

I've attempted to carve out a useful selection, but I'm not sure if there would be an issue if it is similar to the selection in Collins. Starts on page 1034.

THE INCOMPATIBLES.

CONCLUDED.

‘SIR, it is proper to inform you that *our measures must be healing.*’ The Irish Land Bill is now before the world, and it is easy enough, no doubt, to pick holes in its claim to be called *healing*. The Irish chafe against the connexion with this country; they are exasperated with us; they are, we are told, like wolves ready to fly at the throat of England. And their quarrel with us, so far as it proceeds from causes which can be dealt with by a Land Act—their quarrel with us is for maintaining the actual land-system and landlords of Ireland by the irresistible might of Great Britain. The grievance which they allege against the land-system and landlords is twofold; it is both moral and material. The moral grievance is that the system and the men represent a hateful history of conquest, confiscation, ill-usage, misgovernment, and tyranny. The material grievance is that it never having been usual with the landowner in Ireland, as it is in England, to set down his tenant in what may be called a completely furnished farm, the Irish tenant had himself to do what was requisite; but, when he had done it, it was the landlord’s property, and the tenant lost the benefit of it by losing his farm.

As to the material grievance there is no dispute. As to the moral grievance, it is urged on our side that ‘the confiscations, the public auctions, the private grants, the plantations, the transplantations, which animated,’ says Burke, ‘so many adventurers to Irish expeditions,’ are things of the past, and of a distant past; that they are things which have happened in all countries, and have been forgiven and forgotten with the course of time. True; but in Ireland they have not been forgiven and forgotten; and a fair man will find himself brought to the conservative Burke’s conclusion, that this is mainly due to the proceedings of the English incomers, with whom their ‘melancholy and invidious title’ of grantees of confiscation was for so long a favourite, and who so long looked upon the native Irish as a race of bigoted savages, to be treated with contempt and tyranny at their pleasure. ‘Even the harsh laws against popery were the product,’ says Burke, ‘of this contempt and tyranny, rather than of religious zeal. From what I have observed, it is pride, arrogance,

and a spirit of domination, and not a bigoted spirit of religion, that has caused and kept up these oppressive statutes.' The memory of the original 'terrible confiscatory and exterminatory periods' was thus kept alive, and the country never settled down. However, it is urged, again, that the possessors of the soil are now quite changed in spirit towards the native Irish, and changed in their way of acting towards them. It is urged that some good landlords there always were, and that now, as a class, they are good, while there are many of them who are excellent. But the memory of an odious and cruel past is not so easily blotted out; and there are still in Ireland landlords, both old and new, both large and small, who are very bad, and who by their hardness and oppressiveness, or by their contempt and neglect, keep awake the sense of ancient, intolerable wrong. So stands the case with the moral grievance; it exists, it has cause for existing, and it calls for remedy.

The best remedy, one would think, would be a direct one. The grievance is moral, and is best to be met and wiped out by a direct moral satisfaction. Every one who considers the thing fairly will see that the Irish have a moral grievance, that it is the chief source of their restlessness and resentment, that by indirect satisfactions it is not easy to touch it, but that by such an act as the expropriation of bad landlords it would be met directly. Such an act would be a moral expiation and satisfaction for a moral wrong; it would be a visible breaking, on the part of this country and its Government, with the odious and oppressive system long upheld by their power. 'The law bears with the vices and follies of men until they actually strike at the root of order.' The vices and follies of the bad landlords in Ireland have struck at the root of order; things have gone on without real and searching cure there, until the country is in a revolutionary state. Expropriation is, say objectors, a revolutionary measure. But when a country is in a revolutionary state you must sometimes have the courage to apply revolutionary measures. The revolution is there already; you must have the courage to apply the measures which really cope with it. Coercion is a revolutionary measure. But it may be very right to apply coercion to a country in Ireland's present state; perhaps even to apply a coercion far more stringent and effectual than that which we apply now. It would be a revolutionary measure to have the bad landlords of Ireland scheduled in three classes by a Commission, and, taking twenty-five years' purchase as the ordinary selling-price of an Irish estate, to expropriate the least bad of the three classes of scheduled landlords at twenty years' purchase, the next class at fifteen years' purchase, the worst at ten years' purchase. But it would be an act justified by the revolutionary state into which the misdoing of landlords of this sort, preventing prescription and a secure settlement of things from arising, has brought Ireland. It would fall upon those who represent the ill-

doers of the past, and who are actually ill-doers themselves. And finally, it would be a moral reparation and satisfaction, made for a great and passionately-felt moral wrong, and would, as such, undoubtedly have its full effect upon the heart and imagination of the Irish people. To commute the partial ownership which the Irish tenant has in equity acquired by his improvements of the land cultivated by him for absolute ownership of a certain portion of the land, as Stein commuted the peasant's partial ownership in Prussia; to give facilities, as is now proposed, for emigration, and for the purchase of land and its distribution amongst a greater number of proprietors than at present—this, joined to the expropriation of bad landlords, is what might naturally occur to one as the simple and direct way of remedying Irish agrarian discontent, and as likely to be effective and sufficient for the purpose.

