

Anna Parnell Land Speeches

Claremorris, Co.Mayo, Sunday 13th February 1881

Anna Parnell made her first appearance as a speaker for the Irish National Ladies Land League at Claremorris, Co.Mayo, on Sunday, 13th February 1881, and the occasion, from her arrival to her departure, was reported in detail in the Irish press. The novelty of the situation, the size of the demonstration, and not least the fact that it was taking place in Co.Mayo (1), all accounted for the long newspaper reports. As this was the first public speech made by Anna Parnell it seems appropriate to use a larger part of the description than is otherwise practicable.(2) On her first visit to Co.Mayo she was escorted by J.P.Quinn, an official of the Land League executive; they travelled from Dublin on the Saturday night mail and despite bad weather were greeted at many of the stations along the way. Crowds were present at Athlone, a band added to the welcome at Roscommon, and there were similar scenes at Castlereaugh and Ballyhaunis. She had asked to be met quietly at Claremorris and consequently there was no large demonstration; instead, they were welcomed by Delia Moran (3) and a Miss Ansboro and then driven to Ansboro's Hotel where they spent the rest of the night. The weather on the following day was fine and the crowds began to gather for the afternoon's open-air meeting. The Claremorris band played and the men prepared themselves to draw the wagon in which Anna Parnell was to travel to the site of the meeting. With characteristic modesty she avoided the tribute on this occasion, and walked to the meeting accompanied by Delia Moran and members of the Claremorris Ladies' Land League. Two local priests, Canon Ulick.J. Bourke, a local Land League organizer, and the Rev. James Corbett also accompanied her.(4)

The meeting-place was in the garden behind the Claremorris Reading Room where a platform had been erected with a white banner placed in front announcing "Miss Parnell to the Rescue." Reports record that thousands of women gathered in the garden in front of the platform. The women of Co.Mayo had responded quickly to the L.L.L.circular issued from Dublin on the 4th February and a number of Ladies' Leagues had already been formed. Amongst the branches attending were the Ladies' Land Leagues of Claremorris, Knock, Ballyhaunis, Ballindine, Logboy, Balla, Ballinrobe, Castlebar, and Irishtown. A large number of men and boys attended, many of these sitting on the surrounding walls. The meeting was to be well-ordered and followed the customary forms. Canon Bourke was appointed to the chair and four addresses of welcome were read from the crowded platform by women representatives of local Leagues. Amongst the references to the patriotism of the Parnell family and the lamentable condition of Connaught under "landlord rule", there was condemnation of the Liberal Government for the contrast between its policies abroad and at home. For the most part the addresses represented the determination of the women to uphold the Land League and give support to the families of those imprisoned or evicted, under the guidance not only of the League leadership but of the Catholic bishops and priests of Ireland. Three resolutions were introduced by Canon Bourke. The first described the object of the L.L.L., "To help in every lawful way all who may be evicted..." and was used by the Canon to establish the movement's respectability by linking the traditions of Christian charity to this new role for Irish women. A Mrs McEllinn, who proposed the resolution, also emphasised that the L.L.L. was to be a relief committee and not a political organisation. "The work which we propose to ourselves to accomplish is one that no Irishwoman should be ashamed of or shrink from." The second resolution, was a call for the formation of branches of the L.L.L. in every parish, and it was introduced with the recollection that if such an organisation had existed in 1847 many lives might have been saved during the Famine. The third resolution was a call to

maintain strong opposition to coercion and to all oppressive measures instituted by the Government.

When Anna Parnell came forward to speak to the second resolution she was met with loud cheering. Although nervous at first, she quickly took control and spoke with "much coolness and deliberation." She first countered claims that the L.L.L. was to be a charitable organisation ministering to the needs of a demoralised tenantry. The L.L.L. was to be a relief committee to which League members in need had a right to apply. Although she was to concentrate on the aims and objectives of the organisation the speech was not without political comment; it was to prove impossible to separate the organization's activities from the political context and Anna Parnell was, perhaps, never going to try. She made the first of her public attacks on her unholy trinity of Gladstone, Forster and Bright, and their threat of new coercion measures to break up the Land League. In the event of their introduction, the L.L.L. would administer the relief funds and support the evicted, the imprisoned and their dependents, and effectively sustain the Land League effort in the face of Government attacks. She stressed the importance of the funds from America and the sacrifices being made there to support the League in Ireland. The need for the efficient gathering of information on action taken by landlords against tenants, and its swift despatch to Dublin for action by the L.L.L., was emphasised. The audience was warned against close contact with the Royal Irish Constabulary, so as to avoid giving them any information. The speech ended with a general call for preparation in the event of further oppressive Government action.

[Report of the **Claremorris speech** as it appears in the *Connaught Telegraph* Saturday 19th February 1881]

She said- Rev. chairman, ladies, and gentlemen, the second resolution has been entrusted to me to propose and I hope you will keep as quiet as possible, because I want to make myself heard. There is no use taking the trouble of talking at all unless you are listened to :-

Resolved, that we hereby enter our public protest against the arrest of Michael Davitt and to avenge his imprisonment in a way worthy of the noble spirit of Christian women by staying the evil effects of tyranny and legalised violence, we call on the women of Ireland to form in each parish a branch of the Ladies Irish National Land League, and thus at once call into existence the last public expressed wish of the imprisoned patriot.(Cheers). (5)

Before speaking to the resolution I wish to thank the ladies of Claremorris for their beautiful reception, and to express the pleasure it gives me to hear the national music of Ireland played by the excellent bands of Mayo. Whatever the English Government has succeeded in doing it has not succeeded in crushing the Irish genius for music. There is just one point I want to call you attention to- it is about this movement of ours. We're not a political movement, but we are not a charitable movement either, because charity is understood to mean alms giving, and this movement has nothing whatever to do with alms, which is understood by the word "charity." It is a relief movement (hear, hear). The money which we shall have to administer will be the money which has been subscribed by the people themselves, and entrusted to the Irish National Land League to help them when the emergency arose. Thus I hope that you will all remember our title is relief, and our work is relief, not charity. We don't want the people whom we help to feel humiliated, or to feel as if they were getting money which they had no right to. They will have the best right in the world to everything they get.

Now I don't suppose you require me to tell you what the Irish Land League is. You know all about it, and probably you may know more about it than I do myself (laughter). You know also that for about twelve months the landlords of Ireland have not been getting as much rents as they are entitled to (cheers and laughter), and they are very savage in consequence, and perhaps within the next six months they will get still less (cheers), and then they will get still more savage. Well, some other gentlemen are getting savage too- not Irish landlords. I will mention three of them- three Christian gentlemen. They are Mr Gladstone, Mr Forster, and honest John Bright (loud groans and hisses). Well, the reason why they are savage is that the Irish people refuse to be satisfied with a mixture of buckshot and good intentions instead of food and clothes, that they refused to be pleased and happy when they are turned out of their homes in the dead of winter, and when they are robbed of all they possess- that they refuse to be pleased and go on their knees and call Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright their friends, and so it is no longer possible for Mr Gladstone, or Mr Bright, or Mr Forster, to parade themselves in Ireland as the friends of Ireland (hear, hear), and that is making them very savage.

Well, now, what is it that they want to do? They are bringing in a bill- they are trying to pass a law, and it may be passed next week, which will enable the lord lieutenant of Ireland to put any man or woman in prison, and keep them there for a year and a half. (6). Very well. And how will they use this law? This is the way these Christian gentlemen intend to use this law. Whenever a landlord wants to evict a tenant, or whenever he wants to evict a large number of tenants, he will apply to the lord lieutenant of Ireland to put any man or woman in prison whom he thinks will be likely to give help to those evicted tenants. You know that heretofore the Land League has worked in this way when tenants have been evicted, the Land League has given money to the local leagues, to the treasurers, president, and secretaries of the local leagues, to help evicted families so that they might not starve, and public opinion has been called in to prevent anyone else taking the farms.- Well, now, you see it will disorganise the relief of evicted tenants very much if the landlord has it in his power, before he carries out his eviction- if he has it in his power to put in prison the men whose duty it is to provide for those evicted families, and it is for the purpose of supplying the place of those men in carrying on the work of relief that we have been called into existence by Michael Davitt. Mr Forster, Mr Gladstone, and Mr Bright hope that when the Habeas Corpus Act is suspended, the relief branch of the work of the Irish National Land League will fall into confusion, and the tenants who are evicted may be left to want, and that the families of persons imprisoned may be left to want and starvation. That is what those Christian men, Quakers, and such like, want to do and that is what we shall prevent them from doing.

We will see that the wives and families of people imprisoned because they are Land Leaguers shall not starve, and we will see this as long as the Land League has a penny to give us- it has a great many pennies (laughter and cheers); and if the men and women of this country take up a manly and a womanly attitude respectively they will have a great many more pennies still. (cheers and laughter), for I do believe the Irish people of America will send us vast sums of money if only we act rightly. If we are not cowards or fools they will send us money and make extraordinary sacrifices to help us now. I know it well. If Mr Forster wants to stop us he will be obliged to go openly to the House of Commons and tell the truth for once in his life (laughter), and say that if the tenants who are evicted by force of police and soldiers are not left to starve, the landlords will not be able to recover their lawful rights. He would have to say, "We must stop the relief or we shall be beaten," and he would not like to have to say that- he will wait some time before he does say it. And if he does say it- well, perhaps, it would not be much harm to make a Quaker tell the truth like another man (cheers).

Well our objects are three. First of all to relieve the evicted families, and that is the really difficult thing to do- that will tax all your brains, because you will have to provide them with shelter and food as well. In order to carry out this object you require organisation. Now the women of Ireland have never been organised before. The women of a superior sphere very much above our heads have played at organisation- they have pretended to organise relief committees, but they were never deprived of the guidance of their male friends and relations (7); but you will very likely for a time be deprived of the guidance of those whom you have been accustomed to trust and look to for help. So you must learn to depend upon yourselves, and to do things for yourselves, and to organise yourselves. You may even be deprived of many of your pastors- your spiritual guides.

