

No. 1.

REVOLUTION:

THE ONLY REMEDY FOR THE OPPRESSED CLASSES OF IRELAND, ENGLAND,
AND OTHER PARTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

A REPLY TO "DUNRAVEN."

(SECOND EDITION.)

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TO THE MAN IN IRELAND, WHOSE NAME IS BELIEVED TO BE QUINN, BUT
WHO SIGNS HIMSELF "DUNRAVEN."

Sir, –Your letter of Jan. 1, 1880, addressed to the Editor of the New York Herald, and published in the Herald of Jan. 7, deserves an answer, for the reason that it undoubtedly expresses not only your own sentiments, but also those of the class to which you belong. It virtually announces, and was evidently intended to announce, to the Irish people, both in Ireland and America, and to all other persons interested, that the landlords of Ireland, – backed, as you claim that they are, by the whole power of "the British Empire" – are determined to drive what you consider the surplus population of Ireland out of the country by starvation. You virtually say that all this feeding the starving Irish in their own country, is merely money and mercy thrown away; that as nothing but starvation will ever induce them to go, the sooner they are left to see that they have no other alternative, the better it will be for them, and for everybody else.

If you had, in so many words, threatened to drive them out by the bayonet, you could hardly have been more explicit. This makes it necessary that not only the Irish people, but that everybody else who feels any interest in such a matter, should inquire by what right you propose to do all this and also whether you really have the physical power necessary to do it.

The following address to them, and this letter to yourself, are intended to show not only that you have neither the right, nor the power, to drive them out, but that they, and others similarly situated, have both the right and the power to drive you, and all your abettors, out of both Ireland and England; and also, if need be, from off the face of the earth.

If you, and others like you, in England and Ireland, are prepared to meet this issue, we think that other men – men who believe that human beings have rights in this world, and that such a government as that of "the British Empire" has no rights at all – will, at no distant day, be ready, in sufficient numbers, to try conclusions with you.

The whole force of your letter, as a defence of Irish landlords, rests upon the assumption that they are the real and true owners of the lands they now hold. But this assumption is a false one. These lands, largely or mostly, were originally taken by the sword, and have ever since been held by the sword. Neither the original robbers, nor any subsequent holders, have ever had any other than a robber's title to them. And robbery gives no better title to lands than it does to any other property.

No lapse of time can cure this defect in the original title. Every successive holder not only indorses all the robberies of all his predecessors, but he commits a new one himself by withholding the lands, either from the original and true owners, or from those who, but for those robberies, would have been their legitimate heirs and assigns.

And what is true of the lands in Ireland is equally true of the lands in England. The lands in England, largely or mostly, were originally taken by the sword, and have ever since been held by the sword; and the present holders have no better titles to them than simple, naked robbery has given them.

If the present holders, or any of their predecessors, in either Ireland or England, have ever purchased any of these lands, they have either purchased only a robber's title to them, or they have purchased them

only with the profits or proceeds of previous robberies. They have, therefore, never had, and have not now, any real titles to them.

For these reasons, the present holders of lands generally, in either England or Ireland – whether they hold them by inheritance or purchase – have no whit better title to them, than the highwayman has to the purse he has taken from the traveller, or than the pirate has to the ships and cargoes he has captured on the ocean.

It cannot be supposed that you are so stupid as to be ignorant of all this; and you seem to be conscious of it – and also of the fact that these lands are to be holden, if at all, only by the sword, in the future, as they have been in the past – when you say that –

"The liability [of the actual cultivator] to pay rent can be evaded only by overturning the whole social structure of the United Kingdom."

Your opinion on this point is doubtless correct. But what does "the whole social structure of the United Kingdom" amount to? To this only: That the original robbers and holders of these lands (in both England and Ireland), with such accomplices as they have, from time to time, induced to join them, have now, for many hundreds of years, constituted a conspiracy – that is, have organized themselves into what they call a government – for the purpose of sustaining each other in the possession of all the lands they have seized; and also for the purpose of plundering and enslaving all the descendants of those from whom the lands were originally taken; and for the still further purpose of plundering and enslaving, as far as possible, all other peoples in other parts of the world. This conspiracy has existed in an organized form, – that is, in the form of both State and Church, – for many hundreds of years. And it is this conspiracy, and nothing else, which you attempt to dignify by the name of "the whole social structure of the United Kingdom."

Do you really think that an "overturning" of such a "whole social structure" as this would be any great calamity, either to the "United

Kingdom," or to the world at large? Would it not rather be the opening of a day of freedom for more than two hundred millions of enslaved people, "British subjects," so-called; to say nothing of its influence on other "social structures," of like character, in other parts of the world?

But you evidently consider such an "overturning" impracticable, for you say,–

"It is not likely that the Irish, in and out of Ireland, will combine to wage war upon the British Empire; neither is it very probable that they would be successful."