The Land Bill of the Government has provisions for furthering emigration, and provisions to facilitate the purchase of land. But the moral grievance of the Irish occupier it does not deal with at all; it gives no satisfaction to it and attempts to give none. It directs itself exclusively to his material grievance. It makes no distinction between good and bad landlords—it treats them all as alike; but to the partial ownership which the occupier has in equity acquired in the land by his improvements, it gives the force of law, establishes a tribunal for regulating and enforcing it, and does its best to make this sort of partial ownership perpetual. The desirable thing is, on the contrary, as every one who weighs the matter calmly must surely admit, to sweep away this partial ownership—to sweep away tenant-right altogether. It is said that tenant-right is an Irish invention, a remedy by which they themselves have in some degree met the wants of their own case, and that it is dear to them on that account. In legislating for them we ought studiously to adopt, we are told, their inventions, and not to impose upon them ours. Such reasoners forget that tenant-right was a mere palliative, used in a state of things where thorough relief was out of the question; tenant-right was better than nothing, but ownership is better still. The absolute ownership of a part, by a process of commutation like Stein's in Prussia, engages a man's affections far more than any tenant-right, or divided and disputable ownership in a whole. Such absolute ownership was out of the question when the Irish occupier invented tenant-right; but it would please him far better than tenant-right, and commutation might now give it to him. The Land Bill, on the other hand, adopts, legalises, formulates tenant-right, a description of ownership unfamiliar to countries of our sort of civilisation, and very inconvenient; it establishes it throughout Ireland, and, by a scheme which is a miracle of intricacy and complication, it invites the most contentious and litigious people in the world to try conclusions with their landlords as to the ownership divided between

them. I cannot think such a measure healing. A divided ownership of this kind will probably, however, no more be able to establish itself permanently in Ireland than it has established itself in France or Prussia. One has the comfort of thinking that the many and new proprietors who will, it is to be hoped, be called into being by the Purchase Clauses, will indubitably find the plan of divided ownership intolerable, and will sooner or later get rid of it.

I had recourse to Burke in the former part of these remarks, and I wish to keep him with me, as far as possible, to the end. Burke writes to Windham: 'Our politics want directness and simplicity. A spirit of chicane predominates in all that is done; we proceed more like lawyers than statesmen. All our misfortunes have arisen from this intricacy and ambiguity of our politics.' It is wonderful how great men agree. For really Burke is here telling us in another way only what we found Goethe telling us when we began to discuss these Irish matters: *the English are pedants*. The pedant, the man of routine, loves the movement and bustle of politics, but by no means wants to have to rummage and plough up his mind; he shrinks from simplicity, therefore, he abhors it; for simplicity cannot be had without thinking, without considerable searchings of spirit. He abhors simplicity, and therefore of course his governments do not often give it to him. He has his formula, his catchword, which saves him from thinking, and which he is always ready to apply; and anything simple is, from its very simplicity, more likely to give him an opening to apply his formula. If you propose to him the expropriation of bad landlords, he has his formula ready, that *the Englishman has a respect for the eighth commandment*; if you propose to him to do justice to the Irish Catholics, he has his formula, at one time, that *the sovereign must not violate his coronation oath*, at another, that *the Protestants of Great Britain are implacably hostile to the endowment of Catholicism in any shape or form*, or that *the Liberal party has emphatically condemned religious endowment*. A complicated, intricate measure is the very thing for governments to offer him, because, while it gives him the gratifying sense of taking in hand something considerable, it does not bring him face to face with a principle, does not provoke him to the exhibition of one of the formulas which, in presence of a principle, he has always at hand in order to save himself the trouble of thinking. And having this personage to deal with, governments are not much to be blamed, perhaps, for approaching their object in an indirect manner, for eschewing simplicity and choosing complication. The Irish Land Bill does not meet the moral grievance of the Irish occupier at all, and it meets his material grievance in a roundabout, complicated manner, and by means that are hard upon good landlords; but it does meet it after a fashion, and in meeting it does not challenge the presentation of any of the pedantic Englishman's stock formulas, while it effects, at the same time, some very useful

things by the way. And certainly governments which seek to compass their ends in this manner do not incur that severe condemnation which Burke passes upon ministers who make it their business 'still further to contract the narrowness of men's ideas, to confirm inveterate prejudices, to inflame vulgar passions, and to abet all sorts of popular absurdities.' No, not by any means do they deserve this formidable blame. But when Burke writes to the Duke of Richmond of that day, that without censuring his political friends, he must say that he perceives in them no regular or steady endeavour of any kind to bestow the same pains which they bestow on carrying a measure, or winning an election, or keeping up family interest in a county, 'on that which is the end and object of all elections—namely, the disposing our people to a better sense of their condition'—when Burke says this, then he says what does touch, it seems to me, both the present government, and almost all governments which come and go in this country; touches them very nearly. They acquiesce too easily in the mass of us being, as Goethe says, pedants; they are too apprehensive of coming into conflict with our pedantry; they show too much respect to its formulas and catchwords. They make no regular or sustained endeavours of any kind to dispose us poor people to a better sense of our condition. If they acquiesce so submissively in our being pedants in politics, pedants we shall always be. We want guidance from those who are placed in a condition to see. 'God and nature never made them,' says Burke of all the pedantic rank and file of us in politics, 'to think or to act without guidance or direction.' But we hardly ever get it from our government.

