

Ireland 1870-1914 Revision notes

Key people

Charles Stewart Parnell (1846–91) Irish politician, born in Avondale, Co Wicklow, E Ireland. He studied at Cambridge, and in 1875 became an MP, supporting Home Rule, and gained great popularity in Ireland by his audacity in the use of obstructive parliamentary tactics. In 1879 he was elected president of the Irish National Land League, and in 1886 allied with the Liberals in support of Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. He remained an influential figure until 1890, when following his affair with Katharine O'Shea, he was cited as co-respondent in a divorce case, and forced to retire as leader of the Irish nationalists

John (Edward) Redmond Biography (1856–1918)

politician, born in Dublin, Ireland. He was called to the bar in 1886, and entered parliament in 1881. A champion of Home Rule, he became chairman of the Nationalist Party in 1900. He declined a seat in Asquith's coalition ministry (1915), but supported the War. He deplored the Irish rebellion, and opposed Sinn Féin.

Edward Carson (born Feb. 9, 1854, Dublin, Ire. — died Oct. 22, 1935, Minster, Kent, Eng.) Irish lawyer and politician. In 1892 he was elected to the British House of Commons and was appointed Irish solicitor general. He served as British solicitor general (1900 – 05), attorney general (1915), first lord of the Admiralty (1916 – 17), and lord of appeal (1921 – 29). Known as the "uncrowned king of Ulster," he successfully led Northern Irish resistance to the British government's attempts to introduce Home Rule for all of Ireland.

TOD, ISABELLA 1836-1896 Isabella Tod was born in Edinburgh and educated privately. She came to live in Belfast and contributed to the *Dublin University Magazine*, *The Banner of Ulster* and other journals, with a view to raising the status of women. During the period when she was working with the temperance movement, she, along with Caroline Norton and others, formed a society which agitated for changes in the law which culminated in the Married Women's Property Bill. She was a campaigner for votes for women and was secretary of the Northern Ireland Branch of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, established in 1871. She published many articles on social issues and campaigned against the Contagious Diseases Act which allowed magistrates in garrison towns to force women suspected of being

prostitutes to undergo medical examinations for venereal disease. The acts were repealed in 1886. In 1867 she was secretary of the Ladies Institute in Belfast, which played a prominent role in achieving the rights of girls to take recognised academic tests. Throughout her life she was a supporter of higher education for girls and petitioned the Queen's University of Ireland to allow girls to take university examinations. The university agreed to admit girls to tests, though they were awarded certificates, not degrees. She was vehemently opposed to Home Rule and was involved in the Women's Liberal Unionist Association.

Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington (May 26, 1877 — April 20, 1946) was born in Kanturk, County Cork, Ireland, the eldest daughter of David Sheehy, Irish Parliamentary Party Westminster MP, who was also the brother of Father Eugene Sheehy, a priest who educated Eamon de Valera in Limerick and Elizabeth McCoy. One of her sisters, Mary, married the writer and politician Thomas Kettle. Another sister, Kathleen, who married Frank O'Brien, was the mother of Conor Cruise O'Brien.

Hanna's father was MP for South Galway and the family moved to Drumcondra, Dublin in 1887. He remained loyal to the British government throughout her numerous subsequent imprisonments, which caused a rift between him and his daughter. Hanna Sheehy (or Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, as she was known after marrying Francis Skeffington) is remembered as an Irish feminist who, along with her husband and James Cousins founded the Irish Women's Franchise League in 1908 with the aim of obtain women's voting rights.

Sheehy was also a founding member of the Irish Women's Workers' Union as well as an author whose works deeply opposed British imperialism in Ireland. Her son, Owen Sheehy-Skeffington became a politician and Irish Senator. Sheehy was educated at Dominican Convent, Eccles Street where she was a prize-winning pupil. She then enrolled at St Mary's University College, a third level college for women established by the Dominicans in 1893. Women were not allowed to attend lectures at either University College Dublin or the University of Dublin. She sat her examinations at Royal University of Ireland (later University College, Dublin) where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1899 and a Master of Arts Degree, with first-class honours in 1902. This led to a career as a teacher in Eccles Street and an examiner in the Intermediate Certificate examination.

Sheehy married in 1903, becoming Sheehy-Skeffington and in 1908 founded the Irish Women's Franchise League, a group aiming for women's voting rights. She lost her teaching job in 1913 when she was arrested and put in prison for three months after throwing stones at Dublin Castle. Whilst in jail she started a hunger strike but was released under the Prisoner's Temporary Discharge of Ill Health Act and was soon rearrested.

In 1916 Sheehy's husband, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, was shot dead during the Easter Rising on the orders of a British army officer, Captain J C Bowen-Colthurst. Bowen-Colthurst, following court martial in June 1916, was sent temporarily to a Canadian hospital after being adjudged insane in the aftermath of the Rising, but he was released with a pension to settle in Canada.

Sheehy refused any kind of compensation for her husband's death, and soon afterwards she travelled to the United States to publicise the political situation in Ireland. She published *British Militarism as I Have Known It*, which was banned in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland until after the First World War. Upon her return to Britain she was once again imprisoned, this time in Holloway prison. After being released Sheehy supported the anti-Treaty IRA during the Irish Civil War. During the 1930s she was assistant editor of *An Phoblacht*, a Sinn Féin newspaper. During this period she was arrested once more for breaking the Northern Ireland Exclusion Order. She died, aged 68, in Dublin and is buried there in Glasnevin Cemetery.

James Connolly

Irish political leader and insurgent, born in Edinburgh, EC Scotland, UK. He joined the British army at the age of 14, and was stationed in the Curragh and Dublin, but deserted to get married to an Irish girl in Scotland. Returning to Ireland in 1896, he organized the Irish Socialist Republican Party and founded *The Workers' Republic*, the first Irish Socialist paper. He toured the USA as a lecturer (1902–10), and helped found the Industrial Workers of the World ('Wobblies'). Back in Ireland, he organized Socialist 'citizen armies', and after taking part in the Easter rebellion (1916) he was arrested and executed

Michael Davitt

Founder of the Irish Land League, born in Straid, Co Mayo, W Ireland. Before becoming a journalist, he worked in a cotton mill, where he lost an arm in an accident. In 1866 he joined the Fenian Movement, and was arrested in 1870 for sending guns to Ireland from the USA, and sentenced to 15 years penal servitude. Released in 1877, he began an anti-landlord crusade which culminated in the Land League (1879). During a further period of imprisonment, he was elected an MP (1882), but disqualified from taking his seat. A strong Home Ruler and opponent of Parnell, he was twice more an MP (1892–3, 1895–9).

James Larkin

Irish labor leader. Born January 28, 1874 in Liverpool, England. Growing up in the slums of Liverpool, James Larkin had little formal education. To supplement the family income, he worked a variety of jobs in his youth, eventually becoming a foreman at the Liverpool docks. A committed socialist who believed workers were treated unfairly, James Larkin joined the National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL) and became a full-time trade union organizer in 1905.

James Larkin's militant strike methods alarmed the NUDL, and he was transferred to Dublin in 1907 where he founded the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. The goal of the union was to combine all Irish industrial workers, skilled and unskilled, into one organization. Larkin later formed the Irish Labour Party and was responsible for leading a series of strikes. Most significant of these was the 1913 Dublin Lockout where more than 100,000 workers went on strike for nearly eight months, eventually winning the right to fair employment.

At the outbreak of World War I, James Larkin staged large anti-war demonstrations in Dublin. He also traveled to the United States to raise funds to fight the British. In 1920, he was convicted of criminal anarchy and communism, then pardoned three years later and deported to Ireland. There, he organized the Workers' Union of Ireland and secured recognition from Communist International in 1924. James Larkin married Elizabeth Brown in 1903; the couple had four sons.

Douglas Hyde

Writer, philologist, and first president of Ireland (1937–45), born in Frenchpark, Co Roscommon, WC Ireland. He studied at Trinity College, Dublin, and was the founder and first president (1893–1915) of the Gaelic League. Professor of Irish in the National University (1909–32), he wrote *A Literary History of Ireland* (1899), as well as poems, plays, works on history and folklore, in Irish and English.

WB Yeats

Poet and playwright, born near Dublin, Ireland. Educated at schools in London and Dublin, he became an art student, then turned to writing. A leader of the Irish Literary Revival, he is a major voice of modern Irish poetry in English. In 1888 he published ‘The Wanderings of Oisín’, a long narrative poem that established his reputation. *The Celtic Twilight*, a book of peasant legends, appeared in 1893. With his patron, Lady Gregory, he founded the Irish Literary Theatre in 1899, and was a director of the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, from 1904. He wrote nearly 30 plays, including *The Countess Cathleen* (1892), *The Land of Heart's Desire* (1894), and *Cathleen ni Houlihan* (1903). He adopted a more direct style with *Responsibilities* (1914), which also marks a switch to contemporary subjects. The symbolic system described in *A Vision* (1925) informs many of his best-known poems, which appeared in *The Tower* (1928), *The Winding Stair* (1929), and *A Full Moon in March* (1935). Much of his best poetry is inspired by personal longing, notably his unrequited love for the revolutionary Maud Gonne and for a mythical Irish Golden Age. He received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1923, and also became a senator of the Irish Free State (1922–8). His *Collected Poems* were published in 1950.

