

**BODYKE: A CHAPTER IN THE  
HISTORY OF IRISH  
LANDLORDISM; QUESTIONS  
OF THE DAY, NO. XLII**

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Bodyke: A Chapter in the History of Irish Landlordism; Questions of the Day, No. XLII by Henry Norman

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**HENRY NORMAN**

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*QUESTIONS OF THE DAY, No. XLII.*

# BODYKE

A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF IRISH LANDLORDISM

BY

HENRY NORMAN

REPRINTED, WITH SEVERAL ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS, FROM THE "FALL MALL  
GAZETTE," AND ILLUSTRATED WITH SKETCHES FROM INSTANTANEOUS  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

"Cultivate the extension of knowledge upon the Irish Question"

—MR. GLADSTONE, at Swansea, June 4, 1887

"It is the interest of the Irish landlord to get rid of his tenant"

—LORD SALISBURY, in the House of Lords, July 1, 1887

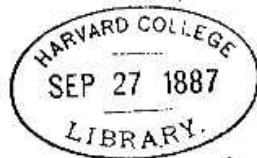
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G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
New York

## PREFATORY NOTE.

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EIGHT of the following twelve chapters were telegraphed, on the evenings of the events they describe, to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and according to an arrangement made by the Editor of that journal, whom I have to thank for permission to reprint them, simultaneously to the *Liverpool Daily Post*, the *Newcastle Leader*, the *Bradford Observer*, the *Plymouth Western Daily Mercury*, the *Edinburgh Scottish Leader*, the *Glasgow Mail*, and the *Dundee Advertiser*.

I have no doubt they contain some slight inaccuracies of figures, of proper names, and perhaps in the sequence of events. This was unavoidable, where the facts could only be gathered from conversation with more or less illiterate persons. Neither have I any doubt, however, that in all essentials the following is an accurate account, and I will undertake to prove by the sworn testimony of several witnesses the literal truth of everything I have described as an eye-witness. While these pages were in the press, Mr. Balfour has, in effect, stated in the House of Commons that the parts of them which have already appeared were "a mass of pure fabrications." If he would do me the favour to repeat this assertion in some place where Parliamentary privilege does not render him irresponsible, I should be able to submit to a court of law the question which of us is speaking the truth.

H. N.

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# BODYKE.



## CHAPTER I.

### BODYKE AND ITS INHABITANTS.

BODYKE is a pleasant little village of a score or two houses and half a dozen shops, all in one wide street a couple of hundred yards long, and it lies upon the slope of a picturesque green valley, in which half the land is very good and half is very bad—mere swamp and mountain, in fact. It figures neither upon the map nor in the Irish Bradshaw, but Limerick was clearly the place to aim at from Dublin; and when I reached there I found that a drive of twenty miles would bring me to it. I soon discovered, however, that in Ireland it is one thing to decide to drive and another to do so. Outside Limerick station stood a row of cars, so I selected the fittest-looking horse, and then went back for lunch. In less than five minutes, however, the owner of the car arrived, and with considerable embarrassment proceeded to administer a series of questions to me concerning my business in Bodyke. As I purposely avoided giving him any information he was finally compelled to come to the point, and blurted out, "It's this way, sir; I'm a business man, and I keep pack-hounds, and I hunt over everybody's land, and I run all the mail cars, and I can't afford to do anything that would make people refuse to lend a hand if one of my cars should break down, or stop my hunting, so if you're going to Bodyke on account of the evictions, or if you're anything to do with the Sheriff, you shan't have a car of mine, and that's the truth!" I pacified this excellent person, who was not inappropriately

named Cooney, by the assurance that I was as sincere a Home Ruler as he was, and then nothing would satisfy him but that I must go and see his hounds and his wonderful leaping horse "Get-away." A similar incident occurred on the journey half way to Bodyke. My jarvey pulled up at a little shop, before which sat two women, one of them having an empty bucket by her side. This he borrowed to water the horse, and while he was away I inquired the distance to Bodyke. "To Bodyke, is it?" was the instant reply; "then if I'd known that was where you're going, devil a hand should he have laid on my bucket!"

After leaving Limerick the road runs for several miles through country lanes as charming as those of Devonshire, over which delightfully green beeches make a continuous archway, only interrupted now and then by the lodge gate of an old-fashioned mansion. Suddenly the wood on either side ceases and a great stretch of rolling country comes in sight, with hardly a tree upon it but all ablaze from roadside to horizon with "the blossom'd furze, unprofitably gay." There are literally miles of the blazing yellow bloom, that dazzling evidence of poor and wasted land. By and by this gets thinner, the hills get bigger, scattered clumps of stunted and starved firs spring up, the stones on the fields get thicker and thicker, until at last there must be tons of them to the acre, and the bones of the few goats and donkeys, which are almost the only living things to be seen, seem to stick out through their skins. This lasts for weary mile after mile—in fact, until one reaches the greenest of the valleys hercabouts, along the further slope of which we rattle into Bodyke.

Bodyke, however, though like every village throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, it is blessed with a police barracks, has neither a priest nor a spare bed for a stranger, and therefore I pushed on to the neighbouring village of Tomgrancy, where for three weeks I remained in the enjoyment of Father Murphy's generous hospitality. The little place is a monument of landlordism. One by one its houses have fallen vacant and have never been re-let. There are only two or three little shops in it, and almost the only decent house is the old manse hidden in trees, where Father Murphy lives. In the centre of what one must call the principal street, a huge rock fifty yards wide rises abruptly

from the ground, and on the summit of it is perched a great oak tree, under which what we soon dubbed the Tomgraney Parliament assembles every night. Two miles further on is the more flourishing little town of Scariff, where the combined telegraph office and dry-goods store is kept by Mr. Hickie and his excellent family, whose untiring hospitality and infinite good nature we put to the severest trial by keeping them up night after night till the small hours of the morning, with our long press messages.

Even in this out-of-the-way place, however, where the *Freeman's Journal* is always twenty-four hours old and the London papers arrive yellow with age, life is not without its joys, although they are naturally of a chastened character. To begin with, the priests, like their predecessors of old, are a "jovial race." There is dear old Father Murphy, the personification of all human kindness, and so bigoted in his large heart that he insisted upon nursing with his own hands a Protestant clergyman and his wife who lived near him, when they were both dying, and afterwards himself buried the former when his friends neglected him. Every night a score of people gathered round his table, and when by and by they could shake off the depression in which the cruel sights and sounds of the day had plunged them, many were the merry jests and songs that went round. Then there is Father Hannon, whom a Greek sculptor would have been thankful to get for a model, and whose name will figure frequently in these pages; and Father Mat Kenny, whose pathetic nightly rendering of "The Irish Brigade" can never be forgotten by anybody who heard it; and his curate, Father Glynn, whose brogue was the richest, whose courage was the coolest, whose humour was the driest, whose schemes were the most audacious in Clare, and whose appearance in his tall hat and priestly garb upon the back of his dark brown thoroughbred was—when he was not thrown—most impressive. Then the influx of visitors, too, made things lively. There was Mr. Waddy, M.P., with his coat-tail pockets stuffed with the rent receipts of half the tenants on the estate; "Daniel O'Connell" Cox, the jovial and popular member for the district; the courtly Pierce Mahoney, M.P.; the kindly and cool-headed Sheehy, M.P.;