And I suppose it was despair at this sort of thing in his own time and commonwealth which made Socrates say, when he was reproached for standing aloof from politics, that in his own opinion, by taking the line he did, he was the only true politician of men then living. Socrates saw that the thing most needful was 'to dispose the people to a better sense of their condition,' and that the actual politicians never did it. And quiet people at the present day, who have no Socrates to help them, may well be inclined at any rate to stand aside as he did from the movement of our prominent politicians and journalists, and of the rank and file who appear to follow, but who really do oftenest direct them—to stand aside, and to try whether they cannot bring *themselves*, at all events, to a better sense of their own condition, and of the condition of the people and things around them. The problem is to get Ireland to acquiesce in the English connexion as cordially as Scotland, Wales, or Cornwall acquiesce in it. We quiet people pretend to no lights which are not at the disposal of all the world. Probably if we were mixed up in the game of politics we should play it much as other people do, according to the laws of that routine. We do not suppose, even, that we can point out courses which politicians and newspapers, as people and parties now are, will be at

all likely to entertain. But we may be able to suggest, perhaps, courses which quiet people may think over in their minds as possible means to help us out of our difficulties, and which will remain to be tried, and to save us from despair, if the means which politicians and newspapers are now recommending, and of which the public mind is full, should prove, when they are tried, not to be successful. In this way we were led to suggest a mode of dealing with the agrarian trouble in Ireland which our politicians and newspapers are not at all likely to entertain, but which to quiet, simple people may perhaps commend itself as reasonable enough, and as offering refuge and hope if other courses, when they are tried, fail.

Meanwhile, however, let us treat the endeavours and plans of other people without pedantry and without prejudice, remembering that our one business is to see things as they really are. Ireland is to be brought, if possible, to acquiesce cordially in the English connexion; and to this end our measures must be *healing*. Now, the Land Bill of the Government does not seem to deserve thoroughly the name of a *healing* measure. We have given our reasons for thinking so; but the question is, whether it proposes so defective a settlement as to make, of itself, Ireland's cordial acquiescence in the English connexion impossible, and to compel us to resign ourselves a prey to the alarmists. One cannot without unfairness and exaggeration say this of it. It is offered with the best intentions, it deals with the material grievance of the Irish occupier if not with his moral grievance, and it proposes to do certain unquestionably good and useful things besides redressing this grievance. It will not of itself make the Irish acquiesce cordially in the English connexion. But then neither would a thoroughly good Land Bill suffice to do this. The *Pall Mall Gazette* says indeed, or did say formerly, for we will by no means oblige it to remain in a particular opinion which seems unsound—the *Pall Mall Gazette* said formerly: 'A good Land Bill will take the political bread out of Mr. Parnell's mouth.' Now Mr. Parnell maintains that he and his friends 'have the forces of nature, the forces of nationality, and the forces of patriotism' working for the separation of Ireland from England: and so they have at present. A good Land Bill will not suffice to stay and annul the working of these forces, though politicians who are busy over a Land Bill will always be prone to talk as if it would suffice to do whatever may be required. But it will not; much more than a good Land Bill is necessary in order to annul the forces which are working for separation. The best Land Bill will not reduce to impotence the partisans of separation, unless other things are accomplished too; the present Land Bill is not so defective as that it need prevent cordial union, if these other things are accomplished.

One of them has been mentioned already in the former part of these remarks. I mean the equitable treatment of Catholicism. To many of the Liberal party it is a great deal easier to offer to Ireland

a fair Land Bill than to offer to her a fair treatment of Catholicism. You may offer as fair a Land Bill as you please ; but if, presently, when the Irish ask to have public schools and universities suited to Catholics, as England has public schools and universities suited to Anglicans, and Scotland such as are suited to Presbyterians, you fall back in embarrassment upon your formula of pedants, *The Liberal party has emphatically condemned religious endowment*, you give to the advocates of separation a new lease of power and influence, you enable them still to keep saying with truth that they have 'the forces of nature, the forces of nationality, and the forces of patriotism' on their side. 'Our measures *must be healing*,' and it is not only as to Irish land that healing measures are necessary ; they are necessary as to the Irish people's religion also.

If this were in any good measure accomplished, if, even, we offered the Land Bill which Mr. Gladstone brings forward now, and if we offered a treatment of Catholicism as well intentioned and as fair in its way, then indeed things would have a look of cheerful promise, and politicians would probably think that the grand consummation had been reached, and that the millennium was going to begin. But a quiet bystander might still be cool-headed enough to suspect that for winning and attaching a people so alienated from us as the Irish something more, even, is required than healing measures in redress of actual mis-usage and wrong ; 'their temper, too, must be managed, and their good affections cultivated.' Many of us talk as if the mere calculation of their interest, of the advantage to their commerce, industry, and security from the English connexion, must induce the Irish to blend readily with us, if they were but treated fairly. But with a people such as the Irish, and when once such a feeling of repulsion has been excited in them as we have managed to excite, the mere calculation of their interest is not sufficient to win them. They must find in us something that in general suits them and attracts them ; they must feel an attractive force drawing and binding them to us in what is called our civilisation. This is what blends Scotland and Wales with us ; not alone their interest, but that our civilisation in general suits them and they like it. This is what so strongly attached to France the Germanic Alsace, and keeps it attached in spirit still ; the wonderfully attractive power of French civilisation.