Key terms

Home Rule A political movement that sought the governing of Northern Ireland by an Irish Parliament rather than by Britain in the 1870s and 1880s.

democracy the political orientation of those who favor government by the people or by their elected representatives -a political system in which the supreme power lies in a body of citizens who can elect people to represent them -majority rule: the doctrine that the numerical majority of an organized group can make decisions binding on the whole group

Separatism -the desire of a group of citizens of a state to separate from the state and form their own state

militarism A system involving large armies, the influence of military leaders mobilizing millions of men, and building artillery in the event of war.-a political orientation of a people or a government to maintain a strong military force and to be prepared to use it aggressively to defend or promote national interests

socialism -A system based on public ownership of the means of production and distribution of wealth.

feminism -The view, articulated in the 19th century, that women are inherently equal to men and deserve equal rights and opportunities.

Political agitation

Suffragette :a person who campaigned for the right of women to vote.

Irish Ireland

Anglo-Irish

Anglicisation-de-anglicisation

Cultural History

Cultural Revival and the GAA 1880-1914:

The Cultural Revival was a period in Irish history when many people tried to reawaken in the Irish people a pride in their nation~ culture and heritage. The movements which attempted to do this were the G.A.A... which promoted Irish sports; the Gaelic League, which promoted the Irish language, music and dancing and the Anglo-Irish literary revival. Ultimately, the Cultural Revival became mixed in the rise of nationalism, which again appeared at the start of the twentieth century~ and, as a result, was a contributory factor towards the 1916 Rising

Reasons for the Cultural Revival

1 Irish sports~ such as Gaelic football, hurling and handball, were losing out in popularity to English sports, such as soccer, rugby and cricket
2 Ever since the Famine, the Irish language had been declining and English was spoken by the people because it seemed more practical and relevant to the modern world.

3 Many felt that Irish culture was worth preserving and that it was not inferior to British culture. They tried to reawaken the Irish national spirit and to make the Irish people proud of their heritage.

THE GAA

The Gaelic Athletic Association was the first of the cultural nationalist movements to emerge in the late nineteenth century. Its aim was to preserve and revive traditional Irish sports. This formal organization of sport was not unique to Ireland; it was part of an international trend. For example, in Britain, soccer was formally organized by the Football Association (established in 1863), and rugby was organized by the Rugby Union (established in 1871). In each case, rules of play were drawn up, sporting clubs were established and many of the famous football clubs of today were founded (Celtic in 1882, Liverpool in 1892, etc.). It was this formal organization of sports such as football and rugby that allowed their appeal to spread from Britain and across the world. In Ireland, rugby and football became more popular, at the expense of traditional Irish games.

Gaelic Games

Ireland had, and still has, sports that are unique to this country. They were described as 'Gaelic' games. The oldest of these games was hurling. It had been played in

Ireland since at least the fifth century. Gaelic football is believed to date from around the sixteenth century. Other sports such as handball and athletics were also popular.

During the nineteenth century, Gaelic games went into decline. There were many reasons for this, such as the rise in emigration and the fact that these sports were not formally organized. Hurling and football had no agreed basic rules, such as the number of players allowed, match duration, etc., and so in many cases games descended into chaos.

The appeal of these disorganized games declined as organized sports such as football, rugby and cricket spread across Ireland. A variation of hurling, known as Hurley, became popular in Dublin and was played in Trinity College. In 1877, the college drafted a set of rules for Hurley. In terms of rules, it was closer to hockey.

Michael Cusack

The revival of Gaelic Games can be credited to the work of a number of dedicated individuals -the most important of whom was Michael Cusack. Born in Co. Clare, Cusack worked as teacher for a while, before founding a school to educate those hoping to enter the civil service. This made him very wealthy. Cusack was very interested in all aspects of Gaelic culture, especially its sports, and he worked to develop the public's interest in Gaelic games. He set up the Civil Service Academy Hurling Club. By the early 1880s, he had come to the conclusion that a new national organization was needed to revive Gaelic Games. In this, he was helped by another enthusiast, P.W. Nally, who was a member of the IRB.

The Amateur Athletic Ass.

Before the GAA was founded, there had been an attempt to organise sports in Ireland. During the 1870s and 1880s, a number of amateur athletics clubs were founded, such as the Irish Championship Athletic Club. These clubs hoped to organise sports in Ireland. They had the following features.

Membership of these clubs was limited to the 'gentleman class'. This meant that the majority of people could not take part in any of their organised sports activities. Most of the leading organisers of these clubs were unionists. For people such as Cusack,

there was a growing fear that most sporting activity in Ireland would be organised and controlled by people who did not share the views of the majority~ by the early 1880s, Ireland was becoming divided between nationalists and unionists; there was a concern that popular sports would be controlled by unionists. Cusack believed it was important to organise Irish sports along nationalist principles.

The GAA is founded

On 1 November, 1884, the GAA was officially formed at a meeting in Hayes Hotel in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. There were only seven people at this meeting. Along with Cusack, one notable figure was Maurice Davin, who was one of the most famous, respected and successful athletes in Ireland. The small attendance can be partly explained by the fact that there had been only one week's notice of the meeting.

At the meeting, the key aims of the GAA were set out:

- To organise Irish sports according to Irish rules.
- To draw up rules for the playing of these sports.
- To allow membership to all classes.

It was agreed that because of the great respect in Ireland for Davin, he should become the GAA first President. Cusack was appointed secretary. The Association's first patrons were Archbishop Croke of Cashel, Charles Stewart Parnell and Michael Davitt - the former Fenian, John O'Leary, became a patron in 1886. Parnell became patron of the GAA in Dec 1884

GAA rules ready by Jan 1885-rules drawn up by Davin. Between 1885-86 GAA grew -new clubs-parish teams, inter parish matches organized. The ban- members of non GAA sports clubs not allowed to join GAA-dropped in 1886.

Internal problems Cusack wanted things done his way or not at all-letters of complaint about him-did not reply to letters, receipts of club fees not given, medals for comp not awarded. Forced to resign.

GAA and Nationalism

Link from the start Davitt ex IRB, Parnell Home Rule Croak firm nationalist.-meant Unionists would not join the GAA and likely that the IRB would try to influence or control it-try to use it to recruit members. In 1886new council elected all but 2 members were IRB members. They made a number of discisions. RIC members

banned from GAA-all members of CC were members of every county committee-this was about control. Davin resigned in disgust. HR party and the RCC alarmed at IRB control. At 1887 convention 200 members walked out in protest-looked like GAA was going to split but compromise tried in 1888 convention –Davin reappointed President and IRB influence reduced. Lesson sport and politics do not mix well. GAA split over Parnell's fall. The patrons were mixed-Davitt against, John O Leary for him. IRB central council for Parnell. When Parnell died in 1891 GAA formed a guard of honour-many saw GAA as linked with Parnellism and as it declined so did the GAA. Members left-clubs closed and in 1892 only 6 counties were rep at annual convention.-only 200 clubs-looked bad. Yet it survived.-focused on sport and not on politics.By 1914 crawled back and had 35,000 members. GAA began work on Croke park-helped revive Irish games-gave people back pride in their culture. Ban brought back in 1905 until 1970.

Economic History

1913 Lockout

BACKGROUND

Socialism slows to dev. In Ireland-60% workers on farms-only industry in Belfast but workers there div. between RC/Prot. Most workers unskilled-afraid to act up/established unions because lose jobs. H. Rule distracted from labour issues. There were some craft unions-in 1868 Irish Trade Union Congress established for them (felt English Unions not looking after them) They represented about 60,000 workers.

No unskilled workers unions but some in GB 1880's. Connolly Edinburgh, dustman, Irish parents-came to Ireland to organise socialist movement-1896-1 pound a week-stayed 7 years- established Irish Republican Socialist Party 1898-established paper The workers Republic-left Ireland 1903.

1900 conditions very bad-inflation up-unemployment up. Larkin arrives 1907-Belfast-org. Dockers-strike 1908-workers out in sympathy inc. police. Larkin moved to Dublin-put 2500 men into Dockers Union -3 strikes-GB union not happy-suspended. Larkin set up ITGWU in Dublin-Cork- Belfast-new union not that successful. 1900 Larkin sent to jail for misusing funds. Connolly back in Ireland 1910.

By 1912 ITGWU-18,000 members- Larkin good organiser. Between 1912-13 number of strikes-wages up 25%-used sympathetic strike (Blacklegs) Employers worried-org. by William Martin Murphy-owned trams, Clerys, Indo(100,000 a day)-68 years old

Murphy felt he paid well-but demanded loyalty. Paid 1 pound 2 shillings a week but lot workers part time-6 years probation-paid own uniform-fined if trams were late-no unions allowed. July 1913 told workers on trams no unions allowed- 6 ITGWU members fired. August in Indo 40 men/20 boys sacked. Tram workers refused to handle Indo-200 sacked. Larkin called a general strike for 26 August-Dublin Horse Show-busy week for trams. Power station at Ringsend kept open by police and in the Trams supervisors/non union men kept service going.

Looked like Murphy had won but authorities made mistakes-made arrests inc. Larkin. Banned ITGWU meeting in O' Connell Street 31 August. On night before- meeting

held at Liberty Hall-police charged the crowd-1 dead/300 injured. Larkin entered the Imperial Hotel on the 31 August-500 injured-most had nothing to do with strike. Larkin arrested.

