as that as my signature.

My writing—its whole character—is entirely different. I unfortunately write a very cramped hand; my letters huddle into each other, and I write with very great difficulty and slowness. It is, in fact, a labor and a toil to me to write

anything at all. But the signature in question is written by a ready penman, who has evidently covered as many leagues of letter-paper in his life as I have yards.

Of course, this is not the time, as I have said, to enter into full details and minutiae as to comparisons of handwriting; but if the House could see my signature, and the forged, the fabricated signature, they would see that, except as regards two letters, the whole signature bears no resemblance to mine.

The same remark applies to the letter. The letter does not purport to be in my handwriting. We are not informed who has written it. It is not alleged even that it was written by anybody who was ever associated with me. The name of this anonymous letter-writer is not mentioned. I do not know who he can be. The writing is strange to me. I think I should insult myself if I said—I think, however, that I perhaps ought to say it, in order that my denial may be full and complete—that I certainly never heard of the letter.

I never directed such a letter to be written. I never saw such a letter before I saw it in the "Times" this morning. The subject-matter of the letter is preposterous on the surface. The phraseology of it is absurd—as absurd as any phraseology that could be attributed to me could possibly be. In every part of it, it bears absolute and irrefutable evidence of want of genuineness and want of authenticity.

Politics are come to a pretty pass in this country when a leader of a party of eighty-six members has to stand up, at ten minutes past one, in the House of Commons, in order to defend himself from an anonymous fabrication, such as that which is contained in the "Times" of this morning. I have always held, with regard to the late Mr. Forster, that his treatment of his political prisoners was a humane treatment, and

a fair treatment; and I think for that reason alone, if for no other, he should have been shielded from such an attempt as was made on his life by the Invincible Association.

I never had the slightest notion in the world that the life of the late Mr. Forster was in danger, or that any conspiracy was on foot against him, or any other official in Ireland or elsewhere. I had no more notion than an unborn child that there was such a conspiracy as that of the Invincibles in existence, and no one was more surprised, more thunderstruck, and more astonished than I was when that bolt from the blue fell upon us in the Phoenix Park murders.

I know not in what direction to look for this calamity. It is no exaggeration to say that if I had been in the park that day I would gladly have stood between Lord Frederick Cavendish and the daggers of the assassins, and, for the matter of that, between their daggers and Mr. Burke too.

Now, sir, I leave this subject. I have suffered more than any other man from that terrible deed in the Phoenix Park, and the Irish nation has suffered more than any other nation through it.

I go for a moment to the noble Marquis the member for Rossendale [the Marquis of Hartington]. The noble Marquis made a rather curious complaint of me. He said that, having denied point-blank a charge that had been made by him against me and the National League during the general election last year, he was rather surprised that I did not again refer to the matter in the House of Commons.

Well, I was rather surprised that the noble Marquis made a charge which he advanced without a particle of truth. He advanced that charge again to-night without a particle of proof, and I deny that charge, as I denied it before, in point-blank terms.

I said it was absolutely untrue to say that the Irish National League or the Parliamentary Party had ever had any communication whatever, direct or indirect, with a Fenian organization in America or this country. I further said that I did not know who the leaders of the Fenian organization in this country or America were.

I say that still. But the noble Marquis says he knows who they are, at least he tells us that Mr. Alexander Sullivan—I believe that was the name mentioned—was president of the Clan-na-Gael, or Fenian organization. When I asked him how he obtained his knowledge, he said that he obtained it from information he received as a member of her Majesty's Government.

That may be. But I am not in possession of the information with regard to the Clan-na-Gael which is possessed by the members of the present, or of the late Government. The Clan-na-Gael is a secret organization; it is an oath-bound organization; it gives no information with regard to its members to persons who are not members. I presume that the Government, if they obtained their information with regard to Alexander Sullivan, obtained it through their secret agents in America, through means which are not open to me in any capacity as a private person or a public politician.

It is no answer to me to say that because the noble Marquis, a member of the late Government, with all the information obtainable by the wealth and resource of that Government at his disposal, believes Alexander Sullivan was a member and the leader of the Clan-na-Gael, or any secret organization in America.

I have never had any dealings with him, or anyone else, either in Ireland or America, in respect to the doings or proceedings of any secret society whatsoever.

All my doings on, and sayings and doings in Irish public life have been open and above board, and they have stood the test of the searching investigation of the three years' administration of the Crimes Act by Lord Spencer, who has left it on record that neither any of my colleagues nor myself were in any way connected with the commission of, or approving of the commission of, any crime. Here are Lord Spencer's words spoken at Newcastle on the 21st of April 1886:

"Foremost among the many objections are these: It is said that you are going to hand over the government of Ireland to men who have encouraged—nay, some I have heard say even have directed—outrage and crime in Ireland. That is a very grave accusation. Now, I have been in a position in my official capacity to see and know nearly all the evidence that has been given in Ireland in regard to the murder and conspiracies to murder that took place in 1881 and 1882, and I can say, without doubt or hesitation, that I have neither heard nor seen any evidence of complicity with those crimes against any of the Irish representatives.

"It is right that I should clearly and distinctly express my condemnation of many of the methods by which they carried on their agitation. They often used language and arguments that were as unjustifiable as they were unfounded. They sometimes, perhaps from financial grounds, were silent when words would have been golden, when words might have had a great influence on the state of the country. They might even have employed men for their own legitimate purposes who had been employed in illegal acts by others; this I must say, but, on the other hand, I believe those men to have an affection for, and a real interest in, the welfare of their country. Their ability has been shown and acknowledged in the House of Commons by all parties. I believe that, with full responsibility upon them, they will show that the only true way of obtaining the happiness and contentment of Ireland, is for the Government to maintain law and order, and defend the rights and privileges of every class and of every man in the country."