Some say that what we have in Ireland is a lower civilisation hating the advent of a higher civilisation from England, and rebelling against it. And it is quite true that certain obvious merits of the English, and by which they have much prospered, such as their exactness and neatness, for instance (to say no more than what everybody must admit), are disagreeable to Irish laxity and slovenliness, and are resisted by them. Still, a high civilisation is naturally attractive ; the turn and habits of the French have much that is irksome and provoking to Germans, yet French civilisation attracted Alsace powerfully. It

behoves us to make quite sure, before we talk of Ireland's lower civilisation resisting the higher civilisation of England, that our civilisation is really high, high enough to exercise attraction.

Business is civilisation, think many of us; it creates and implies it. The general diffusion of material well-being is civilisation, thought Mr. Cobden, as that eminent man's biographer has just informed us; it creates and implies it. Not always; and for fear we should forget what business and what material well-being have to create before they imply civilisation, let us, at the risk of being thought tiresome, repeat here what we have said often of old. They are signs of expansion and parts of it; but civilisation, that great and complex force, includes much more than even that power of expansion of which they are parts. It includes also the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, the power of social life and manners. To the building up of human life all these powers belong. If business is civilisation, then business must manage to evolve them; if a widely spread material well-being is civilisation, then that well-being must manage to evolve all these powers. It is written: *Man doth not live by bread alone.*

Now, one of the factors of civilisation is, without doubt, singularly absent from ours—the power of social life and manners. 'The English are just, but not amiable,' was a sentence which, as we know, even those who had benefited by our rule felt themselves moved to pass on us. We underrate the strength of this element of civilisation, underrate its attractive influence, its power. *Mansueti possidebunt terram*—the gentle shall possess the earth. We are apt to account amiability weak and hardness strong; but even if it were so, 'there are forces,' as George Sand says truly and beautifully, 'there are forces of weakness, of docility, of attractiveness or of suavity, which are quite as real as the forces of vigour, of encroachment, of violence, or of brutality.' And to those softer but not less real forces the Irish people are peculiarly sensible. They are full of sentiment, they have by nature excellent manners themselves, and they feel the charm of manners instinctively. 'Courtesy,' says Vauvenargues, 'is the bond of all society, and there is no society which can last without it.' If courtesy is required to cement society, no wonder the Irish are estranged from us. For we must remember who it is of us that they mostly see, who and what it is that in the main represent our civilisation to them. The power of social life and manners, so far as we have it, is in Great Britain displayed above all in our aristocratic class. Mr. Carlyle's tribute to the politeness to be found amongst them, and to the great value of it, will be fresh in our minds: 'With due limitation of the grossly worthless, I should vote at present that, of classes known to me in England, the aristocracy (with its perfection of human politeness, its continual grace of bearing and of acting, steadfast "honour," light address, and cheery stoicism), if you see

well into it, is actually yet the best of English classes.' But our aristocracy which have, on Mr. Carlyle's showing, this power of manners so attractive to the Irish nature, and who in England fill so large a place, and do really produce so much effect upon people's minds and imaginations, the Irish see almost nothing of. Its members who are connected with Ireland are generally absentees. Mr. Lecky is disposed to regret very much this want in Ireland of a resident aristocracy, and says that the Irish people are by nature profoundly aristocratical. At any rate, it is capable of feeling strongly the attraction of the power of manners in an aristocracy, and with an aristocracy filling the place there which it fills in Great Britain, Ireland would no doubt have been something very different from what it is now. While I admit, however, the merits of our aristocracy, while I admit the effect it produces in England and the important place it fills, while I admit that if it were resident in Ireland we should probably have Ireland in another and a more settled state, yet I do not think that a real solution would have been thus reached there any more than it has been reached, I think, here. I mean, if Ireland had had the same social system as we have, she would have been different from her present self indeed, but sooner or later she would have found herself confronting the same difficulty which we in England begin to feel now; the difficulty, namely, that the social system in question ends by landing modern communities in the happy possession of an upper class materialised, a middle class vulgarised, a lower class brutalised. But I am not going to discuss these matters now. What I want now to point out is, that the Irish do not much come across our aristocracy, exhibiting that factor of civilisation, the power of manners, which has undoubtedly a strong attraction for them. What they do come across, and what gives them the idea they have of our civilisation and of its promise, is our middle class.