Riots spread-abuse of police at Corpo buildings-police entered flats-5 arrested. Bloody Sunday-this got workers sympathy. House collapse Church Street-7 killed-again sympathy for workers-Murphy convinced employers federation to get workers to resign ITGWU or Lockout (Sept 1913). By Oct 20,000 people on strike or locked out.

THE LOCKOUT

Sept 1913-April 1914-Trade Union Congress (UK) - sent 100,000 to Dublin. Murphy's newspapers slagged workers for taking UK charity. A Griffith/ DP Moran were anti-Larkin TUC want strike over-sent reps to Dublin. Murphy would not talk to Larkin/ITGWU-so TUC had to support Larkin-but at same time they still wanted things sorted out. In UK libs wanted problem ended. Redmond/ Dillon -anti Larkin/Murphy but overall they were not involved because they were fighting for Home Rule.

Lib government set up an enquiry- 3 Englishmen -held public meetings and spoke to Larkin/Murphy. Workers side was strong- their wages were low/slums. Larkin offered to end sympathetic strikes if workers were allowed back into ITGWU. The Enquiry in Oct condemned both sides-employers refused to compromise-made them seem unreasonable and lost public support.

English socialists suggested taking Dublin children to UK in Oct. Church against it. Larkin annoyed but public opinion was against it so scheme abandoned. Employers begin to fight back-use of blacklegs-some given guns-use of lorries instead of carts. UK dock workers sent over (600) by UK shipping Federation. Connolly reacted by closing the docks -asked UK unions not to handle Irish goods going to UK. Tension between Larkin and TUC rose- TUC wanted talks. Larkin toured UK complaining about TUC leaders.

At TUC meeting in Dec Larkin got little support. Railway union workers in Dublin docks were ordered back to work. TUC tries again for talks but Murphy feels he is winning so no deal. Money from GB was disappearing. By Jan 1914 clear ITGWU had lost-workers began to drift back to work.-no pay rises-many had to leave ITGWU.

Ended April 1914-2000 still out of work-many joined UK army. ITGWU had Dec 1913 -20,000 members but now a lot less. Larkin left for the USA. Connolly took over the ITGWU-set up Citizens Army Nov 1913 to protect workers-will be used in 1916.

ASSESSMENT

Murphy won but the cost was high-hated in Irish history-starving workers etc. Workers lost battle but won the war. No future employer tries to destroy trade unions.

Political history

Topic 1

The Home Rule Movement: Part 1 :Origins and Leadership of Isaac Butt, 1870-79

Introduction to any essay on home rule

Home Rule meant the setting up in Ireland of an Irish Parliament which would take care of domestic matters, e.g. health, education and local government etc., while imperial matters, e.g. finance, war, trade etc., would still be controlled by Westminster. In the beginning, Home Rule was an expression of loyalty to England and a means of protecting the union between Ireland and England. However, in the course of time, the Home Rule Party became very nationalistic, and Home Rule came to mean almost total independence for Ireland, though a dual monarchy system would still prevail, i.e. the King of England would be head of both the Irish and the English parliaments.

Isaac Butt, 1813-79

Isaac Butt came from a very unionist background. He was born in Glenfin, Co. Donegal, the son of a Church of Ireland vicar. A member of the Protestant ascendancy (upper class), he became a Professor of Political Economy at Trinity College, a position from which he later resigned in order to practice Law. At this stage, he believed that the Act of Union gave peace and stability to Ireland. Butt even debated against Daniel O'Connell on one occasion, in the Corn Exchange in Dublin, when O'Connell was seeking to repeal the Act of Union. Soon after this, seeds of doubt about direct rule from Westminster began to form in Butt's mind and he began to feel the need for an Irish parliament in Dublin. Butt could see the poverty of the majority of the Irish people, and the lack of industry in Ireland made him realize that a separate system of taxation was necessary to encourage Irish industry.

Between the Famine and the Fenian Rising, Butt spent most of his time in England, but he returned to Ireland in 1865 to practice Law. His experiences in parliament during these years, first as an M.P. for Harwich and later for Youghal, convinced him of the need for change in Anglo-Irish relations as they then were. After the

Fenian Rising, he defended some Fenians in court. While he did not agree with their aims, he was impressed by their courage and determination. Butt became very popular in Ireland and his politics took the final steps towards reflecting his personal belief in Home Rule. The final stages occurred when Gladstone became Prime Minister in 1868. In 1869 Gladstone disestablished the Church of Ireland, i.e. the Church of Leland or any other Church would not be supported by state funds. In 1870, Gladstone introduced a Land Act. The Protestant landlords, already angry about the disestablishment of their Church, were furious about the Land Act, which they saw as an attempt to reduce their power. Butt emerged as their leader and, during the rest of his life, he tried to lead the Protestants towards Home Rule, which he saw as the answer to Ireland's problems.

The Home Government Association, 1870

There was so much discontent in Ireland that a new political movement, the **Home Government Association**, was formed in **May 1870**. It was made up of all classes but was dominated by Protestants, protesting against the erosion of the Act of Union. It was not a political party at this stage, but a pressure group, which advocated Butt's form of **Federalism**, i.e. an Irish parliament, with control over domestic matters, to be set up in Dublin. The Home Government Association did not interest itself in seeking tenant rights or in fighting elections. Meanwhile, In England, Butt also founded the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain to advance his ideas. It was quickly taken over by the Fenians. This was the first of several steps, which would change the Home Rule Movement from being a Protestant dominated Organization to a Nationalist movement.

The Home Rule League

In 1873 the Home Government Association was renamed the Home Rule League. By this time, Catholics and Nationalists predominated in the movement. It decided to contest the next general election, which was to be held in the following year. This was to be the first general election since the **1872 Ballot (secret) Act** was passed, so tenants could vote for the candidate of their choice without landlord interference. **Fifty-nine M.Ps** were returned for the Home Rule League in 1874. Included among them were two tenant farmers - a definite sign that the land was again

becoming a problem in Ireland. The M.Ps found themselves in a political party whose aim was Home Rule.

The Leadership of Isaac Butt

Butt proved to be a weak leader. He could not control the many groups within the Home Rule League and weld them into a united party. Benjamin Disraeli was Prime Minister at the time. He was far more interested in European affairs, e.g. Bismarck's Germany, the Balkans etc., to bother with Ireland, which **in** his opinion was merely a pinch in the imperial snuffbox. Butt was too polite and had too much respect for the House of Commons to cause a disturbance there. He dutifully prepared his speeches to which the other M.Ps listened politely but nothing was achieved. Butt, to the anger of his followers, continued to tolerate this. On a personal level, Butt had problems also because he was a chronic gambler who was always **in** debt.

Biggar, a Belfast merchant and ex-Fenian, became restless at Butt's lack of success. He introduced the **policy of obstruction**. He was later joined by others including O'Connor Power and Charles Stewart Parnell. Obstruction worked as follows: when a Bill was introduced into parliament, the obstructionists would speak about it at great length, supporting their arguments by quoting from books and dragging out the time so that parliament which only met for a limited period each year, could not conduct its business properly. On one occasion, Biggar forced the Prince of Wales to leave parliament during a debate. Butt was horrified at these tactics but could not stop them. In Ireland, the public, including the Fenians, were pleased about obstruction, because Butt's gentlemanly ways had brought no success whatsoever.

The Final Years of Isaac Butt

Butt was now out of step with the movement he had started and he began gradually to lose control. In **1877 Parnell became Chairman of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain**, thus replacing Butt. During the Balkan Crisis of 1877-78, Butt wanted the Home Rule Party to vote with the government, but he had fierce opposition from within his own party. There was a growing number of Home Rule M.Ps who wanted to make use of the Balkan Crisis in order to highlight their lack of interest in British affairs. In **February 1879**, there was a meeting of the Home Rule Party and Butt turned on those who opposed him. He demanded a **vote of**

confidence in him as leader and when the vote was taken, **he scraped** home b y **32 votes to 24 votes**. After the meeting, Butt tried to ignore the opposition to him within the party. At this stage, his health was getting worse and, in **May 1879**, he died. Parnell was still not strong enough to win the leadership and William Shaw, an M.P. who supported Butt, took over. However, in **1880 Parnell at last managed to become the leader of the Home Rule Party**.

Topic 2

Michael Davitt, 1846-1906

Introduction

During the 1870s, there was again an agricultural depression. The tenants were in a terrible state and the number of evictions rose. Two men **in** particular emerged to help them; the first was a rich Protestant landlord, Charles Stewart Parnell, and the second, the son of an evicted tenant farmer from Co. Mayo, Michael Davitt. Both were born in the year 1846 and though from very different backgrounds, they managed to get the tenants the '3Fs' by forming and leading the *Land League* during the years 1879 to 1882.

Michael Davitt, 1846-1906 Davitt was born in Straide, Co. Mayo, the son of a poor tenant farmer. The family was evicted for non-payment of rent in 1852 and emigrated to Lancashire. When he was eleven years old, he lost **his** arm in an accident. **Being** unfit for manual work, he returned to school and eventually went on to study History and Literature. Because of the experiences of his family, he had a great sympathy for the poor farmers of Ireland. In Lancashire, he saw that the poverty and suffering of the factory workers was just as bad.