A Voice- "Father James." (8)

That you will have to rely upon yourselves, and to organise yourselves. This is not the time to go into details, but you will have to keep a sharp eye on the landlords (laughter). You will have to know and tell us in Dublin when the landlords have evicted a family, and you will have to be ready to do more, you will have to be ready to tell us who is going to evict a family. That is what you will have to do. And you will have to be very energetic about it, so that no one will be left to want even for a single day, who falls a victim to the just rights of the landlords (laughter and cheers). The second object is more easy it is only the relief of families of persons who are imprisoned for their connection with the Land League. All you have to do is to find out who they are, and report the circumstances and the number of the family to headquarters, and then the money for them will be sent to you. The third object is to attend to the comforts of the people who are imprisoned under the Coercion Act, now as a matter of fact, imprisonment- the terrors of imprisonment under this act- have been exaggerated. You think of, you remember the horrible sufferings that men imprisoned in the Fenian time underwent; you remember how they were starved and kept in solitary confinement, and without seeing their relations. But I must explain to you what you perhaps don't all of you know- that there have been changes in the law since then.

A voice-"Thanks to Mr Parnell" and cheers.

Miss Parnell- Years ago the Irish Party in Parliament- it is about four years ago now since the Irish Party in Parliament (sic)- and it has been working ever since like the busy little bee (laughter), and the consequence is that we have some advantages now that we should not have had otherwise. There have been special rules draughted to provide for the proper treatment of prisoners who have not been convicted of any crime. These rules will apply to prisoners under the Habeas Crpus Suspension Act. (9). In 1866 when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and nearly one thousand men thrust into prison, they were practically left to starve because they had nobody to assist them. They would have been allowed to get food for themselves, if they had had money to pay for it. But they had most of them neither. So that is a danger which the prisoners under this Coercion Act will not be called upon to face. We will see that they get food (cheers), and we will see that they get books and newspapers, and all the comfort which the law will allow them. And we will greatly mitigate the severity of imprisonment (cheers).

Now, there is one thing I just want to say to you. It is intended for the ears of the women alone (laughter). You know something about those nice young men, the Royal Irish Constabulary (cheers and laughter). Now, I am not going to advise you not to have them as sweethearts (laughter), because I know that you wont [sic]. But it

has come to my knowledge, in my own part of the country and I suppose it is the same way here, that the Royal Irish Constabulary- such of them as have an eye to promotion- have a kind of way of going into people's houses without any particularly pressing invitation, and asking all manner of questions that is not any business of theirs, and they have a habit of addressing ladies in the streets whom they have not been introduced to at all, and asking them questions about things which are not any business of theirs. Well, I want to give a little advice on the subject. These gentlemen- these Royal Irishmen- don't go into your houses for any good purpose as a rule. They don't stop you in the streets and ask you questions with any good purpose. They want- I am sorry to say in most cases I am afraid they want to get something out of you to use against you. Very well; then my advice is if you see one of the green coats coming into your houses, you ask him to walk out (cheers) if one of them speaks to you in the street, don't answer him at all- hold no communication with him; and then I think you will be quite safe. Now, we never can tell what is going to happen- all we can do is to be prepared for it. Within a month from this date there may be a thousand people imprisoned, or there may not be twenty- there may be five thousand people evicted, or there may not be a hundred; but we must be prepared for the thousand, and we must be prepared for any number of evictions. I may close by moving the resolution which I read (loud cheers).

At the end of the proceedings Anna Parnell made one more brief statement. Pointing to the white banner at the front of the platform, she declared that the L.L.L. had decided to use white as the colour of the organization, for "while men fight about orange and green- the ladies do their work in peace." Great cheering followed this statement, and the meeting which had been well-ordered then broke up.

The Claremorris speech showed all the elements that were to be characteristic of her platform style, not least the scornful humour which was to be used with such effect against "those Christian gentlemen," the hated Liberals. As a debut it was successful and established Anna Parnell as a leading Land League propagandist.

Early on the Monday morning she took the opportunity to visit some cottages in the Claremorris neighbourhood, and questioned the residents on their circumstances. Accompanied by Canon Bourke, a visit was made to the Convent of St. Michael where she was welcomed by the Superioress and thanked for the food and clothing already provided for needy children. That same morning Anna Parnell took the 10.40 train to Ballyhaunis and gave a short, but unreported speech in the waiting-room of the station. Here, she broke her return journey by going to Ballaghderreen to visit Mrs. Anne Deane, the cousin of John Dillon (10). On Wednesday 16th February, she resumed her journey to Dublin, this time travelling via Carrick-on-Shannon and Longford. She was welcomed at Carrick by a crowd and a band, and at Longford by an even larger crowd, for people had gathered there to witness the transfer of the Drumlish prisoners to the county prison at Mullingar (11). On her own arrival at Mullingar station, Anna Parnell was called on by the mostly male crowd to make an impromptu speech from her carriage window, and appropriately, in view of the destination of her fellow passengers, she asked them to show courage in the face of imprisonment and for them all to follow Davitt's advice to stand by the League.

Poulaphuca. Co.Wicklow. Monday 28th February 1881

The success of the Claremorris meeting ensured there would be further invitations and on Monday, 28th February, Anna Parnell spoke at Poulaphuca, Co.Wicklow. The contrast between the conditions in poverty-stricken Co.Mayo and those in more prosperous Co.Wicklow, was to provide a useful theme. Anna Parnell had been invited by members of the newly-formed Hollywood and Dunlavin L.L.L. to

become their President and to address the inaugural meeting. She travelled down from Dublin escorted by J.H.Mullaly of the Dublin Land League; the journey, in contrast to the one to Claremorris was quiet. She left the train at Sallins where a crowd of two-hundred or so people had gathered to welcome her. Patrick Driver, a local Poor Law Guardian and Ballymore Land League official welcomed Anna Parnell to her native county, and escorted her to the meeting-place at the Poulaphuca Ballroom by the Poulaphuca waterfall, a beauty spot and pleasure-ground. This indoor meeting was restricted to women and about one hundred had gathered, although J.H.Mullaly and some other men, including the newspaper reporter, were allowed entry. The speech Anna Parnell gave was largely inspirational in tone. She first expressed her surprise and her satisfaction in finding that County Wicklow, despite being a landlord stronghold, was growing in its support for the Land League. At this meeting of women, she did not hesitate in describing the L.L.L. as a political organisation, the first such organization established for the women of Ireland, and told them that the responsibility for success rested on themselves. As a protest against the enforcement of a new Coercion Act rents were to be withheld and the local Leagues would then, in the event of large scale evictions, inform Dublin and distribute resources. The women were warned of the risks they were to be exposed to and she stressed the need for caution and emphasised their legal rights. Lastly, she urged them not to fail, for by doing so not only would they betray the Irish abroad but they would lose an historic opportunity.

[Text of the **Poulaphuca speech** as reported in the *Leinster Express* Saturday, 5th March 1881]

Miss Parnell, who on rising was loudly applauded, said it was a great satisfaction to her to be addressing a Land League meeting in the county Wicklow, her own native county- the county where she had been born- because that time twelve months if anyone had told her that there would have been a Land League in the county Wicklow, she should have been inclined to have doubted them. They must know that the county Wicklow, up to recently, had had rather a reputation for being a poor-spirited county, though she thought it was becoming a better county than many that had made greater professions before (1). Six months ago if anyone had told her that she should be herself the president of a Land League in the county of Wicklow- and they had done her the honour to make her president of that Land League- she should have thought that they had little regard for the truth. However, all these things had come to pass, and now whatever anyone told her as being about to happen she should not think it too wonderful. They knew that the Ladies' Land League, or any kind of political organisation amongst women, was a novelty in Ireland. This was the first time it had been tried, and she hoped it would be a success.

The reason why it was being tried was that there was a crisis peculiarly novel in Irish history taking place at present, and she thought the circumstances of the present movement were altogether peculiar. They knew that the Irish had been for seven hundred years making efforts, first of all to keep the English out, and each time they obtained a footing, to drive them again out of the country. Hitherto they had not succeeded, but in all former movements there had been one feature lacking, which had existed at present. The responsibility had never before been thrown on the people themselves, it had always rested more with their leaders than with themselves, and so the responsibility of failure, if it had rested with anyone, had rested more with the leaders than with the people. But now she believed, for really the first time, that movement, on which so much depended, had been carried so far that the responsibility of carrying it to a successful issue depended upon the people themselves; upon the men outside and upon the women inside, and even upon the children, for they also could help. No leaders could help the Irish people now to

any great extent. She thought that hitherto, and up to the present, they had been pretty well led. She did not think that upon the whole in any movement that had ever taken place there had been fewer mistakes made by the leaders, or firmer and wiser action shown on the part of the leaders. They had succeeded by their leadership in bringing to a point the Irish land question- to a point when the people would have to carry it on themselves. Upon the attitude which the people took up now depended whether that Land League organisation was going to succeed, or whether it was going to fail, and if there was such a thing as failure, and she did not believe there would be any failure, it would be a great deal more serious than any failure that had been before, because it would show that the metal of the people had failed; that they were not of the right stuff, and she was sure that no one wished that it should be the opinion of the civilised world that the Irish people were not of the right stuff.

Well, a great deal of responsibility rested upon the women. In the first place they must be very careful that they do not by any act, word, or look even discourage the men, or do anything that could tend to discourage the tenant farmers of Ireland from following the advice which had been given them by their leaders. For instance if any of them had a relation who was thinking of not paying rent, and they knew the advice of the Land League was that if the Coercion Act was put in force in any district in order to break up the Land League, then it was their duty to advise the tenant farmers to pay the landlords no rent (applause) until that coercion was done away with; and perhaps if the landlords found out that they could not have everything- that they must make a choice between rents and coercion, perhaps on the whole they would come to the conclusion that they would prefer to take their rents, their fair rents, fair to themselves and fair to the tenants- the women would find it was their business not to do anything to discourage their relations from following the advice which had been given them in the past. If they saw a tenant farmer who was thinking of not paying his rent she would not advise them to go to him and say "We will all be murdered, ruined, processed, or put out if you if you do this," but would rather advise them to put brave faces on the matter, for that was half the battle- the keeping up a good heart within them.

