

**PICTURES  
FROM IRELAND**

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Pictures from Ireland by Terence McGrath

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**TERENCE MCGRATH**

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BY

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# PICTURES FROM IRELAND.

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## CHAPTER I.

### AN IRISH LANDLORD OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

TO the Irish landlord the year 1879 will present itself in time to come as one of the saddest in his history. In 1848, when famine decimated the people, the bonds of sympathy still existed between them and their landlords. The movement of 1867 was purely "national," and its subsidence restored the friendly feeling that had hardly been interrupted. But the present agitation is different. Led by men who "dare do all that may become" an agitator, but who carefully abstain from the post of danger with the rabble maddened by their teaching, the tenants have themselves cut the cord of sympathy with the landlords, and turned upon them with a savage vituperation as undeserved as it was unexpected.

Mr. Kirkland lives on a property that has been

in the possession of his family for nearly 300 years. No blight of absenteeism has passed over the place, where the well-trimmed lawns and drives, and carefully tended timber, afford constant work to many labourers. With the inherited instincts of his class, he has a firm belief in the moral inferiority of the Roman Catholic people, yet in years gone by he has acted liberally towards his tenants, who are mainly Roman Catholic. No tenant has ever appealed to him in vain, his purse and his influence being equally at their service. He has even given a site for a new chapel and a subscription towards its erection. In ordinary times things have always gone smoothly enough; and the new agent who ten years ago suggested an increase of the rental, which he declared could be effected without hardship to the tenants, was answered so decidedly that he did not again allude to the subject. Feeling himself bound to stand by his tenants in any strait, and ready to do so against all comers, he has a firm belief that the bounden duty of his tenants is to stand by him, which he interprets by the entire subordination of their social and political ideas to his.

Thus every election before the change effected by the Ballot Act resulted in strained relations that took some time to settle. For weeks before the momentous day the agent or rent-warner was busy among the tenants. Leaseholders were asked to remember how long the family had lived on the

estate. That cattle-shed about which there was some difficulty could be built, and timber and slates were readily promised. Tenants at will were more sternly reminded of that fact, and after former elections had learned how bitterly Mr. Kirkland could resent the adverse vote that he looked on as the basest ingratitude.

On the other hand, the popular side had generally a sturdy champion in the parish priest, who is considered by Mr. Kirkland, in his secret heart, as a dangerous viper to whom all the troubles of the country can be traced. Busy as the agent might be with the tenants, Father Pat was not a whit behind, either in the persuasiveness of his canvass or the rigour of his denunciation.

"What am I to do, Father Pat?" said the distraught Tom, who had been visited by the agent. "Sure I cannot see myself turned out on the roadside with my little family, like Will Delany after the last election."

"Tom, you must be a true man and stand by your country and your Church."

"Troth, I would surely, if I dared; but your Riverince knows that I cannot go against the masther."

"Very well, Tom, be a renegade at your peril; but as you have deserted your clergy, so your Church will desert you in your hour of need."

Tom was triumphant at having escaped the danger of opposition to the landlord, and trusted

to time to make his peace with the Church. But he miscalculated the power of Father Pat's resources. At home he found his wife in tears. The priest had been with her, and shown her how much better it were for her husband that he had a millstone tied about his neck and were flung into the sea than that he should be a renegade to his religion. His name would be execrated from the steps of the altar, and heaven would be closed against him. Manfully as he might resist, the parish priest was too strong for him. His neighbours looked askance at him. His wife was about to present him with another of those branches that grow so thickly on the Irish family tree; and who could tell what the consequences might be? He did not quite believe in the power of Father Pat to endow the promised increase with horns like a goat, but his wife did; and, so implicit was her faith and abject her terror, that he felt he must choose between his promise and her life. Of course he yielded. Probably, if he had any ideas on the subject at issue between the landlord and the priest they coincided with the views of the latter; but neither his feelings nor the pressure to which he was subjected were accepted by Mr. Kirkland as an excuse for what he called an ingrained baseness, and he sighed with regret that Oliver Cromwell's life had not been prolonged for fifty years.

Sometimes the tenant stood by the landlord,