I cordially re-echo those words. I believe that that expresses the only real way of maintaining law and order in any country—that you must obtain from the majority of the people of the country sympathy toward the law, without which the maintenance of the law is impossible; that you must show the majority of the community that the law is not only made, but that it is also administered for their benefit, and fairly and justly to all classes.

In this way, and in this way only, can you ever obtain respect and sympathy for law and order in Ireland, or anywhere else. The present Bill may put down crime, or it may increase crime. If it puts it down, it will not put it down by instilling in the minds of the people a sympathy for law and order. Crime will die out only as the effect of sullen submission. You will be no farther, after you have been administering your Crimes Act, in the direction of the real maintenance of law and order than you were at the beginning; nay, not nearly so far.

You are crushing by this iron Coercion Bill those beneficial symptoms in Ireland which a Government of wise statesmen and wise administrators would cherish and foster. You are preventing that budding of friendship between the two countries which this generation would never have witnessed in Ireland had it not been for the great exertions of the right honorable member for Midlothian.

Who could have predicted, who would have ventured to predict, that the heat, the passion, the political antipathies engendered by the working of the Protection Act of 1881 and the Crimes Act of 1882 would have all disappeared in three or four short months, and that you would have had the English and the Irish people regarding each other as they did during that happy, that blessed period, and all this to be put

an end to by the mad, the fatuous conduct of the present Government.

You are going to plunge everything back into the seething cauldron of disaffection. You cannot see what the results of all this may be. We can only point to the experience of what has happened in past times. We anticipate nothing beneficial from this Bill, either to your country or to ours; and we should not be honest men if we did not warn you, with all the little force at our command, of the terrible dangers that may be before you.

I trust before this Bill goes into Committee, or at all events, before it leaves Committee, the great English people will make their voices heard, and impress upon their representatives that they must not go on any further with this coercive legislation.

If this House and its majority have not sense enough to see this, the great heart of this country will see it, for I believe it is a great and generous heart, that can sympathize even when a question is concerned in reference to which there have been so many political antipathies. I am convinced, by what I have seen of the great meetings which have been held over the length and breadth of England and Scotland, that the heart of your nation has been reached—that it has been touched, and though our opponents may be in a majority to-day, that the real force of public opinion is not at their back.

A Bill which is supported by men, many of whom are looking over their shoulders and behind them, like the soldiers of an army which a panic is beginning to reach, to see which is their readiest mode of retreat, is not likely to get through the difficult times before it emerges from Committee. The result will be modifications of the provisions of the most

drastic of the Coercion Acts ever introduced against Ireland since 1833.

Do not talk to me of comparing the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act with the present Bill. We have suffered from both. We have suffered from some of the provisions of the present Bill, as well as from the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, and we are able to compare the one with the other; and I tell you that the provisions of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act empowered you to arrest and detain in prison those whom you suspected; but it guaranteed them humane treatment, which did much to soften the asperities that otherwise would have been bred between the two nations by that Act. Your prisoners under the Habeas Corpus Act were not starved and tortured as they will be under this. Your political prisoners were not put upon a plank bed, and fed on sixteen ounces of bread and water per day, and compelled to pick oakum, and perform hard labor, as they will be under this Bill.

The Bill will be the means by which you will be enabled to subject your political prisoners to treatment in your jails which you reserve in England for the worst of criminals, and it is idle to talk about comparison between the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, under which your prisoners were humanely and properly treated—although imprisonment is hard to bear under the best circumstances; but in the position in which this Bill will place them, your political prisoners will be deliberately starved with hunger and clammed with cold in your jails. I trust in God, sir, that this nation and this House may be saved from the degradation and the peril that the mistake of passing this Bill puts them in.

MICHAEL DAVITT



MICHAEL DAVITT, Irish nationalist, politician, and journalist, one of the founders of the Irish Land League, was born of peasant parents at Straid, County Mayo, Ireland, March 25, 1846. His father, being evicted in 1851, removed to Lancashire, where the son worked in a cotton factory until he was eleven, and then, after a few years' schooling, became a printer. Joining the Irish movement in 1865, he was tried at London in 1870 for "treason-felony" and sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude, but after seven and a half years' confinement in Dartmoor prison he was released on a ticket of leave. With Parnell and others he founded the Irish Land League, in 1879, and was arrested the same year for seditious utterances, but was soon released. In 1881, he was again arrested on a similar charge, and was sent to Portland prison for fifteen months, and in 1883 was once more arrested and imprisoned for three months. While detained in Portland prison he was elected to Parliament, but was disqualified by vote of the House of Commons, and when re-elected in 1892 was unseated. The same year, however, he entered unopposed for Cork, but resigned in 1893, owing to bankruptcy proceedings against him. In 1895, he was returned to Parliament for East Kerry and South Mayo, retaining his seat until 1899. Mr. Davitt has paid several lecturing visits to this country. He has published "Leaves from a Prison Diary" (1884), "Defence of the Land League" (1891), and "Life and Progress in Australia" (1898).

IN DEFENCE OF THE LAND LEAGUE

FROM SPEECH DELIVERED BEFORE THE SPECIAL COMMISSION,
OCTOBER, 1889

I AM only too sensible of the fact that I have trespassed upon the patience and forbearance of the court to an extent which, possibly, would not be permitted to a lawyer. I am thankful, therefore, for such latitude, as well as for the unfailing fairness and courtesy of your lordships toward me, personally, from the very commencement of this inquiry.

I know too well I have spoken hot words and resorted to hard phrases in arguments, which may have been out of place in the calm region of a court like this. But that was because