But that was not the most important thing after all, although it was very important. While the issues were being tried with the landlords in that way, in many places the landlords would succeed in effecting evictions. There could be little doubt that they would try to carry out large evictions in some places, and the people could not know beforehand where those places would be- in what places the soldiers, police, and landlords would pounce down, but they wished to have an organisation among women who would be able, when they saw evictions taking place, to let them know in Dublin, so that they might be prepared to bring the resources of the Land League to bear on that district- to let them know when evictions had taken place, to give them all the details and circumstances, and to carry out their instructions, in order effectively to prevent those people who might be selected as victims by their landlords, from suffering. And by being well prepared to do this, they would be doing the very best thing in the world in order to prevent it having to be done at all, because, although it was a hard thing to say of any people, of any man, but it was true, nevertheless- it would be the desire of the landlord to see the people who have been defying him for the last eighteen months suffer. And if he knew that their organisation was such that those people would not suffer want, the very strong motive which he would otherwise have had to push his rights to the uttermost would not exist. Well, she did not suppose they wanted her to make a long speech, and if they did, she hoped they would excuse her, because it had been very hard work getting there- at least it had been very hard for the horse (laughter). It had been rather tiresome to them on account of the snow. They had said it was six miles from Sallins to Poulaphuca, but it seemed to her it was something like sixty, so they would

please consider that she had been travelling between sixty and seventy miles that day, because when she had got into Poulaphuca, she certainly felt as if she had been travelling sixty or seventy miles (laughter). On that account, therefore, she wished to say that she was not inclined to talk for a very long time.

She supposed they did not anyone of them require to be informed at that time as to what the men's Land League was, or what the women's Land League was going to be. They knew that the women wanted to take off the shoulders of the men entirely the important task of providing for the wants of evicted people, and the wives and families of prisoners, and also to take care of the prisoners themselves, in order that those prisoners might have as much comfort as the law would allow them. The ladies were not to be discouraged if their work was not so agreeable perhaps as they expected it to be. When that Coercion Bill was passed there would be a great many people who would take advantage of it to annoy them- the agents and under-strappers of landlords perhaps would annoy them. But she did not think that the women of Ireland were afraid of threats. They must be patient, and the more they saw their enemies trying to annoy them, the better pleased they ought to be, because that would be a sign that the Ladies' League was being successful. If they did not do any good at all the government and the landlords and the police and the magistrates would let them alone; but if they did as much good as she expected and hoped that they should do, then she was afraid that in about two months the government would be turning all the men out of the gaols, in order to let the women in (cheers). They were not to alarm themselves about anything they had a right to do- that they knew they had a right to do under the law, and which was also necessary and useful in their work. They were not to allow themselves to be threatened, frightened, or deterred by anything from doing it. But at the same time they were to be very careful not to give any handle to the enemy. They were to go about their work just as quietly as they could.

They ought to be ready to make sacrifices in Ireland, because they knew that the Irish in other countries had made very great sacrifices to help them. They had subscribed large sums of money in order to enable the Irish to fight that question properly, and they were not to suppose that the people who had subscribed all that money to help them were rich people. They were not rich at all. That money had been subscribed by poor sempstresses toiling in the back garrets or back cellars of New York from morning to night- it had been subscribed by people who had to work hard, and who had a very hard time of it, and who had to deny themselves a great deal of that which they might otherwise have enjoyed. The Irish abroad had a very difficult fight of it. When they got abroad it was easier to live there than it is in Ireland; but at the same time, when men and women landed in New York without a penny in their pockets, it was hard for them to live. The impression sometimes in this country was that people when they emigrated were going straight to fortune. But emigration was not anything of the sort, and she knew that it was not, because she had seen emigrants, and she knew the very great self-denial that those people in America- and she supposed it was the same in New Zealand and Australia- the great self-denial they exercised in order to help their people at home; and she thought that should encourage the people of Ireland to suffer something themselves.

If the Irish people showed any cowardice now, they would be disgraced in a way in which they had never been disgraced before, because for almost the first time- at any rate the first time this century- the people of Germany and France understood that question. They understood it almost as well as the Irish did themselves. They knew what the issue was, and they would know if there was any failure whose fault it was, and they would be able to put the responsibility of the failure at the right door. They would know that the Irish people wanted the courage not to take up arms and fight,

but to do a much smaller thing, just to keep their hands in their pockets; and not to give money to those who were going to use it in order to exterminate them. Now, if the County Wicklow had been backward hitherto, at any rate, there was one advantage to be derived from that. If the County Wicklow people showed a little firmness now, it would have a great deal more effect than an immense quantity of firmness in a place like Mayo, because landlords know that those places like the County Wicklow were their strongholds. Whenever she saw a case of a tenant refusing to pay rent, or of tenants, or a body of tenants refusing to pay, or a Land League established, she always looked to see what county it had taken place in. Well, if it was in Mayo she did not pay much attention, but if it was in Kildare or in Wicklow, then she entered a good mark in her journal, and said to herself, "That is one step forward." (2).

Just one little caution she wanted to give them. She did not know whether it was necessary or not, but in some places she heard people say that they were pretty well off, and why should they go and fight the landlords? But these people should remember that when they had something to lose was the time that they should try to keep their own. It was no use when they had nothing [they] left trying to keep it, because it was always pretty easy to keep nothing. Now from what she had seen in the County Mayo, she was beginning to think that the last eighteen months had already effected a considerable change in the respective prosperity of the west and the east of Ireland. Two years ago the west was the poor place, the east was the rich place. Now the west had still the reputation of being the poor place, but from the short time that she had to look at the County Mayo, she had begun to suspect that the east and the west were changing places; for in the west they had been standing up for their rights. She thought that some of those in Mayo who till recently were very poor people were really getting to be a little better off than a good many down in those parts who had not found out the way to help themselves. So they were all to remember they would be very much to blame, if by cowardice, or laziness, or selfishness they allowed that opportunity to pass away without taking advantage of it. If they let it slip, they would not have another opportunity like it for at least twenty years and perhaps for a longer period than that. (Miss Parnell resumed her seat amidst loud applause.)

After the women's meeting a second impromptu meeting was arranged for the 400 to 500 men waiting outside; this was addressed by Patrick Driver and other local speakers. Leaving Poulaphuca after a short stay, Anna Parnell drove back to Naas with J.H.Mullaly and his daughter Sarah Mullaly, secretary to the branch; on their arrival they accepted an invitation to supper made by a local merchant, Patrick Byrne. Later that evening, escorted by J.H.Mullaly, Anna Parnell left Sallins by the 9.15 train for Dublin.

Keadew, Co.Roscommon. Sunday, 6th March 1881

The following weekend Anna Parnell travelled to Keadew, Co. Roscommon, a small town near the Leitrim border. The L.L.L. branch had been founded on 2nd January 1881 in advance of the Central L.L.L. circular, and it drew support from an area long known for its opposition to landlords (1). Leaving Dublin on the Saturday, Anna Parnell travelled by train to Carrick-on-Shannon, where she stayed the night. Early on the Sunday afternoon she was driven to Keadew to attend the meeting; the occasion was not reported in great detail, but the day was fine and a large procession of about 3,000 women accompanied Anna Parnell as she made her way into town. The meeting began at 2'o'clock and was chaired by Mrs. Gilleran,

president of the Manorhamilton branch of the Ladies Land League. There is a greater sense of urgency in the speech and the possibility of imprisonment for herself and others is referred to, as is the plight of the children of Land League women already imprisoned (2). The audience was warned that the Government was trying to push them into violent action. On a practical level she called for the collection of books and the knitting of stockings for those in prison.

The speech was a relatively short one but it did give rise to immediate, if unintentional controversy. An ambiguous statement concerning the improbability of reward in the next world for those involved in carrying out evictions resulted in a storm of clerical criticism. In an attempt to offset this a short letter of explanation was published in the next day's *Freeman's Journal*. Characteristically there is no apology.

She wrote:

"Now I don't wish to be charged with attempting to introduce doubts on religious matters into the minds of the women of Ireland..."

and then repeated her original statement about the constabulary and added:

"The feeling which stimulated me to say this was a very strong opinion, which I have for a very long time held that it would be perfectly impossible for anyone who believed in a judgment to come in another world to sanction or tolerate, directly or indirectly, the atrocities which are practised in Ireland under the cover of the law."(3)

Anna Parnell was not to make such a mistake again, although she was to continue to pour scorn on the supposed Christian ideals of Gladstone, Forster, and Bright.

[Text of the **Keadew speech** taken from the *Roscommon Herald* Saturday, 12th March 1881]

Miss Anna Parnell said- Ladies and gentlemen- I am very pleased to see that Mr Forster has entirely failed in putting all the Land Leaguers in prison. In other parts of the country he has done so, but he may be tired before he gets to Roscommon. In case he should come here and put us into prison we should make the best use of the time left us that we can. I think that the objects of the Ladies' Land League are so plain that it is no harm to repeat them. Our first duty is to see when a landlord comes down with all the powers of the law on any of his tenants- we should see that none of the tenants suffer, and no one who can help it be idle. Every effort should be made to make evictions as little fatal as possible. A few weeks ago there was an eviction. A force of police was sent to carry out the sentence of murder- a force of Irishmen were found to take part in the duty. (4).

A Voice- "They were always for the dirty work."

Miss Parnell- If there is such a place as the next world I think anyone helping to turn out starving tenantry wants a great deal of saving in it. One old woman was not able to walk. Two of the constabulary took her in their arms and left her on the roadside (groans). There was a priest there, and he raised his voice to warn the constabulary of the danger they incurred in carrying out the eviction. They did not carry it out, and Mr Gladstone was informed that the priest had interfered. When [they] dare to treat a parish priest thus it will not do to stand aside. We are willing to brave imprisonment and all the other terrors the Government hold over the heads of those at the mercy of the landlords. You have had a Land League for a long time at Keadue [sic]. When

you hear of an eviction, find out all you can about it. We require to know all details, that we may be able to help them.

During the past winter very many women have been imprisoned in Connaught without any cause. The reason is that "Buckshot Forster" knows that thus he has us at his mercy more than in any other way. If the women are taken there is no one to take care of the children. Mr Forster said he got more trouble from the women than from anyone else. I am not surprised. Gladstone, Bright, and Forster know that the children are the first victims. I believe they are deliberating the effect of [sic] the feelings of the Irish people to make them lose their self-control and make them succumb to acts of violence. Young females, do your best to be mothers to those whose mothers are imprisoned, that Mr Forster may be disappointed. It may be that some mothers will give trouble to the process-servers. All animals- the lion, the tiger, and the wolf- turn to defend their young. When an Irish mother does the same, Forster calls it brutality. Great efforts should be made to collect books for those in prison- it will keep up their courage (cheers for Parnell and Davitt). There is another thing I would like to see. If it were not Sunday, I would like to see all the young ladies with half a stocking in their pockets to show when their relatives are imprisoned that they will have a good pair of stocking to wear. Mr Forster would not imprison so many in order to keep them from wearing them. I was thinking if I was sent to prison what I would like least, and I thought cold feet. When I am taken I hope someone else will knit stockings for me.

