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NOW THAT IRELAND IS AT PEACE

912 "Tiger Tim" Healy Looks Back Over the Turbulent Years

LETTERS AND LEADERS OF MY DAY.
By T. M. Healy, K. C. 2 vols. New
York: Frederick A. Stokes Company.
678 pp. \$10.

By CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON

AT the age of 72, Timothy Healy—"Tiger Tim," appointed in 1922 Governor General of the Irish Free State—reflects over a lifetime spent amid turmoil, bloodshed, massacre. He does his reflecting in that unbelievable thing, the country he was born in—a tranquil, orderly, amicable Ireland, as smooth running and peaceful and well governed a nation as there is in the world. Among the men who wrought this incredible change "Tiger Tim's name ranks high.

He says the slaughter he was born in ended in July, 1923, when De Valera announced, "The war is over." Still, the slow aftermath rumbled off gradually, for Kevin O'Higgins was murdered in July, 1927. His father had been slain in the presence of his wife in February, 1923. What a history! Truly Ireland was "the most distressful country that e'er before was seen"; it was fact, not poetry.

Healy fought in turn under all the strenuous leaders of that tumultuous land—Butt, Parnell and the lesser chiefs who kaleidoscopically succeeded each other, and was at odds with all of them, especially Parnell. He began under Butt as a boy, but in 1877, as a mere youth but in the thick of the fray, he was writing, "Butt is no man to lead. He is too soft and easily gammoned." But he never broke with Butt, as he did with Parnell. He was one of the leaders of "the split," when the Irish party broke in two over the O'Shea scandal and Parnell's ruthless domination. There was nothing gentle in that warfare; witness a speech of Parnell's in Kilkenny about his opponents, when the split began:

Pope Hennessy, whom he had first put forward, was "a mongrel skinner from Cork"; Justin McCarthy "a nice old gentleman for a tea party, and if they visited his hotel they would find him with his feet in a mustard bath, with a jug of whisky punch beside him"; Dr. Tanner, M. P., was "a murderer"; Dillon "vain as a peacock and with about as much brains"; Davitt "a jack-daw"; Healy "a scoundrel who betrayed prisoners to the Crown and deserted them when they had no more money in their pockets." Sexton and others were "scum, refuse, gutter sparrows and humbugs."

He served his time in prison, of course; all the Irish leaders did, especially under the terroristic efforts of the British Government to enforce first Gladstone's coercion act and then the crimes act. The crimes act was enacted after the Irish Invincibles brutally murdered Lord Frederick Cavendish and Under Secretary Burke in Phoenix Park in 1882. The government believed that all the leaders, Parnell especially, had organized that devilish crime and so believed until 1889, when the forgeries of Richard Pigott were exposed in court and it turned out that that villain had concocted an imaginary conspiracy. Under that belief Sir William Harcourt brought in a bill which abolished trial by jury, substituted three judges to try prisoners, established secret inquisitions and enabled venues to be changed from Ireland to England. Pigott, after Sir Charles Russell exposed

him, fled, and two days afterward it was announced that he had shot himself in a hotel in Madrid. "Shot, indeed, he was," says Mr. Healy. "Suicide, I doubt."

Parnell's imprisonment in Kilmainham Jail in 1881 "I regard," says Mr. Healy, "as the main blunder in England's relations with Ireland in the nineteenth century." For one thing, it enraged the United States. Healy and other agitators, coming

Though it is far from being the most important part of his book, Americans will be engrossingly interested in the view of them taken by this sharp-witted Irishman in his many visits to this country. He is far more penetrating than nine-tenths of our foreign callers. For this reason it is worth while to let history stand aside a little and devote some space to what he says of us, the more so as the United

blowing about their railway cars, where a man is stuffed into a crowd in uncomfortable seats, you would expect the gates of Paradise were opening for you. Everybody believes it's a duty to shake hands, and to introduce you to some friend, who does likewise; and every citizen asks you the same set of questions, until you wish you or they were at Jericho. * * *

An audience here is a different thing from ours, or even an English one. They seldom become enthusiastic, and rarely applaud until the end. They listen with a cruel intentness, sparing their cheers. Hence one doesn't make what you would call a "speech," but an "address."

Things have changed since 1881, at least in the Southwest:

On the trip through Texas a cowboy took a seat near me with a revolver in his belt. I inquired of the conductor was he well enough off to ride on the Pullman. The smiling answer came, "Well, it's a privilege we allow them."

The throwing open of the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma, a State with a university and professors of Greek) was much agitated in those days. I asked the cowboy, "Have you fought Indians?" "No," he rippled; "but I've run from 'em."

A quarter of a century later, in 1906, he was struck by an American evolution, and wrote from California:

The American accent is hard to understand in the common folk. If the divergence increases, in another hundred years it will be unintelligible to our posterity, although the written tongue remains the same. It's harder to understand than Cockney English.

In 1881 the bitterness of the Civil War was as deep "as if the conflict still raged." He met at dinner an Irishman who had been captured by the Confederates and sent to Libby Prison:

Never did I see so sad a specimen of what Edmund Spenser called an "anatomy of death." More than sixteen years had passed since his release, yet his face was shrunken and his head as bare of hair as a billiard ball. In a low tone, but without bitterness, he told how the Northern captives were so short of food in Libby that they used to scratch the jail yard for worms or slugs to keep themselves alive.

He seems to have made a mistake here; it was Andersonville, not Libby, where the Irish Unionist was imprisoned.

Mr. Healy, too, is a portrait painter. Here is one of his vivid pictures; he is telling of how he met for the first time Arthur Griffith and Eamon de Valera, in 1918:

Griffith, a silent, solid, impressive and highly educated man; de Valera, tall, spare, spectacled, schoolmasterly, of Jewish cast, and as chatterful as Griffith was reserved. He could not pronounce either the thick or thin "th," and his "dats" and "tinks" grated on the ear. Still, a resourceful fellow.

De Valera, it will be remembered, was born in New York, though he was brought to Ireland as a child.

In 1921 Michael Collins asked Healy to send a message to de Valera through Archbishop Byrne of Dublin. He proffered the request, and his grace "sadly" answered: "I will do what you ask, though I have already seen Mr. de Valera, but I cannot even understand the dialect he speaks."

In 1923 Healy wrote to his brother: "De Valera yesterday in Paris announced that Ireland is as firmly attached to the principles of a separate republic as ever! Seeing that the mass of the people never cared a straw, this is a profound truth!"



Tim Healy, K. C.

From a Portrait by De Lazo.

to this country, were treated as heroes; "Governors, ex-Governors, Congressmen and Senators presided over or attended our meetings. The United States militia in many towns turned out to do honor to Ireland."

For another, outrages instantly broke out in Ireland in revenge and murder after murder was committed until no man's life was safe. Finally the government gave in, and in 1882 Parnell, Dillon and O'Kelly were released and Buckshot Forster resigned as Chief Secretary for Ireland under the Gladstone government. He had engineered the persecution.

States has changed visibly in the decades he has been coming here and he holds a mirror up to its alterations. From Illinois he writes, in 1881, and Illinoisans of this generation will find it hard to recognize the picture:

There are no roads, only plowed land, with boggy ruts two or three feet deep. * * * The soil is so rich that it goes down six feet and it will take years before they have roads like Ireland's.

From Kentucky he writes, and this may or may not be so true today:

Americans think their country the most wonderful in the world. To hear them