His sympathy was therefore extended to the working class everywhere who were exploited by the rich. He was not, however, a follower of Karl Marx.-of the experiences of his family, he had a great sympathy for the poor farmers of Ireland. In Lancashire, he saw that the poverty and suffering of the factory workers was just as bad. His sympathy was therefore extended to the working class everywhere who were exploited by the rich. He was not, however, a follower of Karl Marx.

As a young man, Michael Davitt joined the I.R.B. and became regional secretary for the North of England. In 1870, he was arrested for gunrunning and was sentenced to fifteen years penal servitude. As harsh as prison was, it gave Davitt a chance to think out his ideas and he came to believe that the land problem in Ireland must be solved in order to find a solution to Ireland's problems. Two of his books, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland* and *Leaves from a Prison Diary*, explain his ideas.

In 1878, he was released on ticket-of-leave and he went to New Jersey in the U.S. to **visit his** mother. While there, he met John Devoy, who had also been thinking about the land problem in Ireland. It was Devoy who proposed the *New Departure*. This was to be a coalition of Parliamentarians, Fenians and Land Reformers, both those at home and those abroad, working for a solution to the land problem in Ireland after which they would try to get total independence. Devoy and Davitt traveled to Paris to see the I.R.B. President, Charles Kickham, **in** December 1878, but he refused to get involved because he thought that **it** would weaken the Fenian movement. In March 1879, Devoy and Davitt met Parnell in Paris, and he agreed to the New Departure.

Thus were the poor man from Straide and the rich man from Avondale drawn together to lead the Land League.

Davitt returned to Ireland after he met Parnell in Paris. He visited his native Mayo and was angered by the poverty and evictions he saw there. In April 1879, he joined in a demonstration in Irishtown, Co. Mayo, to protest against the injustices of the land system upon the tenant farmer. Because of the demonstration, the local landlord, Canon Burke, reduced his rent. This was a significant victory and **it** encouraged Davitt to organise a second meeting in Westport, in June 1879, with Parnell as the principal speaker. This meeting was also a success and the National Land League was formed in Dublin with Parnell as its President. The aims of the Land League were:

- 1 to fight unjust rents and unjust evictions,
- 2 To press for legislation whereby tenants would own their own lands.

Why did Parnell become President of the Land League? The support of the ordinary people in Ireland could only be gained by supporting action on their most urgent problem, i.e. the land. When Parnell did so, he gained much wider support both for himself and for his party. Thus, after the General Election in 1880, Parnell was able to gain the leadership of the Home Rule Party. Parnell was not an expert on land problems but his ideas were developing. In the beginning, he would have been

content for the tenant to gain the '3Fs'. However, speaking in Cavan early in 1879, he said he was looking forward to the time when, by purchasing the interests of the landlord, it might be possible for every tenant to be the owner of the farm which he occupied as tenant-at-will or otherwise.

The Growth of the Land League

The Land League grew rapidly and received support from many people including the Fenians in America, who also donated money to the movement. The Land League was a passive movement, i.e. it did not believe in the use of violence. There was a minority in the movement who did believe in violence and the leaders of the League were not always able to control them. Parnell knew that it would be difficult to satisfy both moderate and more violent supporters. He tried to do this by making angry speeches, which seemed to suggest violence without actually mentioning physical force. As Westport, in June 1879, even before the League was formed, he urged the tenants to 'keep a firm grip on their homesteads' and to resist eviction. At Ennis, in September 1880, he spoke about Boycotting, which turned out to be the League's most powerful weapon. Disturbances did occur as a result of these speeches and W.E Forster, the Chief Secretary, was forced to introduce the Protection of Persons and Property Act, in March 1881, in order to put down agrarian crime. Davitt was arrested soon after this and it was hoped that Parnell would leave Westminster and return to Ireland to set up a parliament. He did not do so, and this showed that Parnell was quite clearly a constitutional politician, even if his words were sometimes those of a revolutionary.

Boycotting

Parnell spoke of Boycotting at Ennis in September 1880; when he urged the tenant farmers to shun any landlord who unjustly evicted tenants and to shun any tenant who took the land of an evicted farmer. They were to be treated like a 'leper of old' and made complete outcasts. Boycotting first took place on Lord Erne's estate in Co. Mayo, against his land agent Captain Boycott, in October 1880. All his servants and laborers left him and he could not gather in his harvest. In desperation, he wrote to the *The Times* in London, describing his plight. The Orange Order then sent him a number of laborers, who had to be guarded by police and soldiers. The cost of this

was more than the harvest was worth. Boycott's nerve finally broke and he returned to England. Boycotting was thereafter used **in** many parts of the country.

Gladstone's Reaction to the Land League

Agrarian crime continued to increase and Gladstone decided to introduce a Coercion Act, The Protection of Persons and Property Act, which he then followed with a second Land Act in 1881. The 1881 Land Act granted the tenants the '3Fs', i.e. Fair Rent, which was to be fixed for fifteen years, Free Sale and Fixity of Tenure. Gladstone promised to set up land courts, which would establish what Fair Rent was. Excluded from the benefits of the Land Act were 130,000 tenants, who were in arrears with their rent, and 150,000 leaseholders. In spite of this, the Act did meet the demands of the Land League and Parnell knew this. He was now in a difficult situation. If he rejected the Act, he would lose the support of his moderate supporters, and if he accepted the Act, he would lose the support of his extreme followers, including the Fenians. He decided to concentrate on the weaknesses of the Act, i.e. the situation of tenants in arrears and the leaseholders. He gave many fiery speeches around Ireland and he began to insult Gladstone to such an extent that Gladstone had him arrested and placed in Kilmainham jail. On the day of his arrest, he wrote a letter to Katherine O'Shea, the English woman with whom he was in love. In it he said: 'Politically it is a fortunate thing for me that I have been arrested, as the movement is breaking fast and all will be quiet **in** a few months when I shall be released.'

The Kilmainham Treaty, 1882

Parnell was imprisoned in Kilmainham from October 1881 to April 1882. From jail, Parnell warned the government that 'Captain Moonlight' i.e. violence, would take his place. He was correct and there was soon great unrest in the country. Parnell also issued a No Rent Manifesto calling on the tenants to withhold their rents. This was only partly successful, as the demand of his moderate followers had been met by the terms of the 1881 Land Act. Parnell and Gladstone eventually came to an agreement, The Kilmainham Treaty, whereby Parnell would be released in return for (1) his help in restoring order in the country, (2) the relaxing of coercion, and (3) the extension of the terms of the Land Act to include tenants who owed rents and the leaseholders.

Parnell was then released, much to the disgust of W.E Forster, the Chief Secretary, who resigned. The treaty was regarded as a betrayal by both Davitt and Devoy, though both men did not openly speak against it for fear of creating even further disunity. However, the New Departure was now at an end. The Land League had been suppressed before Parnell's arrest and he did not revive it. Instead, he set up the Irish National League to campaign for Home Rule first and Land Reform second. Parnell now believed that a purely agrarian struggle was no longer practical. He now entered a new phase of **his** career - that of a constitutional **politician** working in Westminster.

Michael Davitt, 1882-1906

Davitt regarded the 1881 Land Act, which gave the tenants the '3Fs', as being only a stepping-stone towards the real solution to the land problem as he saw it. Before the 1881 Land Act, the landlords were an elite group **in** the country. Now their **position** was collapsing and by 1903 the landlords would be replaced by small tenant farmers who, because they owned their own farms, became the new elite group. Davitt wanted the land nationalized. The government would hold **it in** trust for the entire nation, though farmers could work it for agreed lengths of time. His dream did not come true and the tenant farmers became the owners of the land. On his release from prison, Davitt threw himself back into the land question. He was elected M.P. for Meath in 1882, for the constituency of North Meath in 1892, and for South Mayo from 1895 to 1899. Besides believing in land nationalization, Davitt saw the land as being a stepping-stone towards total independence. The split the Home Rule Party, which came about with the fall of Parnell, set the question of the land back a long time. Davitt withdrew from politics in 1899 and became a journalist who traveled the world reporting on various wars etc., which were taking place. He visited America and South Africa and published six books, including *The Boer Fight for Freedom*, 1902. He died **in Dublin** on 31 May 1906 and is buried in Straide, Co. Mayo.

Topic 3 Parnell Part 1 **Parnell's Involvement with the Land Question**

C.S. Parnell, born Avondale, Co. Wicklow in 1846, son of a rich Protestant landlord. Yet, the Parnell's were not typical of their class in that they had deep hatred and mistrust of everything English. As a result, when P. entered parliament (29), he did so as a member of the Home Rule Party. Over time, Parnell sought to rise to prominence within the Party and ultimately to replace Butt as leader. Why then did P allow himself to become caught up with the agrarian struggle? He realized that the bulk of Irish people were interested more in the land than in constitutional reform. His involvement in the land question would be the means by which he could win popular support, which would enable him to become leader of the HR Party. The land question would be the engine by which the train of Home Rule would be drawn.

The New Departure, 1879

P was very anxious to join with Davitt and Devoy in the *New Departure* (1879). Yet, his early involvement was marked by an obvious hesitancy. Parnell feared clerical disapproval. Even after Irishtown, Co. Mayo on 20 April 1879, which attracted about 10,000 people and succeeded in achieving rent reductions Parnell still held back. Took persuasion (Davitt's) part to persuade Parnell to attend Westport, Co. Mayo in June 1879. Here he urged the tenants "*to keep a firm grip on their homesteads*" Parnell's own ideas on the land problem were only developing. In the early days, he envisaged a socially stable partnership where kindly landlords would win the approval of tenant farmers and together they could live harmoniously. This view changed. Speaking in Cavan in 1879, he said he was looking forward to the time when, it might be possible for every tenant to be the owner of his or her farm.