After the meeting Anna Parnell returned to Carrick-on-Shannon where she was met by a large number of women and presented with another address before boarding the evening train for Dublin. At Mullingar, the L.L.L. branch had been informed by telegraph that Anna Parnell would be passing through and had arranged a welcome for her. There was time for a short meeting and the presentation of an address in the ladies' waiting-room of the station before Anna Parnell continued on her journey back to Dublin.

England, Tuesday. 8th March to Sunday. 13th March 1881

On her return to Dublin Anna Parnell left almost immediately for England. The rapid growth of the L.L.L. made it difficult for her to leave Ireland but the development of the organisation in England was important for fund-raising and propaganda purposes. On Tuesday 8th March she was in London and met with members of the Central London branch of the L.L.L. at their offices in the Westminster Palace Hotel, the headquarters of the Land League in England. The Central London branch of the L.L.L. had been formed on the 20th February 1881 at a meeting held at Kenley Lodge, Clapham Common. Ann Sullivan, wife of A.M. Sullivan, was elected president, Charlotte McCarthy, daughter of Justin McCarthy M.P., was made treasurer, and Hannah Lynch, honorary secretary. The Englishwoman, Helen Taylor, daughter of Harriet Taylor, and step-daughter of John Stuart Mill, was a committee member. (1) The other L.L.L. branches being formed in England and Scotland during these early weeks were in the metropolitan centres and nearby towns that had large Irish communities. The different function of these branches was shown by the concerts, picnics, outings, as well as platform meetings, that were organised. Funds were raised from the membership and entrance fees and then sent on a weekly basis to Dublin. Anna Parnell visited many of the larger branches and took the opportunity

in her speeches to denounce government policy and to contradict the reports hostile to the Land League in the "State of Ireland" columns of the British press.

Liverpool, Thursday 10th March 1881

Anna Parnell gave her first speech in England in Liverpool. She travelled back there from London on Thursday 10th March to address the inaugural meeting of the Liverpool L.L.L. The branch was to be one of the most successful at fundraising and raised over £300 during the year (1). The meeting was held in the Concert Hall, Lord Nelson Street, and was filled to capacity with men and women. As Anna Parnell entered the hall accompanied by prominent Irish nationalists of the city, she was given a standing ovation. Dr. Commins, M.P., took the chair on a crowded platform and addresses were presented from the Liverpool L.L.L. and from the Liverpool branch of the Children's League. In a short, but fierce speech she attacked the hypocrisy of the British press, and used the recent repeated eviction and imprisonment of a Carrick-on-Shannon family, a widow and her small children, to expose the double standards of the British press and British politicians (2). She argued that the suffering of Irishwomen and their children justified the setting up of the L.L.L. and the Children's Leagues, (the latter as the junior section of the Land League were also to be controversial).

[Text of the **Liverpool speech** taken from the *Liverpool Daily Post*, Friday, 11th March 1881]

On quiet being restored, Miss Parnell said she felt that the first thing she ought to do was excuse herself for coming to Liverpool at all ("No"). She felt she had, though unintentionally, deserted her post in leaving Ireland, because, she was sorry to say, there was a great deal for everyone to do in Ireland who wished to do it (cheers). As the best people throughout Ireland were being carefully selected for imprisonment, it did not do for anyone, however feeble, to remain idle in Ireland (hear, hear and cheers). However, if it had been a mistake to come to Liverpool, at any rate it had been one which was very pleasant in its consequences to her, and she hoped it would do no harm, whether it did any good or not (cheers). She was happy to hear that there was a large and prosperous Ladies' Land League in Liverpool already. They knew, no doubt, that the duties of the Ladies' Land League were not precisely the same as were those of the original Land League. The Ladies' Land League had to undertake what was called the relief branch of the organisation. They were to perform similar duties to those that fell to the lot of the detachment that supplied a besieged city in the time of war (hear, hear, and cheers). She believed that was called a relief corps, and the Ladies' Land League was a sort of relief corps to the Irish National Land League.

Yesterday morning she took up an English newspaper- she thought it was *The Standard*- and she saw that, strange to say, that newspaper had objections to the Ladies' Land League- to the movement called the Ladies' Land League. This movement did not, she was sorry to say, meet with the approval of that organ of the Tory party in England. *The Standard*, in its article, had made the discovery that home was the only proper place for woman, and that maternity was the crown of woman.(3). Now, she just wished she could get the party which *The Standard* represented to recognise that home was the proper place for Irish women (cheers). If the Tory party led by Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Randolph Churchill (groans) (4), would apply its powers to keep the women of Ireland in their homes, she thought the Ladies' Land League might then be fairly dissolved (laughter and applause). But at

present *The Standard*, as well as the *Daily News*- because there was no difference, so far as she could see, in that respect between different parties, whether Tory or Whig, or Liberal, or Radical both taught that the roadside was the proper place for the Irish woman. ("Shame, and loud cheers)

Then there was that other discovery of *The Standard*, that maternity was the crown of woman. She thought that in Ireland maternity must often be a crown of thorns to her daughters. She thought it was a bitter crown for a woman to wear when she saw her children die of cold and hunger before her eyes ("Shame" and cheers). Miss Parnell then related how a widow, with her two little boys, had been driven from her hut at Carrick-on-Shannon, and was forced to take refuge in a ditch. She believed that the authorities did not evict the poor woman from the ditch (laughter); but at night a number of men from the surrounding country put the woman back into her house (cheers). But this was a crime in Ireland- it was a crime for a mother to creep back to her cabin with her children, and the mother was sentenced to a month's imprisonment. (Cries of "Shame," and cheers). That was nothing in Ireland, for she was sentenced three times and she was now being tried for the fourth time at Carrick assizes, and if the jury convicted her, she would receive a more severe sentence than before, as she would this time be sentenced by a judge- that excellent, hard-hearted judge, Fitzgerald (groans and uproar).(5). He would have an opportunity for showing what he thought was the proper place for Irish women, if only he could get the jury to convict her. If the jury did not convict her he would say that they were too much afraid to return just verdicts (laughter and cheers). But she had more to tell them even than that, for the judge sentenced the two boys of this widow woman, aged eight and ten years respectively, to a month's imprisonment each. She could not now remember whether they were sentenced more than once, but she knew they were not sentenced at the same time as their mother, so that when she was in jail they were left to themselves ("Shame"). She thought after that there was sufficient need for a Ladies' Land League, and a Children's Land League also (cheers): and there were plenty of women in Ireland who had suffered just as much as this one, or perhaps more.

After she had finished speaking two resolutions were proposed and passed. The first, that the meeting should support the L.L.L.; and the second, that the meeting should condemn the arrest of Davitt. Following the vote of thanks, a member of the Liverpool Children's Land League, a May Davitt, presented Anna Parnell with a large bouquet and a cheque for £40 which represented the first sum raised by the Liverpool L.L.L.

London, Sunday. 13th March 1881

From Liverpool, Anna Parnell returned to London to make her first, and possibly only public speech in the British capital. At a meeting of the Central London branch of the L.L.L. on Sunday, 13th March, held at 35, King's Street, Westminster, she addressed a large gathering of members; Helen Taylor, who was proving to be an efficient organiser and propagandist for the L.L.L., was in the chair. In this speech Anna Parnell took particular care to refute the reports of supposed Land League outrages against animals that were appearing in the British newspapers. In a skilful piece of counter-propaganda she built up her argument that the outrages were a direct result of the coercive laws, but in the paradoxical sense that outrages were "manufactured" to justify those laws. The statement about the involvement of the R.I.C. in the houghing of cattle appears outrageous but her next point, that some boycotted farmers sought compensation by maiming their own cattle, has a chilling ring of probability about it. Anna Parnell was responding to a published criticism by an English member of Parliament of C.S.Parnell's "irresponsibility" in not publicly

condemning the perpetrators of the attacks (1). At the close of her speech she returns to L.L.L. activities and called for a large amount of money to be raised in London.

(Text of the **London speech** made on Sunday, 13th March 1881, taken from the *Irish Times*)

She was received with loud applause, in reference to which she observed that it was satisfactory to find the ladies of the Land League in England knew how to make a demonstration. Alluding to a letter which had been received by Mr. Jesse Collings, M.P. (2), she said she had noticed some time ago that he had written to the papers on the subject of the outrages upon cattle in Ireland. In that letter Mr. Collings was very bitter against her brother for not having denounced the cruelties inflicted upon dumb animals. Well, there could be no doubt that there had been such things in Ireland as the "houghing" of cattle, the maiming of sheep, and there had been instances in which cows' tails had been cut off; but what would have been the position of her brother had he taken upon himself the duty of denouncing the perpetrators of these atrocities? As President of the National Land League, and as leader of the national movement, if he were to do what Mr. Jesse Collings seems to think he ought to have done, if he were to take upon himself the duty of denouncing outrages upon cattle, he would make it appear that he was under the impression that such outrages were committed by the persons with whom he has influence in Ireland, and who have made him their leader.

As a matter of fact the outrages were not committed by these persons. It might be asked, then, by whom were they committed? Well, in the first place, she believed the Royal Irish Constabulary had a great deal to do with them (hear, hear). In spite of Mr. Forster she held the belief that the constabulary cut off the cow's tails because the Irish Chief Secretary had made it their interest to "discover" as many outrages as possible in order to justify the coercive legislation for Ireland. A member of the constabulary who discovered an outrage earned for himself a distinguished mark of promotion, and if no outrages were committed it was the simplest thing in the world to perpetrate outrage in order to discover it afterwards (laughter).

A constable wicked and brutal enough to do such things could always rely upon being protected. It would never do to discourage a young constable in the discovery of outrages, because if that were done no outrages would be discovered, and where then would be the justification of Mr. Forster's policy of coercion? (Hear, hear). It was upon this extensive manufacture and discovery of outrages that this policy was based, and she was quite sure it would not be the worse for any of the constabulary in Ireland who had helped make it possible.