I have said so much about this class at divers times, and what I have said about it has made me so many enemies, that I prefer to take the words of anybody rather than myself for showing the impression which this class is likely to make, and which it does make, upon the Irish, and the sort of idea which they form of the attractions of its civilisation for themselves, or for mankind in general, or for any one ~~except us natives of Great Britain.~~ There is a book familiar to us all, and the more familiar now, probably, to many of us, because Mr. Gladstone solaced himself with it after his illness, and so set all good Liberals (of whom I wish to be considered one) upon reading it over again. I mean *David Copperfield*. Much as I have published, I do not think it has ever happened to me before to comment in print upon any production of Charles Dickens. What a pleasure to have the opportunity of praising a work so sound, a work so rich in merits, as *David Copperfield*! *Man lese nicht die mit-strebende, mit-wirkende*, says Goethe: do not read your fellow-strivers, your fellow-workers. Of the contem-

porary rubbish which is shot so plentifully all round us, we can, indeed, hardly read too little. But to contemporary work so good as *David Copperfield*, we are in danger of perhaps not paying respect enough, of reading it (for who could help reading it?) too hastily, and then putting it aside for something else and forgetting it. What treasures of gaiety, invention, life, are in that book! what alertness and resource! what a soul of good-nature and kindness governing the whole! Such is the admirable work which I am now going to call in evidence.

Intimately, indeed, did Dickens know the middle class; he was bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh. Intimately he knew its bringing up. With the hand of a master he has drawn for us a type of the teachers and trainers of its youth, a type of its places of education. Mr. Creakle and Salem House are immortal; the type itself, it is to be hoped, will perish, but the drawing which Dickens has given of it cannot die. Mr. Creakle, the 'stout gentleman with a bunch of watch-chain and seals, in an arm chair,' with the fiery face and the thick veins in his forehead; Mr. Creakle sitting at his breakfast with the cane, and a newspaper, and the buttered toast before him, will sit on, like Theseus, for ever. For ever will last the recollection of Salem House, and of 'the daily strife and struggle' there; ~~the recollection~~

of the frosty mornings when we were rung out of bed, and the cold, cold smell of the dark nights when we were rung into bed again; of the evening schoolroom dimly lighted and indifferently warmed, and the morning schoolroom which was nothing but a great shivering machine; of the alternation of boiled beef with roast beef, and boiled mutton with roast mutton; of clods of bread and butter, dog-eared lesson-books, cracked slates, tear-blotted copy-books, canings, rulerings, hair-cuttings, rainy Sundays, suet-puddings, and a dirty atmosphere of ink surrounding all.

A man of much knowledge and much intelligence, who died not long ago, Mr. Baring Gould, shortly before his death published a book about Germany, in which he gave testimony which in a curious manner proves how true and to the life this picture of Salem House and of Mr. Creakle is. The public schools of Germany come to be spoken of, and the training which the whole middle class of Germans gets in them; and Mr. Gould mentions what is reported by young Germans trained in their schools, who have afterwards served as teachers of foreign languages and ushers in the ordinary private schools for the middle class in England. With one voice they tell us of establishments like Salem House and principals like Mr. Creakle. They are astonished, disgusted; they cannot understand how such things can be, and how a great and well-to-do class can be content with such an ignoble bringing up; but so things are, and they report their experience of them, and their experience brings before us, over and over again, Mr. Creakle and Salem House.

A critic in the *World* newspaper says, what is very true, that in

this country the middle class has no naturally defined limits, that it is difficult to say who properly belong to it and who do not, and that the term is taken in different senses by different people. This is most true, and therefore, for my part, to prevent ambiguity and confusion, I always have adopted an educational test, and by the middle class I understand those who are brought up at establishments which are more or less like Salem House, and by educators who are more or less like Mr. Creakle. And the great mass of the middle part of our community, the part which comes between those who work with their hands, on the one side, and people of fortune, on the other, is brought up at establishments of the kind, though there is a certain portion broken off at the top which is educated at better. But the great mass are badly taught, and brought up on a lower plane than is right, brought up ignobly. And this deteriorates their standard of life, their civilisation. True, they have at the same time great merits, of which they are conscious themselves, and of which all who are in any way akin to them, and disposed to judge them fairly and kindly, cannot but be conscious also. True, too, there are exceptions to the common rule among the establishments and educators that bring them up; there are good schools and good schoolmasters scattered among them. True, moreover, amongst the thousands who undergo Salem House and Mr. Creakle, are some born lovers of the humane life, who emerge from the training with natures unscathed, or who at any rate recover from it. But, on the mass, the training produces with fatal sureness the effect of lowering their standard of life and impairing their civilisation. It helps to produce in them, and it perpetuates, a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners. And this is what those who are not akin to them, who are not disposed to be friendly observers of them, really see in them. This is what the Celtic and Catholic Irish see in them. The Scotch of the Lowlands, of far the most populous and powerful part of Scotland, are men of just the same stock as ourselves, and breed Murdstones as naturally as we do. Wales is Celtic, but the Welsh have adopted with ardour the Murdstonian religion, and this at once puts them in sympathy with our middle-class civilisation. With the Irish it is different. English civilisation means to the Irish the civilisation of our middle class, and few indeed are the attractions which to them, with their quickness, sentiment, fine manners, and indisposition to be pleased with things English, that civilisation seems to have. They do not see the exceptions in our middle class; they do not see the good which is present even in the mistreated mass of it. All its members seem of one type of civilisation to an Irish eye, and that type a repulsive one. They are all tarred with one brush, and that brush is Creakle's.