By this you mean that this confederacy of robbers and tyrants – small in numbers, but constituting the only real ruling force of what you call "the British Empire"-- is too well organized, too compact, too rich, and too powerful, and has too much at stake, to be successfully resisted, or, as you say, "overturned."

But in this you may be mistaken. Less than a century ago, "the whole social structure" of France was "overturned," notwithstanding all, or nearly all, the other "social structures" of Europe combined to sustain it. Do you imagine that the other "social structures" of Europe will ever combine to sustain "the whole social structure of the United Kingdom," as they once combined to sustain that of France? You know that nothing of that kind will ever take place. You know that, henceforth, each of "the social structures" of Europe must take care of itself as best it may; and that already most of them are tottering to their fall. You know that all European combinations, in the future, are to be combinations to "overturn" existing "social structures," and not to sustain them.

How, then, do you think that that confederacy of robbers and villains, whom you call, and who imagine themselves to be, "the British Empire," will fare, when the trial comes? And how far off do you imagine that trial to be?

Do not deceive yourselves in this matter. You are really few in number, and easily distinguished from the great body of those whom you and your predecessors have plundered and enslaved. The very wealth in which you so pride yourselves, and on which you rely as a means of safety, is really an element of weakness. It is not yours. It is all stolen property. It consists only of the spoils that have been accumulated through centuries of robbery and extortion. If those, and the descendants of those, from whom all this wealth has been taken, shall combine to take it from you, it will be only an act of just and lawful reprisal and retribution. And it now offers itself to them as the richest prize, of this kind, that was ever offered to men on earth. Do you not think they will take it?

The fact that the direct descendants of the original holders of these lands cannot now be individually traced, and reinstated in the property of their ancestors, cannot screen the present holders from their just liability since the original robbery of the lands, and the entailing them in the families of the original robbers, have not only deprived the direct descendants of the original holders of their rights, but have also deprived all other persons of their natural rights to buy these lands. These other persons, therefore, as well as the direct descendants of the original holders, have a wrong to be redressed. And these two classes, as they cannot now be distinguished from each other, should make common cause.

In addition to all this, these conspirators have, as a government, oppressed, mobbed, enslaved, and made war upon, everybody, indiscriminately in England, Ireland, and throughout what you call "the British Empire" – whom they could oppress, plunder, or subdue. In this way, then, as well as through the original robberies of the lands, they have incurred a liability to everybody, who has, in any way, suffered at their hands. Whenever, then, the day of settlement comes, there will be some two hundred and fifty millions of people, who will be entitled to satisfaction for the wrongs you have inflicted upon them.

And do not imagine that the present landholders alone are to be finally held liable. All who have been voluntary accomplices with them – and all who have voluntarily aided in upholding the British government, have been accomplices with them – have justly incurred the same penalty as the landholders themselves. Among these accomplices have been your great manufacturers, merchants, bankers, ship-owners, money-lenders (lenders of money to the government) – everybody, in fact, high or low, who has voluntarily been part and parcel of the British government – have been accomplices in the thousand crimes by which the people at large, throughout the Empire, have been plundered and enslaved. And having been such accomplices, their property may as rightfully be seized for purposes of reparation, as may the lands of the land-holders themselves for every member of a conspiracy shares in the guilt of all the others; and is equally liable with them to be coerced into making restitution and compensation.

Sir, From the ancient time, criminals of a certain class have been designated as *hostes humani generis*: enemies of the human race. They received this designation because their crimes were committed, not from any special malice towards particular victims, but solely from motives of plunder and they were wholly indifferent as to the name or nation of the persons to be plundered. They as willingly robbed, and, if need were, murdered, the people of any one country, as of any other. It being their practice to plunder, to the extent of their ability, all mankind indiscriminately, they naturally and justly came to be regarded as enemies of the whole human race. And from this fact it necessarily followed that they might justly and rightfully be killed, whenever and wherever they could be found, and by whomsoever could kill them.

This designation – enemies of the human race – has more generally been applied to pirates; to men who committed their crimes upon the sea. But there have been other *hostes humani generis*; men devoted to plunder, who committed their crimes upon the land and who were equally

indifferent, with pirates on the sea, as to the persons on whom their crimes were committed. The ruling classes in England, from the time the Anglo-Saxons first came there, have been hostes humani generis: enemies of the human race. They have had only one motive, viz, plunder. And so long as this motive was gratified, they have cared not whom they plundered, enslaved, or murdered.

The Anglo-Saxons were robbers and pirates in their own country, two thousand years ago; robbers on land, and pirates at sea. Such was their sole business. The men performed no useful labor. Their useful labor was all performed by their women and their slaves. They themselves, as history tells us, scorned to labor for anything they could take by force. They came into England on their usual errand. They seized the country by military power, and reduced the native Britons to slavery. And they have maintained this character ever since. The Normans were equally robbers. The real government of England, the actual ruling power, for more than a thousand years, has been a mere band of robbers; a mere confederacy of villains. And it is nothing else to-day. They have not only plundered and enslaved the great body of the people of England and Ireland, but, as far as possible, the peoples of all other parts of the globe. They have their chains to-day upon more than two hundred millions of people; and their whole purpose is to extort from them everything that oppression, in every form, is capable of extorting.