There was also another class of persons who were distinctly tempted to commit the outrages. She referred to the people in Ireland who were subjected to what was called boycotting. These people were in this position, if they took their cattle to the market or to the fair they could get no one to buy them, but if they mutilated them in such a way to render their destruction necessary they could go to the grand jury and get full compensation for all the animals maliciously injured. In this lay the secret of the fact that the man who displeased his neighbours was generally to be found the man who had his cattle houghed, but they were not houghed by the people he had displeased, because that would neutralise the effect of the "boycotting" by entitling him at the cost of his neighbours to get the full value of the cattle, which he otherwise could not dispose of (hear, hear). She therefore considered, without wishing to say a word in disparagement of the English members of Parliament who had been honest enough to vote against coercion, that Mr. Jesse Collings would have been much better employed in bringing about the abolition of laws which

offer a distinct bribe to persons to mutilate their own cattle than in finding fault with her own brother, because he could not always find time to denounce every outrage which bad laws encouraged (hear, hear).

The real business of the meeting and the real objects of the Ladies' Land League was to get money for the relief of families of those arrested in Ireland (hear, hear). Up to the present there had been very little money from London. Considering the number of Irish residents in London, she did not see why a sum of £4,000 or £5,000 could not be collected in the next six months if the thing were properly worked.(3). What the Land League wanted was the ear of the English people. An effort should also be made to get a list of all the prisoners, so that they might be supplied with books and newspapers, a work in which the English Ladies' Land League could render very great assistance. She observed that some of the newspapers in England- notably -*The Standard*- had complained that the persons arrested were not sufficiently punished. That was a gross misrepresentation, for the men were taken away from their homes and imprisoned in Dublin, so that in many instances it was impossible for their friends to visit them. It was true they were allowed to converse with each other- a privilege which would save many of them from going mad; but their cells were cold and comfortless, and they were only allowed to see friends for a quarter of an hour at a visit, with iron bars to keep them apart.

Anna Parnell was to visit England and Scotland on a number of occasions during the next year. Some of the visits, for example those in April and June 1881, were short business trips. In the autumn and winter of 1881, both before and after the proclamation of the Land League, she made longer speaking tours for propaganda purposes. With the increase in the number of evictions from March 1881 onwards, the organization of relief became the major task, and she became increasingly reluctant to leave Ireland.

Kilbeggan, Co.Meath Thursday. 17th March 1881

After her return to Ireland, Anna Parnell made her next speech on St.Patrick's Day at what was then Kilbeg/Robertstown, a village four miles from Kells, Co.Meath. A crowd of approximately five thousand men and women had gathered from the surrounding district to inaugurate a L.L.L branch. The meeting was not widely reported in the Irish press although it was the first to be held after the attack made on the L.L.L. by Archbishop McCabe .(1). Anna Parnell made an indirect reference to the archbishop's pastoral by commenting that the L.L.L. "must be an excellent thing" if it provoked such objections, but made no further comment; it would have been unwise for the L.L.L. organisers to have responded directly to McCabe. Fortunately, Thomas Croke of Cashel, an archbishop known for his nationalist sympathies, came to their defence.(2) Croke's reply to McCabe was published in the Freeman's Journal on the day of Anna Parnell's visit to Kilbeggan. His defence of the L.L.L. was to prove useful in the early months of the organisation. It gave confidence to devout members of L.L.L. branches who had feared clerical opposition, and encouraged nationalist priests to support the L.L.L. in defiance of the strictures of McCabe and other anti-Land League bishops.

At Kilbeggan Anna Parnell made the first of her many requests to the men to allow the women to have their own meeting; there were to be many attempts over the

following months to hold women-only public meetings although few, in fact, were to succeed. Following the allusion to McCabe's pastoral, she commented on the potential of the L.L.L. as an organisation, and predicted that although the main object was to provide relief there might soon come a time, presumably with the imprisonment of Land League officials, when there would be the need for even greater activity. She referred to the non-payment of rent, carefully presenting it not as L.L.L. policy but as an "opinion" that others might share. Having stepped outside the boundaries of relief, she reverted to practicalities and the importance of providing necessities for the imprisoned, taking the opportunity to criticise the Kilmainham authorities for their obstruction of this duty in contravention of political prisoners' rights laid down in the Prison's Act.

[Report of the **Kilbeg/Robertstown speech** in the *Limerick Chronicle* Saturday, 19th March 1881]

Miss Parnell, speaking at the Ladies' Land League meeting at Robertstown, near Kells, on Thursday, thanked the gentlemen of the district for the courtesy that had been shown in permitting her to speak at the meeting, but at the same time thought that as the gentlemen had had so many meetings during the past eighteen months or two years, they should allow the ladies to have the full benefit of their own meetings now. Some people had such a powerful objection to Ladies' Leagues that she thought it really must be an excellent thing, and a greater obstacle to the landlords than they thought it would be when it was started. Describing the objects of the Ladies' Land League, one to relieve evicted tenants [sic], she said it was quite possible by the time the next rent day came round there would be more prospect of their having something to do in that direction than they had at present. Of course, though it was not their business to say anything about the payment of rent, she didn't see any reason why they should not all have their opinions on the subject; and speaking for herself, and perhaps those who heard her would have the same sentiment, her opinion was that it would not at all be a bad thing if there were no rents paid by these people (loud laughter and cheers), unless, of course, a very great change came over the spirit of Mr Forster's and Mr Gladstone's and Mr Bright's present dreams (hear, and cheers). Well, she didn't think, although they had no wish to meddle in politics, that they ought not to let down their rights to have their own opinions on the subject.

Having impressed upon her hearers that the relief afforded by the Ladies' League had nothing in the form of charity in it, she said that one of the objects of the League was the providing of comforts for the people imprisoned. That was a very vexatious and exasperating kind of thing. It was exasperating to find that when exertions were made to provide for persons imprisoned under the new act every comfort that the law allowed, they were obstructed by the prison officials. They went to a good deal of pains the other day to have bags made to carry away the prisoners washing. There were some forty gentlemen in Kilmainham now, and they wanted their washing done like everyone else (laughter); but when the washerwoman presented herself at the prison they would not let her in (renewed laughter). Under the circumstances all that they could do as far as she could see, was to write to Mr Forster and ask him what object he supposed it would serve not allowing the political prisoners to have their shirts washed. Perhaps he would be able to tell, perhaps he would not. However, they must see that this obstruction would not continue, and that the prisoners must have their comforts allowed them and for that it was very necessary to have efficient machinery. It was very necessary that clothes should be got out of the prison and to have washerwoman, with the hot water and soap and soda and the

irons ready for them (loud laughter). She congratulated the people of the district on having started a branch of the Ladies' League.

At the end of the meeting Anna Parnell was made aware of the large force of armed police which had been positioned, or rather hidden, behind a hedge near the meeting-place in case of riot. The absurdity of this over-reaction by the authorities was to be referred to in her speech at Rathdowney on the following Sunday.

Rathdowney. Queen's County, (Co.Laois). Sunday 20th March 1881

In contrast to the meeting at Kilbeggan, that at Rathdowney was a well-documented event. On the morning of the meeting Anna Parnell left Dublin at 10.15 a.m. she was "ovated" at stations along the route, including Maryborough and Mountrath, and at Ballybrophy, the station nearest Rathdowney, she was given a large welcome by both men and women who were in danger of being crushed. A procession was formed to escort her to Rathdowney Concert Hall and she was accompanied there by Mary E.Lalor, the secretary of the L.L.L. branch(1), and Thomas Feehan, C.C.(2). All the carriages were decorated with green and white banners and the road was spanned with green arches. The crowds cheered: Rathdowney was en fete. A contrast to these festivities was provided by the sombre presence of a large force of police.

The Concert Hall was filled by women with only a few of the men admitted, (a government note-taker was one of the many men to be excluded). When Anna Parnell entered the hall escorted by Richard Lalor, M.P. she was received with "silent curiosity." (3) After the opening address, both the chairman's remarks and the first resolution referred to the controversy caused by the McCabe pastoral, and thanks were given to A.M.Sullivan and Archbishop Croke for their defence of the women. The support that had been given to Anna Parnell and the L.L.L. during this critical time appeared to engender confidence, and the Rathdowney speech shows more assurance and control than previous ones. It is more overtly political, and although long it is lucid and incisive. There is no qualification of the opinions given; furthermore, the visit to the Queen's County gave Anna Parnell an opportunity to display her republicanism.

First, she chided the authorities for fearing that their meetings might provoke riots, and referred to the threatening presence of armed police at the Kilbeggan meeting. The main part of her speech dealt with the threat of landlord action against the tenants, and with biting sarcasm she related McCabe's strictures on women's natural modesty to the attempts by landlords and the Government to avoid publicity for their actions against the tenants. The development of efficient local organizations to counteract landlord activity was to be imperative; information on evictions would be gathered and despatched to Dublin speedily. The continued supervision of landlords and publicity of their actions against tenants would be maintained; a reversal of the surveillance maintained by the Government through its officers. Aligned with this was the need for local L.L.L.'s to move quickly in the event of the arrest of local Land League leaders; they were to avoid relying on assistance from Dublin which could be interpreted as outside interference by the authorities.

Anna Parnell then referred to the recent events which followed the arrest of the Drumlish League officers, and she offered the suggestion that the timing of McCabe's pastoral was closely connected with the visit to Drumlish by an officer of the Dublin L.L.L. In emphasizing the need for strong local organization she referred to the efforts of earlier, although less well funded women's organizations, the

committees run by Fenian women for the relief of prisoners and their families. Before her conclusion Anna Parnell thanked those who had donated books and newspapers for the use of the prisoners in Kilmainham, and repeated the charge made at Keadew against the obstructive tactics of the prison authorities. Finally, she emphasized to L.L.L. members the responsibility they carried to counteract actions of the government and the landlords, but warned the women not to expect much recognition for their actions.