We may even go further still in our use of that valuable and

instructive book, the *History of David Copperfield*, and may lay our finger on the very types in adult life which are the natural product of Salem House and of Mr. Creakle, the very types of our middle class, nay of Englishmen and the English nature in general, as to the Irish imagination they appear. We have only to recall, on the one hand, Mr. Murdstone, with his firmness and severity; with his austere religion and his tremendous visage in church; with his view of the world as 'a place for action, and not for moping and droning in;' his view of young Copperfield's disposition as 'requiring a great deal of correcting, and to which no greater service can be done than to force it to conform to the ways of the working world, and to bend it and break it.' We may recall, too, Miss Murdstone, his sister; with the same religion, the same tremendous visage in church, the same firmness, with her 'uncompromising hard black boxes with her initials on the lids in hard black nails,' her 'hard-steel purse,' and her 'numerous little steel fetters and rivets'; severe and formidable like her brother, 'whom she greatly resembled in face and voice.' These people, with their hardness, their narrowness, their want of consideration for other people's feelings, their inability to enter into them, are just the type of the Englishman and his civilisation as he presents himself to the Irish mind by his serious side. His energy, industry, religion, exhibit themselves with these unpleasant features; his bad qualities exhibit themselves without mitigation or relief. Now Murdstone may be called the natural product of a course of Salem House and of Mr. Creakle acting upon hard, stern, and narrow natures. A disposition to hardness is perhaps the special fault and danger of our English race in general, going along with our merits of energy and honesty. It is apt even to appear in all kinds and classes of us, when the circumstances are such as to call it forth. One can understand Cromwell himself, whom we earnest English Liberals reverentially name 'the great Puritan leader,' standing before the Irish imagination as a glorified Murdstone; and the late Lord Leitrim, again, as an aristocratical Murdstone. Mr. Bence Jones, again, improver and benefactor as he undoubtedly is, yet takes a tone with the Irish which may not unnaturally, perhaps, affect them much as Murdstone's tone affected little Copperfield. But the genuine, unmitigated Murdstone is the common middle-class Englishman, who has come forth from Salem House and Mr. Creakle. He is seen in full force, of course, in the Protestant north, but throughout Ireland he is a prominent figure of the English garrison. Him the Irish see, see him too much and too often; and he represents to them the promise of English civilisation on its serious side, what this civilisation accomplishes for that great middle part of the community towards which the masses below are to look up and to ascend, what it invites those who blend themselves with us to become and to be.

The thing has no power of attraction. The Irish quick-wittedness,

end here?

sentiment, keen feeling for social life and manners, demand something which this hard and imperfect civilisation cannot give them. Its social form seems to them unpleasant, its energy and industry to lead to no happiness, its religion false and repulsive. A friend of mine who lately had to pursue his avocations in Lancashire, in the parts about St. Helens, and who has lately been transferred to the west of Ireland, writes to me that he finds with astonishment that 'even in the farthest *ultima Thule* of the west, amongst literally the most abjectly poverty-stricken cottiers, life appears to be more enjoyed than by a Lancashire factory-hand and family who are in the receipt of five pounds a week, father, mother, and children together, from the mill.' He writes that he finds 'all the country people here so full of courtesy and graciousness!' That is just why our civilisation has no attractions for them. So far as it is possessed by any great body in our own community, and capable of being imparted to any great body in another community, it has no courtesy and graciousness, it has no enjoyment of life, it has the curse of hardness upon it. The penalty nature makes us pay for hardness is dulness; if we are hard, our life becomes dull and dismal. Our hardness grows at last weary of itself; in Ireland, where we have been so hard, this has been strikingly exemplified. Again and again, upon the English conqueror in his hardness and harshness, the ways and nature of the down-trodden, hated, despised Irish, came to exercise a strange, an irresistible magnetism. 'Is it possible,' asks Eudoxus, in Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland*, 'is it possible that an Englishman, brought up in such sweet civility as England affords, should find such liking in that barbarous rudeness that he should forget his own nature and forego his own nation?' And Spenser, speaking under the name of Irenæus, answers that unhappily it did indeed happen so. The Protestant Archbishop Boulter tells us, in like manner, that under the iron sway of the penal laws against Popery, and in the time of their severest exercise, the conversions from Protestantism to Popery were nevertheless a good deal more numerous than the conversions from Popery to Protestantism. Such, I say, is nature's penalty upon hardness; it grows irksome to itself, it ends by wearying those who have it. If our hardness is capable of wearying ourselves, can we wonder that a civilisation stamped with it has no attractions for the Irish; that Murdstone, the product of Salem House and of Mr. Creakle, is a type of humanity which repels them, and that they do not at all wish to be like him?

But in Murdstone we see English middle-class civilisation by its severe and serious side. That civilisation has undoubtedly also its gayer and lighter side; and this gayer and lighter side, as well as the other, we shall find, wonderful to relate, in our all-containing treasure-house of the *History of David Copperfield*. Mr. Quinion, with his gaiety, his chaff, his rough coat, his incessant smoking, his

