

**IRELAND AND THE LAND
LEAGUE; KEY TO THE IRISH
QUESTION. WITH AN
INTRODUCTION BY WENDELL
PHILLIPS**

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Ireland and the Land League; key to the Irish question. With an introduction by Wendell Phillips by P. J. Flatley

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P. J. FLATLEY

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IRELAND AND THE LAND LEAGUE.

KEY

TO

THE IRISH QUESTION.

By P. J. FLATLEY, Esq.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

HON. WENDELL PHILLIPS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Irish question is daily attracting more and more notice. It is, indeed, the pivot on which, just now, English politics turn. Meanwhile, it is a question in regard to which very few men have accurate information; and the sources from which this is obtained are widely scattered, and not easily reached.

The discussions, in journals and speeches, necessitate a constant referencé to trustworthy sources, and are often comparatively worthless from the lack of exact and accurate statements and statistics. The reader needs also to know something of the legislation, which, during the last century, has resulted in the present condition of the

oppressed peasantry. Tables of statistics, respecting crime, population, wealth, rents, division of land, education, etc., etc., are absolutely necessary, if one would correctly estimate the causes that have been at work, the evils which have resulted, and the value of the different measures and methods of relief proposed. Extracts from the speeches of the leaders in the Land League movement, giving trustworthy information of what they wish done, and how they intend to get it done, are the only fair basis on which to discuss and criticise their acts and words.

Any Manual containing such items of information must be of great value to the fair-minded journalist who takes part in this discussion; to the speaker who wishes to have at hand the authority for his statements and the basis of his arguments; and

to the general inquirer who seeks to study this question dispassionately and thoroughly.

The author of the following pages has sought to meet this want, and to supply, from the most trustworthy sources, precisely that kind of information to which we have alluded. He offers these pages to the friends of the cause as ammunition for their use in this agitation; and to the critics and enemies of the movement, as a challenge and test-measure by which to judge of the objections they so groundlessly urge and blindly insist upon.

Mr. Flatley has aimed to make the work accurate and trustworthy, and to give as complete information as possible, so as to enable the reader to become master of the question.

The sun of Ireland was never so near its

noon. The success of the present agitation has been wonderful. It is rare proof of the ability of Parnell and his helpers that, with such slight means, they have been able to accomplish so much. He has watched his opportunity and seized with masterly ability every possible chance of arresting public attention and compelling the government to listen to his claim. And never before has there been so much progress made in twenty months.

Four years ago you could hardly keep a quorum in the House of Commons if the Irish question was in debate; the press ignored it, and readers were generally weary of listening to Ireland's claims. But within two years, without using any means which are not strictly parliamentary, keeping within the limits of legal and honorable agitation, Parnell has filled all the leading

journals, here and in Europe, with articles on the Irish question; he has loaded down the Reviews and Magazines with discussions and controversies touching Ireland; Parliament has become only an Irish debating society; the civilized world pauses to gaze on the struggle going on in Great Britain between a landed aristocracy threatened with ruin and the masses rising to claim that they be lifted to the level of the nineteenth century, where France, Belgium, Germany, and Russia stand; and when an emperor is assassinated men's minds turn instantly to ask, What effect will it have on the Irish question?

One remarkable feature of the present agitation, distinguishing it from all previous ones, is that all classes, all sects, and every district in the Island are united in this effort to throw off the cruel yoke. Protest-

ant stands side by side with Catholic; Celt rallies to the side of Saxon, northern Scottish and western pure Irish blood, all put willing and hearty hands to this plough in the glad hope that it will tear out every root of bitterness, and leave Ireland contented, prosperous, and united.

It seems now only necessary that Ireland's friends here should be united, and success must be ours. These moral movements do not seemingly accomplish quickly as much as the sword appears to do. But half of what the sword gains is lost when the fury of the contest abates and society cools down to its usual mood. On the other hand, all that peaceful agitation puts into the statute book remains forever—a step once gained is gained forever.

If the friends of Ireland will stand resolutely shoulder to shoulder, and let no dis-