The Land League

In October 1879, Parnell accepted an invitation from Davitt to become President of the **Land League**. The two objectives of the League –

- preserving the tenants from being rack-rented and unjustly evicted in the short term and
- making them owners of their farms

Methods: the use of 'moral' rather than 'physical' force. Shortly afterwards, Parnell, along with John Dillon, sailed to USA to make an appeal on behalf of the Land League. 2-month visit traveled over 25,000km and raised 60,000 for famine relief and another 12,000 for the general purposes of the League...personal triumph for Parnell and allowed him to make a deep impact on the hearts and minds of Irish men and women everywhere. Little wonder after the general election of 1880, P gained the leadership of the party

The Activities of the Land League

While the Land League was a passive movement, a minority believed in violence and the leaders not always able to control them. Nor, however, did Parnell want to alienate these supporters. Hence, he often made angry speeches, which seemed to suggest violence without actually mentioning physical force. At Ennis, in September 1880, Parnell pointed out the idea of a '*moral Coventry*'. *Case of Captain Boycott*. Nobody harvested Boycott's crops; he was refused service in shops and generally disregarded by the community. Boycotting was thereafter to prove to be one of the most effective weapons of the Land League

Coercion and Conciliation

Agrarian crime continued and the burning of crops, cattle maiming and shootings became widespread. Gladstone adopted a policy of *coercion and conciliation* to deal with the situation. The coercion bills of February and March 1881 (Protection of Persons and Property act) allowed the Government to arrest, without clear-cut proof, anyone believed to be a danger to security. Parnell and about 20 of his MPs sought to obstruct the coercion bills. This forced the House of Commons to change its rules and ensure that obstructionism would never occur again. This did not stop Parnell from protesting about the arrest of Davitt, however. For his action, he was suspended from the House. Yet, Parnell refused to make his leave permanent, as urged by some of his followers, preferring to fight for the Irish tenant by constitutional means. Further, he had reason to believe that Gladstone was about to introduce a land bill.

The 1881 Land Act, when it came, **established the three Fs all over Ireland. A special commission was also established so that rents could be fixed by judicial**

arbitration for a period of 15 years. The Act had thus gone a long way towards meeting the short-term aim of the Land League. Parnell knew this but he also realized that if he accepted the Act unreservedly he would lose the support of his extreme followers, while, if he rejected the Act, he would lose the support of his moderate supporters. Parnell thus tried to perform a delicate balancing act and avoided condemning the Act outright but concentrated instead on emphasizing its weakest points, such as its failure to deal with tenants in arrears.

Kilmainham treaty

Parnell provoked Gladstone and this led to his arrest in Oct and his imprisonment in Kilmainham Jail...later joined by Dillon, O'Brien. While Parnell was in prison, agrarian violence worsened. From prison, Parnell issued a "*No Rent Manifesto*" calling on the tenant farmers to withhold all rent. The Land League was suppressed. This action on the part of the government only made matters worse and the Ladies Land League, in which Anna Parnell (Charles' sister) played a leading role, took over the work. A compromise was needed in form of the Kilmainham Treaty of April 1882 between Gladstone and Parnell. This was an unwritten agreement **Parnell and other leaders of the Land League would be released from prison on condition that they use their influence to ease agrarian violence. Gladstone, for his part, promised to drop coercion and to settle the arrears question.** Both men kept *their* agreements. Davitt and his associates deplored the Treaty, seen by Gladstone's critics as surrender to Parnell. The Kilmainham Treaty was directly responsible for the resignation of Forster, the Chief secretary. His replacement, **Lord Cavendish**, arrived in Ireland but he and his under secretary, T. H. **Burke**, Cavendish was murdered on 6 May 1882 by members of a secret society, the Invincible. Led to the introduction of a new coercion bill, Parnell's condemnation of the murders and his offer to resign only further increased his popularity and prestige. It also afforded him a welcome excuse to disassociate himself from the Land War and the events of the illegal Land League.

The Irish National League

Parnell's position was so secure that he formed a new organization called the **Irish National League**. This differed from its predecessor in two important ways:
I. It was dominated by the Irish Parliamentary Party and was virtually under the control of Parnell.

2. Agrarian reform was now relegated to second place behind the Movement for Home Rule.

In any event, the founding of the Irish National League allowed Parnell to turn his attentions to his own main interest, that of achieving Home Rule for Ireland. Over the next few years, Parnell moved further and further away from the *struggle* for land reform. 1885 saw the introduction of the Ashbourne Land Act, and while this was welcomed by Parnell, he made no effort in its aftermath to become involved with the Plan of Campaign, 1886-1890. Under the Plan, tenants were to seek a reduction in rents on estates where payments were considered excessive. If this was not granted, they were to pay what they considered a fair rent into an estate campaign fund. Parnell refused to take an active part in the Plan on the basis that it would alienate his Liberal allies.

Conclusion

While Parnell's reasons for becoming involved in the land question were not as unselfish as those of Davitt's were, his involvement had huge significance for the land movement as a whole. From the link between Davitt, Devoy and Parnell emerged the Land League and movement of modern times. Parnell's skill and superb ability to combine the explosive force of agrarianism with the mastery of parliamentary pressure, helped to ensure that the land problem, though not *solved* in the full sense of the word, had at least, by 1892, been revolutionized.

Topic 3 Part 2

P's Involvement with Home Rule also part two of Home Rule 1870-1912/1914 and part of Parnell as a successful leader.

Background

P was born in Avondale, Co. Wicklow, the son of a rich Protestant landlord. His mother, Delia Stewart, was an American and she came from an anti-English family. His grandfather, Admiral Stewart, had fought against the British in the 1812 war. P's mother, however, once she arrived into the Protestant ascendancy, cultivated the family connections in order to help advance her sons. P was sent to Cambridge but he left without taking his degree. He disliked the way the English looked down on the Irish and he inherited his mother's anti-English attitudes. The Parnell family also did not believe that it was right for the Protestant ascendancy to control Ireland, even

though the Ps were members of The result was that P was able to rebel against his class without rebelling against his family.

In 1875, a by-election victory in Meath resulted in the advent of this new recruit to the HR Party. Parnell favored the Home Rule formula because, although he believed the orthodox Fenian doctrine of armed rebellion--to be in no way --repugnant, and even endorsed such approaches in the final months of his career - earning him a lasting reputation and heroic stature within the republican tradition - he was first and foremost a constitutional nationalist who saw radicalism, from a practical point of view, as an irrelevance in the Ireland of his time. Within a year of Parnell's entry to parliament, he had joined the obstructionists -and, w fell out of favour with Isaac Butt for his involvement, he quickly began to make a very real impact, gaining further attention by claiming that-the Manchester Martyrs were not murderers. Shortly afterwards, in 1877, P, became President of the Fenian dominated HR Confederation of Great Britain. In February 1879, a vote was taken on the leadership issue and Butt barely managed to retain his position. Meanwhile, Butt's health was steadily declining and he died in May 1879. P was still not strong enough to win the leadership, the majority of the Party favouring a banker called William Shaw-.

From Land League to National League

If P was to win the leadership of the HR Party, he had to get the backing of public opinion in Ireland. The opportunity to win widespread popularity came with Parnell's involvement in the New Departure and in the Land League, as well as his siding with the tenant farmers -through the Land War years, 1879-1882. Reward came quickly and in 1880, P was strong enough to replace Shaw as leader to the HR League. Yet, it was not until October 1882, when P considered-the land question to be effectively solved, that he once more concentrated on constitutional politics. This change in approach could be seen from his replacing of the Land League with the Irish National League. The new movement was a political party and its principal aim was national self-government. P, as a popular orator, set about re-organizing the HR Party and building it into a strong, tightly disciplined party. At local level, for example, the League became very active and, by 1886, there were 1,200 branches throughout the country. The branches were responsible for collecting money for the various needs and demands of the League, among which were the

payment of election expenses for MPs and the giving of grants to help poor but valuable MPs meet the cost of attending parliament.

Growth of the HR Party

The National League had 30,000 left over from the Land War. A further 60,000 was raised in Ireland between 1882 and 1885. Much of this came about because of the P Testimonial Fund, 1 883. The amount raised showed the confidence, which the Irish people and Irish Americans now had in P. As Parnell's personal influence grew, he won to his side not only the electorate but the bishops and clergy as well. Bishop Nulty of Meath and Archbishop Croke of Cashel were among his staunchest supporters. The strength of the HR League was still further enhanced by the Party Pledge (1884) whereby all parliamentary candidates had *"to sit, act and vote as one"*. Resignation from the party must follow failure to comply. Meanwhile, success in by-elections allowed P to increase the number of Home Rulers in parliament. The 1884 Reform Act, which trebled the number of Irish voters, also proved tremendously advantageous to the Irish Party. Such was Parnell's confidence that he used his position to bargain with the Liberals and the Conservatives - in the event of a forthcoming election and an inconclusive general election result P would support the party which offered him the most.