brandy and water, is the jovial, genial man of our middle class civilisation, prepared by Salem House and Mr. Creakle, as Mr. Murdstone is its severe man. Quinion was not precisely and literally Murdstone's partner, for Grinby, we are told, was his partner; but Quinion was his manager, and is truly his pendant. He is the answer of our middle-class civilisation to the demand in man for beauty and enjoyment, as Murdstone is its answer to the demand for temper and manners. To a quick, sentimental race, Quinion can be hardly more attractive than Murdstone. He produces our towns considered as seats of pleasure, as Murdstone produces them considered as seats of business and religion. As it is Murdstone, the serious man, whose view of life and demands on life have made our *Hell-holes*, and the dissidence of dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion, and the refusal to let Irish Catholics have schools and universities suited to them because their religion is *a lie and heathenish superstition*, so it is Quinion, the jovial man, whose view of life and demands on it have made our popular songs, comedy, art, made the City Companies and their feasts, made the London streets, made the Griffin. Nay, Quinion has been busy in Dublin too, for have we not conquered Ireland? The streets and buildings of Dublin are full of traces of him; his sense of beauty governed the erection of Dublin Castle itself. As the civilisation of the French middle class is the maker of the streets and buildings of modern Paris, so the civilisation of the English middle class is the maker of the streets and buildings of modern London and Dublin.

Once more. Logic and lucidity in the organising and administering of public business are attractive to many; they are satisfactions to that instinct of intelligence in man which is one of the great powers in his civilisation. The immense, homogeneous, and (comparatively with ours) clear-thinking French middle class prides itself on logic and lucidity in its public business. In our public business they are conspicuous by their absence. Our public business is governed by the wants of our middle class, and is in the hands of public men who anxiously watch those wants. Now our middle class cares for liberty; it does not care for logic and lucidity. Murdstone and Quinion do not care for logic and lucidity. Salem House and Mr. Creakle have not prepared them for it. Accordingly, we see the proceedings of our chief seat of public business, the House of Commons, governed by rules of which one may at least say, without risk of being committed for contempt, that logic and lucidity have nothing to do with them. Mr. Chamberlain, again, was telling us only the other day that 'England, the greatest commercial nation in the world, has in its bankruptcy law the worst commercial legislation of any civilised country.' To be sure, Mr. Chamberlain has also said that if in England we fall behind other nations in the intelligent appreciation of art, we minister to a hundred wants of which the other nations have no suspicion.' As we are a commercial people, one would have thought

that logic and lucidity in commercial legislation was one of these wants to which we minister; however, it seems we do not. But, outside our own immediate circle, logic and lucidity are felt by many people to be attractive; they inspire respect, their absence provokes ridicule. Probably the Irish themselves, though they are gainers by it, laugh in their sleeve at the pedantries and formalities with which our love of liberty, Murdstone and Quinion's love of liberty, and their total want of instinct for logic and lucidity, embarrass our attempts to coerce them. Certainly they must have laughed outright, being people with a keen sense of the ridiculous, when in the information to which the traversers had to plead at the late trials, it was set forth that the traversers 'did conspire, combine, confederate, and agree together, to solicit, incite, and procure,' and so on. We must be Englishmen, countrymen of Murdstone and Quinion, loving liberty and a 'freedom broadening slowly down from precedent to precedent;' not fastidious about modern and rational forms of speech, about logic and lucidity, or much comprehending how other people can be fastidious about them, to take such a jargon with proper seriousness.

The dislike of Ireland for England the resistance of a lower civilisation to a higher one! Why, everywhere the attractions of this middle-class civilisation of ours, which is what we have really to offer in the way of civilisation, seem to fail of their effect. 'The puzzle seems to be,' says the *Times* mournfully, 'where we are to look for our friends.' But there is no great puzzle in the matter if we will consider it without pedantry. Our civilisation, as it looks to outsiders, and in so far as it is a thing broadly communicable, seems to consist very much in the Murdstonian drive in business and the Murdstonian religion, and in the Quinionian joviality and geniality. Wherever we go, we put forward Murdstone and Quinion, and call their ways civilisation, and our governing class nervously watch their ways and wishes, and back up their civilisation all they can, but it does not prove attractive. The English in South Africa will all be commercial gentlemen, says Lady Barker, their wives will be ladies, they will not even tend poultry. The English in the Transvaal, we hear again, contain a wonderful proportion of attorneys, speculators, land-jobbers, and persons whose antecedents will not well bear inspection. Their recent antecedents we will not meddle with, but one thing is certain: their early antecedents were those of the English middle class in general. They have almost all, we may be sure, passed through the halls of a Salem House and the hands of a Mr. Creakle. They have the stamp of Murdstone or Quinion. Indeed we are so prolific, so enterprising, so world-covering, and our middle class and its civilisation so entirely take the lead wherever we go, that there is now, one may say, a kind of odour of Salem House all round the globe. It is almost inevitable that Mr. Sprigg should have been reared in some such establishment; it is ten to one that Mr. Berry is

an old pupil of Mr. Creakle. And when they visit Europe, no doubt they go and see Mr. Creakle, where he is passing the evening of his days in honourable retirement, a Middlesex magistrate, a philanthropist, and a member of the Society of Arts. And Mr. Berry can tell him of a happy country all peopled by ourselves, where the Murdstone and Quinion civilisation seems to men the most natural thing in the world and the only right civilisation, and gives entire satisfaction. But poor Mr. Sprigg has to report of a land plagued with a large intermixture of foreigners, to whom our unique middle class civilisation does not seem attractive at all, but they find it entirely disagreeable. And so, too, to come back much nearer home, do the Irish.