[Report of the **Rathdowney speech** taken from the *Leinster Express* Saturday, 26th March 1881]

Miss Parnell in rising was received very warmly, and with cries of "welcome." Having remained standing for several minutes looking at the audience very fixedly, she spoke as follows:

Rev. chairman and ladies- I need not tell you that it gives me great pleasure to pay this visit to Queen's County. I have been struck coming up in the train with the impression that it is a very fine county indeed, one of the finest, as far as natural advantages go in Ireland. It is fit to be a Queen's County. Perhaps some day it will be something better, it will be a people's county (applause.) But if you want to deserve such a fine county I think that you ought to be a fine people (hear, hear). You cannot alter your stature, the Scripture says, but you can mould your course of life any way you please; and I hope that the people of the Queen's County will during the next six months show that they deserve to belong to what I think must be the very finest county in Ireland (hear, hear). I suppose you are already well acquainted with the objects of the Ladies' Land League? It is an institution which has acquired a very bad character with some people. In fact I think it has acquired a worse character than it has deserved (a laugh). The other day, for instance, I will tell you, St. Patrick's Day it was, I attended a meeting of ladies at Kilbeggan, in the County Meath. An information was sworn to the resident magistrate that at the meeting we intended to riot (laughter), and a body of armed policemen were sent to keep us in order (renewed laughter). Fortunately for me, however, they were put behind a hedge where I could not see them, and I did not know they were there until after the meeting was over. Had I known they were there with their loaded rifles, they might have made me nervous (laughter), for I think guns when they are loaded are dangerous things, and I would rather not have them near me. But I must say that I do not think any of the ladies present had the slightest intention to riot; at any rate they did not (laughter).

Now, the objects of our League are very simple. Perhaps it is because they are so simple that they are so very much objected to. They are what everyone can understand, and, of course, that is much easier to carry out than what everybody cannot understand. The first object is to attend to the task of assisting in every possible way those people who may fall victims to the steps which the landlords are now about to take to reassert the supremacy which they have always enjoyed up till about the last twelve months. They are going to try to reassert their supremacy now. In that effort it must follow that many people in Ireland will be evicted from their holdings. It is in order to prevent any undue suffering from the unavoidable confusion that must ensue when the working members of the men's League are arrested; it is in order to prevent any undue suffering resulting from the removal of those whose duty it is to attend to the wants of evicted persons, and to report their cases to head quarters that we have been called into existence by Michael Davitt (hear, hear.) I hope that when he comes out of prison we shall be able to show him

that his last work before his imprisonment has been a credit to his forethought (hear, hear).

A Voice- "Three cheers for Davitt. "

The second resolution proposed here to-day states that we ought to help the Land League by carrying out the work that has been assigned to us, and that I think puts in a nutshell what our business is, because we do want to help the Land League. That is what we have formed this organisation for, and this is the way to help it: to see that those three objects, the relief of evicted tenants, and the relief of the families of persons who have been imprisoned for their connection with the Land League, and to attend to the comforts of the prisoners themselves- to see that they shall be efficiently attended to. The Land League expects the tenant farmers of Ireland, rich and poor, to show a bold front in the face of every danger. It knows that the 600,000 tenant farmers of Ireland, or for that matter 300,000, or even 200,000 cannot be evicted. Hitherto the whole 600,000 have been kept in terror and in check by the knowledge that any one of them may be the one to be evicted if he resisted. But if there is an organisation with money under its control- and the National Land League is such an organisation- to protect those who may be selected, then it can be nothing but cowardice on the part of the tenant farmers of Ireland which can destroy the powerful position which they have at present succeeded in gaining (hear, hear). However, I am sure that one object which the government had in view when it brought in the Protection of Life and Property Act, was to confuse- to disorganise this system of protecting the victims chosen by the landlords, and they thought the most effectual way of succeeding in this was to arrest the active members of the Land League in any district where the landlord wanted to evict. If the people of this country stand together, combine together in this organisation, and be prepared to take the place of those removed, then the efforts of the government must fail, and the movement of the people be carried to a successful issue (hear, hear.)

But it is not alone necessary to relieve evicted persons. Before evictions take place at all there is a great deal of very necessary work to be done. We ought to know in Dublin by the next post whenever a writ has been served, or any legal threat made of an eviction. As soon as a process or a writ of any kind has been served on a farmer, then the question of his eviction is only a matter of time, and we ought to know all persons who are liable to eviction, so that we may know upon what ground we stand, and where we have to turn our attention to, and in what districts we are required to keep a special eye. It is a rather formidable undertaking, but I am sure that the ladies of this League are quite equal to it (hear, hear). Every member of the League ought to report any case she knows of- any case of threatened eviction, or eviction, to the secretary of her own branch, who will then bring it under our observation (hear, hear). Care should be taken that all information give in this way be perfectly accurate, and as complete as possible. I mention this point because not only is it necessary for us to have this information, but it is necessary that it should be reliable. I am sure that it will have a very useful effect when it is generally known that this information is being collected, and that it is being forwarded to those who will be able to have a word to say in the matter when the time comes.

Now, within the last few days I must say we have heard a great deal about the beauty of modesty, and retirement, and privateness. The necessity of being very secret, and very quiet, and very retired about everything we do has been thrust upon us with a great deal of force. It seems to me that those who have given us this advice with so much energy must have had before their eyes when they gave it the noble example which is set to us in this respect by the landlords and the government; because I have noticed that the landlords and the government have a great habit of

trying "to do good by stealth and blushing to find it fame." (Laughter.) I notice that when a landlord like Mr Bence Jones (4), sets to work to improve his property by clearing out his tenants into the Atlantic, and benefiting those who remain by doubling their rents for them he is generally very modest indeed about the outside world knowing of his good deeds (laughter.) It is only when he comes to be boycotted that his natural modesty is so far overcome as to induce him to publish a history of the benefits he has conferred upon those whom he has had in his power (renewed laughter).

Now, I am not an advocate of leaving the task of benefiting the people of Ireland to the landlords too much. Their enthusiasm is apt to carry them too far- in fact I think very often they kill the people whom they are trying to serve with kindness- it may be otherwise, I don't know (laughter). So I think it will not be a bad thing at all if in future the landlords of Ireland and the government know that we have got our eye on them (general laughter and applause). That we know everything they are doing, and everything they intend to do. I think that they will feel more shy about prosecuting their good work publicly than they have hitherto felt in prosecuting it privately (hear, hear). We have been called hard names, but I think if we carry out efficiently this part of the programme which I have described to you, we may be called a harder name than all- a name of which probably some of you have never even heard. We may be called "telephones" (5). Now for the benefit of those who don't know what a telephone is, I will say it is an instrument which can communicate information at the rate of a thousand miles instantaneously. If one man, or one woman, puts his or her mouth to one end of the telephone, say in Cork, then any person in Dublin who happens to have his ear to the end of the telephone there, will hear what is spoken at the Cork end. And so you see if you ever hear yourselves called telephones you will know that you have deserved the epithet- at least I hope you will deserve it (hear, hear).

As to the second object which demands our attention- imprisonment it is not at all creditable to the Queen's County that it has not yet been proclaimed (laughter). Perhaps by the time next rent day comes round it will be proclaimed (renewed laughter). And then you may have something to do in the way of looking after the families of persons imprisoned. The remarks I have made with respect to evicted persons apply to the case of persons imprisoned because they are Land Leaguers, or to persons who may be prosecuted under the ordinary law. You may have heard some one say, or you may think, that there was no necessity to call the Ladies' Land League into existence at all. That there ought always to be enough men in a district to do the work- this special work- without calling upon us. But I think in many cases this will actually not be so, because I know in the case which is now known as the Drumlish case, Lord Granard had about the whole of the Drumlish Land League (6), put into prison in order to facilitate getting his rents- I don't know whether he has got them yet or not, but I hope not (laughter and applause). And as not only the officers of the Drumlish Land League were imprisoned, but very nearly the whole of the League, it has come to pass- at least so I have been told- that the families of some of these prisoners were in a very neglected and destitute condition, until the lady from our office went down to look after them and to attend generally to the business of our League in that locality (hear, hear.) And I have heard it whispered that a very famous attack which has been made upon our League dated from that visit of that lady to look after Lord Granard and his tenantry (hear, hear.)

This shows the necessity of local organisation. The central committee hope to prevent anything like such a thing again if they have anyone in the district, anyone to whom they can apply for information, and who can always be relied upon to send them all necessary information. In the case of the Fenians this was done to a

considerable extent. There was at that time a committee of ladies formed to assist the prisoners and their families. They had not, however, control of the same funds as the Land League has, but even if they had I don't think that without local organisation they would have been able to accomplish their object efficiently, and neither shall we where there is no branch of the League. It will infallibly happen that people will suffer in some cases, but they ought not to suffer where there is a branch of the League. If they do so then it must be the fault either of the ladies who had undertaken the work of the local branch or the Central Committee. We ought I think be very grateful to those who have so promptly responded to our appeal to furnish books and newspapers for the use of the prisoners in Kilmainham; but I am sorry to say that I have learnt that they have not got the benefit of the collection; that the prison authorities have violated the law in their case, which requires them to give all books and newspapers to those untried prisoners immediately. The authorities have violated the law in order to treat those prisoners as badly as they can. I hope, however, this will be rectified, so I won't say any more about it at present.

Now there are many of you here perhaps that don't belong to the Land League. There are also, no doubt, many who do, and I have a last word to say to each of these different classes. I should urge you all now that you have heard the objects of the League explained as thoroughly as it in my power to explain them, to become members; but I must warn you not on any account to do so unless you are really prepared to carry out, and carry out in the face of much greater difficulties than any which we have yet experienced, the work which you pledge yourselves to perform when you become members (hear, hear.) It would be selfish and unpatriotic of you to refuse to undertake this work; but it would be much worse if, having once undertaken it, to cast it off, to turn your back on it, because it would be dishonourable (hear, hear). You know something about the sanctity of contract- at any rate you ought to know something about it, because I am sure we have heard enough about it for a long time. Well, I just want to tell you that I think there is one contract which is more sacred almost than any other, and that is the contract entered into to help those who may be in need of help. This is a contract which you cannot violate without incurring the very greatest responsibility, and I am sure that you don't, any of you, want to share any responsibility for the sufferings which may arise from the combined action of the government and the landlords in Ireland for the next six months. But remember if you don't do what lies in your power to counteract the evil effects of their action, and still more if, having once undertaken to do it, you should fail for any reason whatever, the blame would lie with you, and more with you than with the government or the landlords, for I would think your moral guilt would be greater than theirs, since you know what is right in the question. I really don't believe they do any of them. I don't think that Mr Gladstone, or Mr Forster, or Mr Bright, or Mr Chamberlain, or any one of that whole crew, or any of the landlords who are urging the government on- I don't believe, I say, that they know the difference between right and wrong for a moment (applause).