Bargaining for Power - General Election, November 1885

When a Conservative caretaker administration took office in 1885 under Lord Salisbury, the Conservatives were quick to angle for Parnellite support. They relaxed coercion, passed the Ashbourne Land Act (I 885) and appointed a pro-HR Lord Lieutenant to Ireland. P then turned his attention to Gladstone, hoping that he would make an even more attractive offer. Gladstone, however, refused on principle to descend to a sordid bidding for votes. The Conservative-Parnellite alliance was therefore cemented and P instructed his supporters in Britain to vote Conservative at the general election of November 1885. The result of the election was:

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Liberals | 335 |
| Conservatives | 249 |
| HR | 86 |

Although Parnell's party had almost doubled its representation, it did not have a perfect balance of power. By combining his votes-with the Liberals, P could **make** Gladstone Prime Minister, but he could not do the same for Salisbury. YET, P could not support Gladstone without a specific pledge that the Liberals would introduce a Home Rule Bill in parliament.

Flying of the Hawarden Kite - 1886 HR Bill

Before P had come to a decision, Gladstone's son Herbert, speaking from the family home in Hawarden, announced that his father was impressed by the large majority in Ireland in favour of HR and that he intended to bring in a Home Rule bill. This incident, -the "*Flying of the Hawarden Kite*" caused P to swing the support of the HR Party behind Glad. and to irrevocably break up the alliance

with the Conservatives. In government, Gladstone introduced his first HR Bill, April 1886. It proposed:

1. The setting up of an Irish Parliament in Dublin with control over domestic matters (**health**, education, local government)
2. Westminster would still control imperial matters (trade, finance, defence, war)
3. Irish representation in Westminster would cease
4. The Irish Government would pay 15% of Britain's costs in running the empire. When the bill was voted on in the House of Commons it was defeated by 30 votes.

This was because many Liberals (93), led by Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Harrington, had voted against the bill.

Fall of Liberals - Pigott Forgeries

Gladstone now resigned and the Conservatives took office. Over the coming years, they committed themselves to a policy of "*Killing HR with Kindness*. " Any hope of achieving HR depended on the Home- Rule-Liberal Alliance and P now worked to improve relations with this group. Clearly, his opportunity to maneuver in parliament was disappearing. In 1887 the Liberal Alliance appeared in danger when *The London Times* published a series of articles entitled "*Parnellism and Crime*. " P was reputed to have written letters approving of the Phoenix Park murders in 1882. A select committee of the House of Commons was-set up to investigate not just the letters but

P and the Irish League. It was clear that the HR movement was on trial. The investigations were still underway when, in February 1889, one of the witnesses, a Dublin journalist, Richard Pigott, admitted having forged the letters. P was thus completely vindicated and his popularity rose. He became the "*Uncrowned King of Ireland*" and was Gladstone's personal guest at Hawarden. It seemed that the Liberal alliance was now stronger and more promising than ever.

The O'Shea Divorce Case - fall of Parnell

P had been living with Katherine O'Shea, wife of Captain O'Shea, for a number of years and had two daughters, when, in Dec 1889, Captain O'Shea filed for divorce and named P as co-respondent. People were aghast and believed that this was just another attempt to discredit P. P, however, did not contest the case and in Nov 1890, he was found to be the guilty party. P was unprepared for the reaction among his Nationalist and Liberal supporters. Gladstone made it clear that "*on moral grounds*" he could not continue to support P as leader of the Irish Nationalists. In Committee Room 15, P was deposed by 45 votes to 27. This can be seen as a major turning point in the fortunes of the HR Party. The Party was split in two over the issue. Supporters of P approved his defiance of Gladstone and his recent criticism of the limitations of HR. This group was strongest in Dublin and in some of the poorest areas of the West. Opponents of P, on the other hand, condemned his adultery and, in particular, his refusal to resign voluntarily as leader. They had the backing of the powerful Catholic Church. In spite of these differences, P still insisted on fighting for his right to lead. He returned to Ireland and throughout 1891, Parnellite candidates fought three bitter by-elections in Kilkenny, Carlow and North Sligo. In each case, his candidate was defeated. Worn out and disillusioned, P died in October 1891.

Conclusion

Parnell was a figure of immense importance, whose achievements are many and undisputed. Apart from the explosive force he presented in Irish agrarianism, he created a tightly disciplined and effective party whose performance at Westminster changed forever the basis of the relationship between Ireland and England. P, the Protestant, introduced an ecumenical spirit into Irish politics and, by forging a strong sense of nationalism among Irish people, he gave them a unity they had seldom experienced before. With Davitt and the Land League, he managed to break the

power of the landlords and turn Ireland into a land of tenant farmers. This is regarded by historians as the greatest revolution of modern Ireland. However, Parnell regarded land reform as only a stepping-stone to the much more important objective of legislative independence (HR): Tragically, his downfall, due to the divorce case, ended his hopes in that regard. P's achievement as a statesman was damaged by his downfall it was not completely overshadowed, and it still endures to this day. He made the people of Britain aware as never before of Ireland's claim to HR. He is remembered for his spirit of splendid defiance in voicing the claims for Irish nationhood. His outstanding leadership during 10 stressful years laid the foundations for the critical final steps of Ireland's struggle for freedom.

Land Purchase in Ireland, 1870-1909

Land Act, 1870

The period 1870-1909, NB periods in the history of land purchase. G, whose mission was "*to pacify Ireland*" sought to achieve a just relationship between landlord and tenant. Consequently, he introduced his first Land Act in 1870. **The Act gave force of law to the Ulster Custom (the *Three Fs*) - *Fair Rent, Free Sale and Fixity of Tenure* - wherever it was agreed that it existed. Elsewhere**

1. **Tenants leaving farms were to be compensated for improvements made.**
2. **Eviction for causes other than the non-payment of rent was to involve compensation for "disturbance".**

Act was also accompanied by a '*Bright Clause*', which permitted tenants to **borrow two thirds** of the cost of the holding from the state, paying off the debt at **5% interest over 35 years.**

The Act while not radical had a symbolic value....first time the landlord's rights were being questioned Yet the Act had problems. Ulster Custom proved difficult to define in law with the responsibility on the tenant to prove his case.....where there were conflicting claims, the benefit of the doubt was given to the landlord. Tenants failed to achieve security of tenure for anything other than compensation for eviction, while the landlords' power to raise rents was not really restricted. The "Bright Clause,"....most tenants lacked the capital to raise one third of the deposit. Only 877 purchased land. A further problem was that there was no real incentive for landlords to sell.

Land Act, 1881

In 1881G introduced his second Land Act. Became law in August 1881, at the height of the Land War (1879/1882).Difficult time in Ireland. In 1879,evictions amounted to 1,238. By 1881, gone to 3,465. Agrarian crime went from 2,500 outrages in 1880 to 4,400 in 1882. Such statistics suggest that agitation developed as a response to increasing evictions rather than *vice versa*. Seeking therefore to

conciliate, the 1881 Land Act sought to meet the immediate demands of the tenant's .**It established the principle of co-partnership or dual ownership between landlord and tenant....by giving all tenants the 3 Fs. And a land court to establish a fair rent(fixed for 15 years). Also improved on the land purchase provisions of the 1870 Act. Tenants now only had to cover one quarter of the value of their holdings.** Excluded from the benefits of the Land Act were 150,000 leaseholders and 130,000 tenants who were in arrears with their rent.

Arrears Act 1882 - From Dual Ownership to Tenant Proprietorship

Flaws in 1881 Act were solved by the K. Treaty in May 1882. This released Parnell and other leaders from prison and the relaxing of coercion, this treaty provided for an **Arrears Act 1882**. This was an extension of the 1881 act to **include both tenants who owed rents and also leaseholders**. Yet while the Liberals had made the highest concessions to tenant farmers and effectively made them joint owners of their farms with their landlords, they refused to finance any scheme which would lead to owner occupancy, It was the Conservatives, who carried the land question a stage further. Having taken office in June 1885, the caretaker Conservative government, under Lord Salisbury, played a significant role in solving the land problem(part of killing home rule with kindness). It did so by initiating a period of land purchase in Ireland.

Land Act 1885 - Its Consequences and Future Acts

The new Lord Chancellor of Ireland, Lord Ashbourne, proposed a scheme whereby **the State would advance the entire purchase price** of holdings to tenants thereby enabling them to buy their farms, repaying the money in small installments. **The Ashbourne Act of 1885** provided **5m** for land purchase to be **paid back over 49 years at an interest rate of 4%**. The Act was very **successful**. Its attraction, from the tenant's point of view, was that he was advanced the entire amount of money but there was to be no solicitor's fees or legal expenses incurred. Within 3 years, the 5m was already used by 25,00. **Amending acts were passed by the Conservatives in 1887, 1888 and 1889** when further sums of money were provided to meet demand. The Conservatives were prompted by the belief that every man had his price "*men forgive if the belly gains*" and that the improvement of economic conditions would act as an antidote to the Home Rule virus.

The Balfour Land Act 1891

By 1890 the moment ripe for another step forward and Arthur Balfour, Chief Secretary to Ireland between 1887 and 1891, proposed to seize the chance by forcing reluctant or uncooperative landlords to sell. This proved too ambitious, however, and Balfour had to drop it. It was not until 1891 that his Land Act - in altered form - became law- The **1891 Balfour Land Act** was part of the Conservative policy of *"Killing Home Rule with Kindness"*. **33m** provided for the financing of land purchase

paid back over **49 years at a 4% interest rate**. While the amount was greater than under any previous act, **complicated regulations inherent in the Act discouraged tenants somewhat**. Moreover, the Act contained the drawback that **landlords were to be paid not in cash but in land stock**, which was liable to fluctuate with the state of the market. **This Act also provided for the establishment of the Congested Districts Board** which sought to provide relief for farmers in distressed areas of the country (the west) by encouraging home industries, improve fishing and forestry, as well as the growth of railways.