So that if we, who are in consternation at the dismal prophecies we hear of what is in store for Ireland and England, if we determine to perish, as I say, in the light at any rate, to abjure all self-deception, and to see things as they really are, we shall see that our civilisation, in its present state, will not help us much with the Irish. Even if we gave them really healing measures, yet still, estranged as they now are, it would be further necessary to manage their tempers and cultivate their good affections by the gift of a common civilisation congenial to them. But our civilisation is not congenial to them. To talk of it, therefore, as a substitute for perfectly healing measures is ridiculous. Indeed, the pedantry, bigotry, and narrowness of our middle class, which disfigure the civilisation we have to offer, are also the chief obstacle to our offering measures perfectly healing. And the conclusion is, that our middle class and its civilisation require to be transformed. With all their merits, which I have not now much insisted upon because the question was how their demerits make them judged by unfriendly observers—with all their merits, they require, as I have so often said, to be transformed. And for my part I see no way so promising for setting about it as the abolishment of Salem House and of Mr. Creakle. This initiatory stage governs in a great degree all the rest, and with this initiatory stage we should above all deal. *He has got on his old hobby again!* I think I hear people saying. Really they ought rather to commend the strictly and humbly practical character of my writings. It was very well for Mr. Carlyle to bid us have recourse, in our doubts and miseries, to earnestness and reality, and veracity and the everlasting yea, and generalities of that kind; Mr. Carlyle was a man of genius. But when one is not a man of genius, and yet attempts to give counsel in times of difficulty, one should be above all things practical. Now our relations with Ireland will not in any case be easily and soon made satisfactory, but while our middle class is what it is now they never will. And our middle class, again, will not be easily and soon transformed, but while it gets its initiation to life through Salem House and Mr. Creakle, it never will. The great thing is to initiate it to life by means of public schools. Public schools for

the middle classes are not a panacea for our ills, but they are the indispensable preliminary to our real improvement on almost all the lines where as a nation we now move with embarrassment. If the consideration of our difficulties with Ireland had not, like so much else, brought me at last full upon this want which is capital, but far too little remarked, I should probably not have ventured to intrude into the discussion of them. However terrified and dejected by the alarmists, I should have been inclined to bear my burden silently in that upper chamber in Grub Street, where I have borne in silence so many sorrows. I know that the professional people find the intervention of outsiders very trying in politics, and I have no wish to provoke their resentment. But when the discussion of a matter tends inevitably to show the crying need which there is for transforming our middle-class education, I cannot forbear from striking in; if I do not speak of the need shown, nobody else will.

Yet the need is, certainly, great and urgent enough to attract notice; but then the middle class is very strong and self-satisfied, and every one flatters it. It is like that strong and enormous creature described by Plato, surrounded by obsequious people seeking to understand what its noises meant, and to make in their turn the noises which might please it. At best palliatives are now and then attempted, as there is a company, I believe, at this moment projected to provide better schools for the middle classes. Alas! I should not be astonished to find presently Mr. Creakle himself among the directors of a company to provide better schools for the middle classes, and the guiding spirit of its proceedings, so far as his magisterial functions, and his duties on philanthropical committees and on committees of the Society of Arts, permit him to take part in them. But oftener our chief people take the bull by the horns, and actually congratulate the middle class on the character and conditions of its education. And so they play the part of a sort of spiritual panderer to its defects and weaknesses, and do what in them lies to perpetuate them. Lord Frederick Cavendish goes down to Sheffield to address an audience almost entirely trained by Salem House and Mr. Creakle, and the most suitable thing he can find to say to them is, he thinks, to congratulate them on their energy and self-reliance in being so trained. But this is an old story, a familiar proceeding, for which the formula has long since been given: namely, that the upper class do not want to be disturbed in their preponderance, nor the middle class in their vulgarity. But if we wish cordially to attach Ireland to the English connexion, not only must we give healing political measures, we must also, and that as speedily as we can, transform our middle class and its social civilisation.

I perceive that I have said little of faults on the side of the Irish, as I have said little of the merits which accompany, in our middle class, their failure in social civilisation; and for the same reason—

because the matter in hand was the failure on our part to do all in our power to attach Ireland, and how to set about remedying the failure. But as I have spoken with so much frankness of my own people and kindred, the Irish will allow me, perhaps, to end with quoting three queries of Bishop Berkeley's, and with recommending them to their attention:—

1. Whether it be not the true interest of both nations to become one people, and whether either be sufficiently apprised of this?
2. Whether Ireland can propose to thrive so long as she entertains a wrong-headed distrust of England?
3. Whether in every instance by which the Irish prejudice England, they do not in a greater degree prejudice themselves?

Perhaps, also, they might do well to perpend the good bishop's caution against 'a general parturiency in Ireland with respect to politics and public counsel;' a parturiency which in clever young Irishmen does often, certainly, seem to be excessive. But, after all, my present business is not with the Irish but with the English—to exhort my countrymen to healing measures and an attractive form of civilisation. And if our countrymen insist upon it that attractive their form of civilisation is, or ought to be, then we who think differently must labour diligently to follow Burke's injunctions, and to 'dispose people to a better sense of their condition.'

MATTHEW ARNOLD.