Do you imagine that when this band of villains – these enemies of the human race – come to receive their dues, at the hands of two hundred and fifty millions of their victims, justice or mercy will have anything to offer in their behalf?

Sir, To the plundered and starving population of Ireland, you say, in effect, and nearly in these words:

"We, the landlords, have no use for you; we have nothing for you to do; we will not feed you; and you cannot feed yourselves. Why, then, do you

stay here? Your only salvation is in emigra-tion; and the sooner you go, the better it will be for yourselves, and for us."

And you conclude your letter with these words, which are among the vilest that were ever written by human hands:

"Why such people [as those Irish, who dream that they can ever again become the owners of Ireland] are permitted to exist, is a marvel, it is best to try and be philosophical, and reflect that the ways of the Lord are inscrutable, and past finding out; and that possibly they may fulfil some use in the economy of nature so obscure as not to be discernible to mortal eye."

All this is equivalent to your saying: –

"We have taken from you your country, and all your means of living in it. You have nothing more that we can take; and we therefore wish to have nothing more to do with you. By remaining here, you give us no end of trouble, and bring upon us no end of disgrace. You accuse us of starving you to death, and yet you stay with us. If you do not like us, why will you not go, and leave us alone? We want nothing of you; we hate the very sight of you, and wish to get rid of you. It is "inscrutable" to us why the Almighty "permits people to exist," who are of no use to us, whose presence is offensive to us, who are forever accusing us of having robbed them of everything they had, and who never-theless persist in staying with us against our will."

Sir, It is to be hoped that "the ways of the Lord" may soon be made more intelligible to you; that you may be made to know "why such people" as the Irish "are permitted to exist"; what "use in the economy of nature" they "fulfil"; and even why they are permitted to make you so uncomfortable. Perhaps you may come to know that this world and all its inhabitants were not created with a sole view to your pleasure; that for some good reason, in which neither your ease, your pride, your avarice, nor your ambition was consulted, the Almighty saw fit to create other

men, and give them rights equal to your own; that their happiness is quite as important as yours; and that those men, whom you now trample upon with such scorn, may yet be strong enough to teach you, in a rough way, such lessons of humility and justice, as have sometimes been taught to tyrants before, and such as will be very bitter to a man like you. You may, however, have this one consolation -- that should you ever have all this knowledge forced upon you, it will assuredly make you a much wiser and better man than you are now. And this knowledge, that will be so beneficial to yourself, will be equally useful to your associates, the queens, princes, dukes, earls, and the like, who now feel and reason as you do.

It is also to be hoped that the time is not distant, when somebody will be glad to emigrate from both England and Ireland. But who are to be the emigrants? This is the vital question. You will remember that, in similar circumstances, in a neighboring nation, the class who, one day, ruled all France, thought they owned all France, and felt that they, and they alone, were France, the next day found it convenient to emigrate; leaving everything behind them, to become the property of those, whom, up to that time, they had trampled under foot. May we not see the same thing in England and Ireland?

Sir, the plundered people of England and Ireland need neither emigration, legislation. mitigation, nor modification. They need, and if they do their duty to themselves and to you, they will have,

REVOLUTION, RETRIBUTION, RESTITUTION, AND, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, COMPENSATION.

TO ALL THE OPPRESSED CLASSES IN ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND THROUGHOUT THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

The foregoing letter, to the so-called Earl of Dunraven, attempts to show you your true relations to the ruling classes of the British Empire; and also the true and only remedy for the wrongs which their ancestors

practiced upon your ancestors, and which they themselves are now practicing upon you. Do not imagine that the Parliaments and Courts of oppressors will ever right the wrongs of the oppressed. They exist for no such purpose. Such a thing has never happened, and never will. Take the redress of your own wrongs into your own hands, as you are abundantly able to do, if you are only united, determined, and have clear ideas of your rights, and of what is needful to secure them. Your numbers are so great, in comparison with those of your oppressors, as to put their lives and their property wholly in your power, if you so will it. They have no thought of doing you justice. They have no purpose but to keep so many of you in poverty and servitude as they can make serviceable to themselves, and drive the rest of you out of the country by starvation. And they will do this, as they have heretofore done it, unless you yourselves put an end to their power. Wipe out, then, these feudal robbers – the whole race of kings, and queens, and nobles, and all their accomplices in every grade of life, and take possession of all the spoils which they and their predecessors have wrung from you and your ancestors. Put an end to their Parliaments and Courts. Blot out forever their statute books. They contain little or nothing else than the records of their villanies. Free England and Ireland, and thus all the rest of the empire, of the tyrants and robbers that are plundering, enslaving, and crushing, and starving you.