The Wyndham Act 1903

An act amending the B Act was passed 1896. This increased the amount of money available for purchase and dropped some of the safeguards embodied in the 1891 Act, which had frightened off the peasantry. Meanwhile, although the passing of the **Local Government Act in 1898** had no immediate impact on land purchase, it is nonetheless important in that it marked a decisive shift in power and influence over the country from the landlord ascendancy class to the small farmer, shopkeeper and publican. This made it easier for the **Wyndham Land Act of 1903** to carry the principle of land purchase. Government was to provide **100m for land purchase to be paid back at an interest rate of 3.5% over 69 years**. It also **encouraged landlords to sell out their entire estates by awarding them a 12% bonus**. In cases where **75% of the tenants on a given estate wished to buy their holdings and landlords were willing to sell, the remainder of tenants were now obliged to buy**.

Birrell Act 1909

The main drawback of the 1903 Act was that it did not compel landlords to sell. The Birrell Land Act of 1909, passed by the Liberal government under Herbert Asquith,

introduced a compulsory purchase scheme. Thus, by 1909, over 270,000 purchases had been negotiated and 46,000 were pending.

Conclusion

The 1903 and 1909, Land Acts completed the social and economic revolution in land ownership. While, on the one hand, these acts changed the face of rural Ireland in that the landlord system had been broken and destroyed and tenant proprietorship had become a reality, on the other hand, the land acts did not necessarily lead to automatic improvement in conditions of Irish farmers. Farmers continued to be slow to invest in their land, and technology was limited. In 1918, for example, Ireland had only 70 tractors and 300 haybailers. Problems of finance, education, co-operation, long-term planning and conservatism remained

Topic 5

Constructive Unionism 1890-1905

The phrases 'constructive unionism' and 'killing Home Rule by kindness' describe the Conservative policy of combining conciliation with coercion to sideline Home Rule. This policy is mainly associated with Chief Secretaries Arthur Balfour (1887-1891), Gerald Balfour (1895-1900) and George Wyndham (1900-1905). Some Anglo-Irish Unionists were also involved. Most were concerned with improving the country but the wiser ones knew that Ireland was changing fast and that they needed to be seen as progressive if they were to have a place in the new Ireland. Not everybody favoured constructive unionism. Nationalists disliked it because it aimed to destroy Home Rule. Some Conservatives also disliked it, believing that coercion alone offered the only solution to the 'Irish problem'. Other Conservatives wanted to keep Home Rule alive as a handy stick to beat the Liberals with at election time. Constructive unionism involved land purchase, economic development, and local government reform.

Flaws in Gladstone's Land Act of 1881 Act were solved by the K. Treaty in May 1882. This released Parnell and other leaders from prison and the relaxing of coercion, this treaty provided for an **Arrears Act 1882**. This was an extension of the 1881 act to **include both tenants who owed rents and also leaseholders**. Yet while the Liberals had made the highest concessions to tenant farmers and effectively made them joint owners of their farms with their landlords, they refused to finance any scheme which would lead to owner occupancy. It was the Conservatives, who carried the land question a stage further. Having taken office in June 1885, the caretaker Conservative government, under Lord Salisbury, played a significant role in solving the land problem (part of killing home rule with kindness). It did so by initiating a period of land purchase in Ireland.

Land Act 1885 - Its Consequences and Future Acts

The new Lord Chancellor of Ireland, Lord Ashbourne, proposed a scheme whereby **the State would advance the entire purchase price** of holdings to tenants thereby enabling them to buy their farms, repaying the money in small installments. **The Ashbourne Act of 1885** provided **5m** for land purchase to be **paid back over 49 years at an interest rate of 4%**. The Act was very **successful**. Its attraction, from

the tenant's point of view, was that he was advanced the entire amount of money but there was to be no solicitor's fees or legal expenses incurred. Within 3 years, the 5m was already used by 25,00. **Amending acts were passed by the Conservatives in 1887, 1888 and 1889** when further sums of money were provided to meet demand. The Conservatives were prompted by the belief that every man had his price "*men forgive if the belly gains*" and that the improvement of economic conditions would act as an antidote to the Home Rule virus.

The Balfour Land Act 1891

By 1890 the moment ripe for another step forward and Arthur Balfour, Chief Secretary to Ireland between 1887 and 1891, proposed to seize the chance by forcing reluctant or uncooperative landlords to sell. This proved too ambitious, however, and Balfour had to drop it. It was not until 1891 that his Land Act - in altered form - became law- The **1891 Balfour Land Act** was part of the Conservative policy of "*Killing Home Rule with Kindness*". **33m** provided for the financing of land purchase

paid back over **49 years at a 4% interest rate**. While the amount was greater than under any previous act, **complicated regulations inherent in the Act discouraged tenants somewhat**. Moreover, the Act contained the drawback that **landlords were to be paid not in cash but in land stock**, which was liable to fluctuate with the state of the market.

The Wyndham Act 1903

An act amending the B Act was passed 1896. This increased the amount of money available for purchase and dropped some of the safeguards embodied in the 1891 Act, which had frightened off the peasantry. Meanwhile, although the passing of the **Local Government Act in 1898** had no immediate impact on land purchase, it is nonetheless important in that it marked a decisive shift in power and influence over the country from the landlord ascendancy class to the small farmer, shopkeeper and publican. This made it easier for the **Wyndham Land Act of 1903** to carry the principle of land purchase. Government was to provide **100m for land purchase to be paid back at an interest rate of 3.5% over 69 years**. It also encouraged **landlords to sell out their entire estates by awarding them a 12% bonus**. In cases where **75% of the tenants on a given estate wished to buy their holdings and landlords were willing to sell, the remainder of tenants were now obliged to buy**.

Birrell Act 1909

The main drawback of the 1903 Act was that it did not compel landlords to sell. The Birrell Land Act of 1909, passed by the Liberal government under Herbert Asquith, introduced a compulsory purchase scheme. Thus, by 1909, over 270,000 purchases had been negotiated and 46,000 were pending.

The Balfour 1891 Act also provided for the establishment of the Congested Districts Board which sought to provide relief for farmers in distressed areas of the country (the west) by encouraging home industries, improve fishing and forestry, as well as the growth of railways. The mere transfer of land alone rarely improved living standards, especially where land was infertile and holdings were small. In 1891, Balfour set up the Congested Districts Board (CDB) to deal with this problem. Initially the congested districts included 16 per cent of the country and 11 per cent the population. They expanded to include one-third of the country and over 1 million people.

Balfour realised that the CDB would be most acceptable when it was seen to be free of undue government influence. Ex officio members included the chief and under-secretaries and the land commissioner. Other Board members included many clergymen and Nationalist politicians. Home Rulers complained that the ultimate aim of the CDB was to destroy Home Rule but it was of the few state bodies in which they exercised major influence.

The CDB had a major impact on the areas in which it operated. It created many economic holdings; improved land quality; built roads, piers, and light; provided fishing boats; improved housing; and introduced spinning and weaving as home industries. The CDB proved such a success that it was proposed to extend its functions over the entire country. This was not done, for it would have turned the CDB into the effective government of the country.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1898)

Until 1898, Irish local government was controlled by grand juries, self-perpetuating bodies representing only the remnants of the Protestant Ascendancy. The LGA replaced these with county, urban and rural district councils, elected by local ratepayers including women. The councils were financed by rates, government grants and loans and carried out numerous functions, including road building and the provision of housing, sanitation, poor relief, etc.

Before 1898, Nationalists held 47 of 251 grand jury seats. After-wards, they held 774 of 1,039 local council seats. Thus, power on the local authorities transferred from Unionists to Nationalists. However, most councils were dominated by permanent majorities of Nationalists or Unionists and many were characterized by corruption, inefficiency and patronage. Others did fine work and provided their communities with numerous facilities, which they had previously lacked.

Balfour hoped that local home rule would encourage nationalists to forget national Home Rule. It did not. The success of the Act more probably whetted rather than satisfied the appetite for self-government. During the Independence Struggle, the local authorities refused to co-operate with the Local Government Board. They transferred their allegiance to Dail Eireann and paralysed the British administration of Ireland. Thus the instrument devised by Balfour to perpetuate British rule became its own undoing.

SIR HORACE PLUNKETT

Sir Horace Plunkett spent 10 years ranching in the USA and absorbed the great dynamism associated with the New World. He turned to Ireland in 1888 and threw himself into the economic and political life of the country, often with more enthusiasm than tact. His outspoken utterances won him so much hostility that his impact on Irish life was greatly reduced. In his **book**, *Ireland in the New Century* (1904), Plunkett resented a devastating analysis of the state of Ireland. A Unionist himself, he attacked his own class for its greed and its failure to reconcile the people to the Union. He attacked Home Rule politicians for neglecting the country's economic problems. He attacked the Catholic clergy for their authoritarianism, their neglect of worldly problems and their preoccupation with church building. Finally, he accused the population at large of laziness and attacked it for being easily led.