One of the resolutions proposed here to-day finished in this way. It expressed a hope that we should "win the wise who frowned at first to smile at last." Well, I hope that there are some of the wise who have been frowning at us very hard who will not be the persons to smile at us, for if we found them approving of us we ought to feel ashamed (a laugh). But I don't think that they will approve of us. I shall do my part to prevent their approving of us, and I hope you will all do the same (hear, hear). We don't want the friends of England in Ireland approving of us at all. (hear, hear). Perhaps it is to be hoped that when we are dead and gone, and another generation grown up, that the children of those people against whom we are working now will, by the change of things in Ireland, smile at and approve of us, and that perhaps they will point to us as having set a noble example to all the women of Ireland. Whether that

happens or not, we cannot expect to live to see it, so we must be contented, for our part, with the approval of the friends of Ireland now (hear, hear), and I hope that we shall deserve it. (Continued applause, during which Miss Parnell resumed her seat).

Before the meeting ended a number of the men present called upon Richard Lalor to speak. He was sensitive to the occasion and confined himself to giving heartfelt praise and encouragement to the women. After the meeting in the hall, he was again called to speak to the men waiting outside. He made reference to Anna Parnell's punishing schedule and, displaying some prescience, spoke of his fears for her health. That night, at least, Anna Parnell, rested and was entertained at Rathdowney. The visit to Rathdowney marked the beginning of a speaking tour that was to take Anna Parnell into the south-west, and during the next ten days she was to make six major speeches for the L.L.L.

Thurles. Co.Tipperary. Monday 21st March 1881

The following morning Anna Parnell was driven from Rathdowney to Thurles accompanied by Norah Campion, Mary Lalor, and Father Thomas Feehan; the town was crowded in anticipation of the L.L.L. meeting and many women had come in from the surrounding villages. Attendance had been increased as a result of the publicity given to the L.L.L. by McCabe's pastoral, and the visit to Thurles was to give Anna Parnell an appropriate opportunity to thank Dr Croke for his defence of the women. The archbishop was absent from Thurles, but his Administrator, the Rev. James Cantwell, President of the Thurles branch of the Land League, was present (1). Anna Parnell gave two speeches. The first was made to a formal, but well-attended meeting held at Ryans Hotel; the second unreported speech was given to a larger crowd in the open air.

In the reported speech Anna Parnell stressed the importance of "landlord-watching," warning her listeners with some humour that they must not become too attached to the study. She asked the women to establish the facts of any case of imprisonment and to discover whether false charges were brought against men because of their League membership. Making a mock condemnation of the people of Tipperary for not yet living in a proclaimed county, she wondered it was to do with P.J. Smyth being the M.P. for one of the Tipperary seats,(2)). She described the early involvement of women in the work of the Land League, and how the lack of representation in the decision-making, made a separate, although complementary, women's organization necessary. Preparing the women for further attacks she suggested that the scale of these would be a measure of their effectiveness. Her brief reference to the men's organization, or rather lack of it, is mild in its criticism, but it proved to be justified.

[Report of the **Thurles speech** taken from *the Nation*, Saturday 26th March 1881, reprinted from the *Freeman's Journal* of Monday, 21st March 1881]

Miss Parnell said- Rev. chairman and ladies, it is very satisfactory after recent events, which I need not particularly describe, for this meeting to be held in the home, I may say, of Archbishop Croke (applause). Dr. Croke has added one to the many benefits he has conferred on his country since the short time he has occupied his present position. He has added one more benefit to all that he has given before in the stand he has taken upon the matter of our League (hear, hear). I do not think I need say any more on this subject. The only thing I am afraid of is that his Grace

may have been afraid of the storm of female gratitude that would greet him if he remained for our meeting, and that we may have driven him away from terror (a laugh). I hope that is not the reason he is away from Thurles to-day.

Miss Parnell then explained the objects of the Land League, which did not embrace, she said, as some people hinted, the shooting of landlords, (laughter). The local branches of the Ladies' Land League should collect information about the doings of local landlords. Members of our body ought to be able to pass a competitive examination in landlordism (laughter and applause). It is quite possible the Intermediate Education Board may refuse to include this subject amongst the subjects for which it will give prizes (laughter), but I have heard it said that the getting of knowledge is its own reward, and I hope that you will find it so, and that you may be able to do without the prizes of the educational board, because it will be a long time before the educational board will be sufficiently nationalised to take our view of becoming acquainted with the national history of landlordism. Here is the danger which I should, perhaps, warn you against. Study of anything is very interesting, and it is a fact that students in natural history who make it their business to be acquainted with the manners and customs of what we should consider the most repulsive insects, such as black beetles, spiders, and earwigs (hear, hear and laughter), they get so fond of the subject they study that they come to feel a positive affection for those insects (laughter), so I hope you won't find yourself getting so fond of landlordism that you won't like to have it abolished when the time comes to do so (hear, hear and laughter).

Now, with respect to imprisonment you must acquaint yourselves with all prosecutions when there is reason to suppose that the prosecution is connected with the Land League. Charges of intimidation and murder and all that sort of thing are sometimes made against inoffensive persons because they have committed the great crime of being too fond of the Land League (hear, hear). Well, when this is the case, all the facts concerning these persons ought to be reported to us, because, no matter what the ostensible charge against the person is, if the real reason of his prosecution is that he is a Land Leaguer, or that she is a Land Leaguer- for women have suffered just as much as, if not more than, the men- it will be our duty to do our best to assist them and their families. It is, I think, an extraordinary thing that Tipperary is not proclaimed. That appears to me to be the greatest slur that has been cast on Tipperary for a long time. I don't know whether the reason Tipperary has been spared is because there is one righteous man in it in the shape of one of its members- I mean Mr. Smyth (laughter). But he is so very righteous and just a man that it would not be surprising if Government had spared the whole county on his account. But I think that if the ladies of Tipperary had votes Mr. Smyth would not be the member for Tipperary very long (hear, hear).

The chairman- "He does not represent Tipperary at all" (hear, hear).

Miss Parnell- Well, perhaps this reproach will, before the next rent day, be taken off Tipperary, and I feel sure that if the people of Tipperary do not feel that strong disposition to lie down at the feet of their landlords that they are expected to show by the Government, that some attempt will be made to introduce the new Act into Tipperary. Perhaps, indeed, the Government is only waiting for the time when Lent will be over (laughter). It does not want to carry off the priests while Lent is going on. The Government felt, perhaps, that it cannot carry off many members of the Land League, in some places at least, without carrying off the parish priests and curates (applause and laughter). Now, I want to know what you would feel like if your president, Father Cantwell, was shut up in Kilmainham, and if you were not ready to do everything in your power to lighten his imprisonment. You see that in a question of

this kind most of the work has to be done before the need for it arises, because it is too late to commence learning how to do a thing when it is necessary that it should be done. If you find after all that the need for your exertion does not arise, that will be so much the better; but you ought to be ready at any moment to fulfil any part of the programme which has been laid before you, and, as I have said before, it is very important work indeed.

Now there are three ways in which we could have become Land Leaguers. As a matter of fact most of us have been Land Leaguers all along in the way of subscribing to the funds, and giving what assistance we could. That we will do still in our private capacity, but I do not think that the right of the ladies to vote in the councils of the Land League was ever recognised. It was right therefore that we should have started a separate League, embracing all the objects of the Irish National Land League, auxiliary to it in every sense. But it seems to me it would be difficult to work such a League on a large scale; for instance the president of our League and your president- the reverend gentleman who presides to-day- might take different views of what was required to assist the country, and that we would have had the spectacle of masculine and feminine Leaguers knocking their heads together all over the country (a laugh). Perhaps some of the people who have censured us would have preferred that way of doing things. There was only one other way of acting, and that was to form a separate League and separate branches, (hear, hear). The way to meet criticism is not so much to try to avoid it as to try to rise above it (applause). If we continue fearlessly to do our work we will every day be rising another step beyond and above the reach of poisoned arrows of criticism that

I hope you all understand what you have to do. Of course if you do your work well you may expect to be blamed more than you have been hitherto. Remember that the test of our efficiency, of our danger to the landlord party in Ireland, will be the amount of blame that we will get from the friends of the landlord party in Ireland (hear, hear); so that if you happen to hear a chorus of approbation of our proceedings coming from all quarters, I think it will be time to dissolve our League. So perhaps it may be that they will take the hint, and begin to praise us in order to stop us. (hear, hear). However, I am sure I need not caution Irishwomen against the danger of being taken in by blarney. In Thurles I am sure your help may be confidently counted on when you see the officers of the Tipperary Land League are being marched to inaction (applause). I am quite sure that, no matter what may happen, the men, such of them who may happen to remain, will do their duty and finish the work. Sometimes, of course, men cannot do much; that is not their fault (hear, hear); but we can set them a good example by the way we do our business. (applause).

Later that night in the billiard room of the hotel a banquet was given in Anna Parnell's honour. It is likely that she stayed the night in Thurles before travelling on to Kilmallock, Co.Limerick, the next day.

Charleville (Rath Luirc) Co.Cork. Thursday, 24th March 1881

On Tuesday 22nd March, Anna Parnell journeyed to Kilmallock by rail, there she stayed at the home of Mrs Stephen Barry Walsh, president of the Kilmallock L.L.L. Early in the afternoon of Thursday the 24th she travelled by road to Charleville, Co.Cork, accompanied by the Rev. Eugene Sheehy C.C., president of the Kilmallock Land League (1), and the Walshes. The visit to Charleville marked the start of a week spent in the south of the country. The meeting was convened in the hotel garden where a large platform had been erected; the Rev.T. O'Leary, C.C.,

Charleville, took the chair. Approximately three thousand men and fifteen hundred women were present, and consequently, the women had great difficulty getting near to the platform. This led Anna Parnell to open her speech with a forceful statement regarding the right of L.L.L. members to attend their own meetings. The audience was instructed, moreover, that they had a collective responsibility for the maintenance of order at meetings. These warnings did not stop the men from making many interjections.