The co-operative movement

Plunkett believed that co-operation would solve rural Ireland's social and economic problems. By combining their resources, farmers could buy puts cheaply, process their produce and sell it, optimizing their profits at each stage. The first co-operative was established at Doneraile in 1891. The movement grew rapidly and in 1894 Plunkett founded the **Irish Agricultural Organisation Society (IAOS)** to co-ordinate its activities. Many members of the ascendancy were on the committee of the IAOS, reflecting the fact that an important section of this class was anxious to improve their country and to help the people who had deprived them of their estates. The IAOS began publication of *Homestead* in 1895. It was edited by George Russell (AE) and in spite of its title, *The Irish Homestead* became a vehicle for critical analysis of Irish life.

Co-operation was not popular everywhere, as many people disliked Plunkett's personality, politics and religion. Priests, politicians and merchants feared the erosion of their power and profits. Others believed that the IAOS was a covert Unionist Organisation working to woo Irish Nationalists.

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

In spite of the good work of the CDB and the IAOS, Irish agriculture remained very underdeveloped. In 1899, at Plunkett's suggestion, the government set up a Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction with Plunkett himself in charge. The department was assisted by many elected representatives, a one of the government's desire was to involve people in local, non-political matters. The department set up training colleges, ran courses and appointed inspectors, but these did not bring about the great changes that Plunkett had hoped as farmers were generally too conservative and too poor to adopt new ways the farm advisers were bureaucrats at heart, technically very competent but practical experience.

THE DEVOLUTION CRISIS

The success of the 1902 Land Conference persuaded moderate Unionists and Nationalists that similar meetings might hold to further developments. They formed

the Irish Reform Association, a body which quickly found favour with Sir Anthony MacDonnell, the Under-secretary. MacDonnell was a Catholic and a moderate Nationalist who had risen high in the Indian Civil Service before Wyndham appointed him to Ireland. He came only on condition that he would be consulted on all matters of policy. MacDonnell and the Irish Reform Association drew up plans to give locally elected bodies considerable control over Irish finances, legislation and administration. This was not Home Rule but it was close enough for Wyndham to repudiate it and for Northern Unionists to form an Ulster Unionist Council for 'continuous political action'. Opposition to this 'devolution scheme' became so intense that Wyndham had to resign. His departure marked the end of the Conservative policy of 'killing Home Rule by kindness'.

Conclusion part 1

The 1903 and 1909 Land Acts completed the social and economic revolution in land ownership. While, on the one hand, these acts changed the face of rural Ireland in that the landlord system had been broken and destroyed and tenant proprietorship had become a reality, on the other hand, the land acts did not necessarily lead to automatic improvement in conditions of Irish farmers. Farmers continued to be slow to invest in their land, and technology was limited. In 1918, for example, Ireland had only 70 tractors and 300 haybailers. Problems of finance, education, co-operation, long-term planning and conservatism remained

Part 2

Topic 6

The Irish Parliamentary (Home Rule)

Party after Parnell 1891-1914

Introduction

The fall of Parnell had been so unexpected and occurred so quickly that there was no time to prepare the way for a successor. The fateful split was also disastrous because there were now two separate Irish Parties: the Parnellites and the anti-Parnellites, and bitter squabbling was to continue between them over the next ten years until both groups were reunited under John Redmond in 1900. It would have been far better for Irish politics if everybody had walked out of Committee Room 15, because it would have preserved a united Irish Party, but this was not to be.

The Parnellite Group

Parnell died in Brighton on 6 October 1891 and was buried in Glasnevin Cemetery on Sunday, 11 October. On the following day, the Parnellites met in Dublin and issued a manifesto, which repudiated their alliance with the Liberals and also stated that, in the future, they would be in independent opposition to any government at Westminster. However, their support in Ireland continued to dwindle. John Redmond contested Parnell's vacant seat in Cork and he lost. There then followed the election in Waterford, a major Parnellite stronghold and a seat, which the Parnellites had to win. John Redmond again stood and the anti Parnellites asked Michael Davitt to stand for them. The election was hard fought and defeat for the Parnellites would have meant annihilation (end). However, Redmond managed to defeat Davitt by 1775 votes to 1229 votes. The victory ensured that the Parnellites continued to be a force in Irish politics, but it also meant that the bad feeling between the Parnellites and the anti-Parnellites was increased.

The Anti-Parnellite Party

The anti-Parnellites continued to support the Liberals and outwardly, they were successful. In the General Election of July 1895, the anti-Parnellites increased their members to 71 M.Ps, while the Parnellites decreased to nine M.Ps. However, the anti-Parnellites also had problems. The Second HR Bill was introduced by Gladstone in 1893 and was duly defeated. Lord Roseberry then became the new leader of the Liberal Party and he shelved the HR question because of the damage it was doing to his party. Thus, during the years 1894 to 1900, the anti Parnellites were powerless in Westminster. They also had internal problems because their leader, Justin MacCarthy, could not control his followers. The disputes were most heated between John Dillon and T.M. Healy.

As the General Election of 1895 approached, Dillon and Healy argued about the party's choice of candidates in North and South Monaghan, South Louth, East Donegal, North Tyrone, North Mayo, and East Kerry. The squabbling between the two men reached a climax in a by-election in South Kerry. The election was contested by a Dillonite, T.G. Farrell, and a Healyite, William Martin Murphy. Dillon's candidate won and Healy fell into bad grace with the party. Eventually,

Healy was expelled from the party and he set up his own party, the People's Rights Association, to pursue his aims. In the meantime, Justin MacCarthy retired and John Dillon took over the leadership of the party. He tried to rule the way Parnell had done, but it was Parnellism without the overwhelming personality of Parnell, and the mood of the country in 1896 was far different to what it had been in 1886. Then William O'Brien, disillusioned by the constant squabbling within the party and the failure of the 1893 HR Bill, left the party and set up his own group: the United Irish League.

The United Irish League

The aims of the League were:

- 1 A new Land Purchase Bill.
- 2 To bring about an end to the split between the Parnellites and the anti-Parnellites.

In 1898, the anti-Parnellites consisted of three different groups: the antiParnellites themselves, and the two breakaway groups, the People's Rights Association and the United Irish League. The prestige of the anti Parnellites was at its lowest point. The United Irish League began to draw members from both the Parnellites and the anti-Parnellites to such an extent that it forced the two groups to recognize the popular demand in the country for unity. Thus, negotiations began in 1900 and a new party was formed, led by John Redmond, leader of the Parnellites. It had been agreed that the reunion of the party would receive the approval of the League at the next convention. The League, in turn, rejoined the Irish Parliamentary Party at its convention, when Redmond was elected President of the United Irish League. When the United Irish League joined up with the HR Party, it brought 100,000 new members into the Party and provided a national Organisation throughout Ireland, which would help the HR Party get its members elected.

The Wyndham Land Act, 1903

In December 1902, a Land Conference under the Chairmanship of Lord Dunraven met in Dublin. The tenant farmers were represented by William O'Brien, John Redmond and Timothy Harrington. The proposals made formed the basis of the Wyndham Land Act, which made E100 million available to tenants to buy their lands

over sixty-eight years at 3.25/o. The Act, with its 1909 amendment, almost completed the transfer of land in Ireland from landlord to tenant. O'Brien and Dunraven wanted to co-operate even more, in order to try and solve other problems between the Unionists and Nationalists, but neither the Unionist Party in the North nor the HR Party wanted this. John Dillon, in particular, feared that any compromise on the question of HR would overshadow the aims of the HR Party. Redmond supported him and in the end, O'Brien was expelled from the HR Party.

Westminster, 1906-14

In the General Election of 1906, the Liberals triumphed in Ireland. However, people were tiring of the HR 'Alliance' with the Liberals, and one M.P., C.J. Dolan, resigned his seat in order to join the then unimportant SF Party. The tension in the country continued until 1908, when David Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, until

had to raise 16 million in order to pay for Liberal reforms, such as old age pensions. To get it he proposed to increase income tax and death duties, to impose a surtax on incomes above 5,000 a year and to raise taxes on tobacco and liquor. Much of this taxation hurt the rich, who were well represented in the House of Lords. They would not pass Lloyd George's Bill. To resolve this problem the Prime Minister, H.H. Asquith, called an election. In effect, he was asking the British people to limit the power of the House of Lords.

Though Lloyd George's budget was unpopular in Ireland, Redmond recognized the importance of the crisis. If the Liberals won and passed laws limiting the power of the House of Lords, then the way to HR would be open. Redmond swung the support of his party behind the

Liberals. Asquith, in return, stated publicly that he would introduce HR if he was re-elected. The election results were everything that Redmond had hoped for:

Liberals 275, Conservatives 273, Labour 40, HR Party 71.

Thus Redmond held the 'Balance of Power' in the House of Commons even more clearly than Parnell had in 1886. A second General Election, late in 1910, only slightly altered the situation. Asquith then introduced the Parliamentary Act of 1911. This stated that in future, the House of Lords could hold up a Bill for only two years

and when the Bill was passed by the House of Commons for the third successive time, it had to be accepted by the House of Lords. In 1912 the Third HR Bill was moved. As was expected, it was rejected by the House of Lords. It would now become law in 1914, but in 1914 World War 1 broke out and HR was postponed by Britain until the end of the war. However, by that time, the Easter Rising 1916 had occurred and the situation in Ireland was completely changed.