At this meeting she introduced a policy which, as she carefully articulated, was outside of the sphere of "relief business." She asked that the practice of falling into debt with shop-keepers and other suppliers be avoided; this would protect the livelihood of the shop-keepers who formed a significant body of support for the League. Her joking reference to the possibility of the women boycotting their husbands was to bring forth an example of the shocked, and often hysterical reaction to the L.L.L. that she referred to at the end of the speech (2). After describing the main task of dispatching to Dublin of accurate information about eviction writs and processes, she outlined a possible benefit for the women. In this speech she made a forecast, accurate as events were to show, that Forster would regret his under-estimation of their organization.

(Text of the **Charleville speech** as reported in the *Cork Daily Herald* Friday 25th March 1881)

Miss Parnell, who was received with great enthusiasm, said ladies and gentlemen, the first part of my discourse is intended for the gentlemen entirely. I have been very much pained to-day by seeing how very difficult you have made it for the ladies to hold this meeting by preventing them coming before the platform. I sent a particular request to Charleville the day before yesterday, that some steps should be taken to insure [sic] the ladies of Charleville having the benefit of their own meeting. The men of Ireland have had plenty of meetings. They have had plenty of people to speak to them for the last two years, and if they have not been able to profit by those meetings before now, I am afraid there is not much use in their going to any more trouble now, (cheers). But the women of Ireland have not had meetings- they have only been able to stand at the outskirts of your meetings, at a respectable distance, and pick up the crumbs from your table. So that I think if the men of Ireland have any chivalry they ought [to] make it their business to let the ladies come to their own meetings. How in the world do you suppose ladies will be encouraged to attend those meetings if they have to find their way through a crowd of gentlemen? But it is very encouraging to the Ladies' Land League to see that there is sufficient enthusiasm among the women of Ireland that so many have made their way to this meeting under the circumstances which I have seen to-day (cheers).

Now, I have this to say, that if this goes on it will be impossible for me to address any more meetings at all in public. I will not cancel the engagements I have made already; but I will make no more engagements if at the meeting at Kilmallock on to-morrow [sic], at the meeting at Kanturk on Sunday, and at the meeting at Ballydehob (wherever that is I don't know), on Wednesday- if I don't find that the ladies have every facility given them to attend their own meetings (cheers, and several voices "So they will"). Remember that you, the men of Ireland, should be able to keep order yourselves, because there are no police in Ireland in the proper sense of the word (cheers, and a voice, "Away with the police"). In other countries the business of the police is to keep order at meetings of this kind, and to use the authority which their uniform gives them to restrain those who are impetuous. But in Ireland the business of the police is not to keep order, but to make disorder (cheers,

and cries of "True for you, Miss"), not to protect life but very often to try and create danger to life. (hisses). So you have to be your own police, and I hope I will see that you are equal to the emergency (cheers).

Now, it remains for the men of Ireland to say and show by their action whether they wish the Ladies' Land League to go on or not. If the ladies cannot attend their own meetings I don't say that it will put a stop to their League, but it will make it more difficult to carry it on. So it is left to you to decide whether you wish me to address any more public meetings or not (cheers and a voice- "Many more, God bless you"). If you are of the opinion of certain gentlemen in high quarters, who think that my addressing meetings is a discreditable proceeding (cries of "no, no," "not at all"), you can do as you have done to-day, make it very difficult to have the meeting held, but if on the other hand you wish to encourage the ladies to attend them, you will make some provision to see that the ladies can get to their own meetings without being hustled and thumped about, and having their clothes torn and their dresses trodden on. (A Voice- "Cheers for Miss Parnell" (cheers).) (Another Voice- "we would do anything at all for your ladyship." (cheers))

Now, ladies, I am going to speak to you. I am sure you deserve all the speaking that you can get after all you have gone through to get here to-day. Charleville has a bad reputation.

A Voice- "Groans for Sanders and his tenants (loud groaning)."

Miss Parnell- Now it is all very well to groan for Sanders (3), but how about his tenantry (groans). Well, I only mentioned that in order to say that it is not, I am sure, the fault of the women of Charleville (groans), (A Voice- There are some of his tenants and their relations alongside you (loud groans, and cries of "turn them off the platform"), and, now, when the women have come forward Charleville may redeem its reputation (cheers). There will be an opportunity for this very soon. Twice a year in Ireland there is always an opportunity for every place to lose or gain its reputation. That is the two gale days in the year. (4) I believe there is another gale day coming round so we will wait to see what Charleville will do that day, before we will advise the ladies of Charleville to have nothing more to do with any of the gentlemen of Charleville (cheers and laughter). Perhaps that is the reason the gentlemen of Charleville have been so very anxious to-day to monopolise this meeting because they feel they wanted advice much more than the women do (cheers).

Now, to-day, I am going to do a thing I have never done before, I am going outside the sphere of the relief business, although you will agree with me when you hear my advice, that I am not going outside of the domestic sphere; my advice to-day to the ladies of Charleville, who are here, is that they will make it a principle to pay ready money for everything, and I ask you to advise all the others who are not here to-day to do the same thing (a Voice "That's right"). You will find yourselves in a much better position to do your work if you have no debts at all, excepting your debts to the landlord. It has been found, do what they will, that, the Irish people cannot escape their being in debt to the landlord, and they might as well give up trying not to be, but they may make it a principle that they will be in debt to no one else. It is very hard on shopkeepers that they cannot recover their just debts without first paying the landlord's rent, and I think that the ladies might very fairly see to this matter, because they have the control of the purse-strings practically. They can tell their husbands that unless they give them ready money to pay for it they will not give him any dinner, and I think that if Mr.Sanders' tenants had understood this perfectly before they sneaked off to the landlord, that they would not be allowed anything but prison

diet by their wives for the next six months, they would have thought better of what they did (cheers). That is my political advice. I acknowledge that it is political, but it is certainly not outside of your domestic duties, but I think every one will acknowledge that it is right that women should discourage getting into debt. If you succeed in keeping this advice, you will find it much easier than if you were implicated in a network of debt- in debt to the shopkeeper, and in debt to the money-lender, besides that natural and reasonable condition of being in debt to the landlord (cheers, and groans for the landlord). You will find that there won't be so many evicted tenants to relieve, and that is a very important item for us to consider; because if the landlords get their way there will be so many evicted tenants in Ireland that it will be almost impossible to relieve them (hear, hear). No one knows that better than Mr. Forster (groans).

This very same Forster is no fool at all- he knows a great deal, but there is one thing I don't believe he knows anything about, and that is the women of Ireland, because he does not, I believe, know anything about anything except what is bad, and the women of Ireland are not bad, and that is why I think he knows nothing about them (cheers, and groans for Forster). I think this Ladies' Land League has taken him by surprise, and he will be a great deal more surprised before long (cheers). There is a great deal of practical work for the ladies of Ireland to do now. If you do your duty, and let us know in Dublin of every writ and every process that is served in your district you will have plenty to do. I cannot imagine any more improving work for young ladies than to copy those writs, and what is more, it will not only improve your minds, but the practice you will acquire in this way may at some future date enable some of you to earn a living as law copyers; and don't imagine that is anything very dreadful, because plenty of women are already engaged at this work. In asking you to do this I am not asking you to do anything unbecoming a woman though some old gentlemen or old ladies come down on me and tell you it is very unfeminine to be about such things ("no, do," and cheers). Remember that you have my authority for saying that it is not unfeminine (cheers).

You have no imprisonment under Mr. Forster's new Act to cope with here (groans). That is no credit, allow me to tell you, to Charleville, I think if matters had gone differently in a certain quarter, if Mr. Sanders had to go where Mr. Boycott (5) and Mr. Bence-Jones (6) have gone, back to the people who love them (groans), then, I think it not unlikely that you would have Charleville proclaimed, (loud cheers, and groans for Sanders' tenants and coercion). However, there is no use in regretting what is already done, but you will, I am very sure, do your duty by the families of those who may be prosecuted under the ordinary law because they are land leaguers, and it is hard, allow me to tell you, to escape the ordinary law (cheers). I knew a good deal for a woman about law before I began to be a land leaguer, but I found out I was now at the business. For instance, I gave the ladies of Kedue [sic], in the county Roscommon, the advice to knit stockings for the benefit of those who might be imprisoned. Well, a high class London paper said this advice was inciting to assassination. Well, it must come to this that if the advice to knit stockings is inciting to assassination, knitting the stockings must be assassination itself (laughter). So it is quite possible that you are all assassins without knowing it. Under those circumstances when the laws are so very particular it is very hard not to break them some times, even with the best intentions in the world. So you see it will be necessary for you to extend all your sympathies to those who manage to do something wrong and get into the clutches of the law without at all intending it (cheers).

No time should ever be lost in reporting any case to us where relief would be required, because some time must elapse before the relief is granted. Now, ladies, I

think I have said really all I have to say, and the very fact of your being here to-day under such difficulties in such large numbers makes me sure that you will be able for the work that lies before you (cheers). There are fifteen thousand landlords and fifteen thousand agents, and I don't know how many bailiffs, and whatever goal the ladies put before them let them make up their minds to reach it and they will. When that has been done there won't be any more cause for me to shock the sensibilities of any one by making speeches any longer, so that if these persons whose sensibilities have been shocked want to stop my speeches they had better stop evictions (loud cheers). That is the very shortest way that I can tell them how to stop me (cheers).

The speech was followed by Father Eugene Sheehy's strong endorsement of the L.L.L. and the women's involvement in the nationalist struggle. After the meeting Anna Parnell accompanied by Father Sheehy and Father Leary, paid a visit to the Rev. Mother Joseph, sister of the Archbishop of Cashel, at the Charleville convent of the Irish Sisters of Mercy.(7) Later that evening she returned to Kilmallock to stay once more with the Walshes.

Kilmallock, Co.Limerick, Friday 25th March 1881

The following day Anna Parnell had been invited to inaugurate a L.L.L. branch at Kilmallock, It was a holiday, the Feast of the Annunciation, and despite the stormy weather of the morning, a large crowd of four thousand people assembled for a day of religious and nationalist celebration.. Due to the size of the demonstration Anna Parnell was to give two speeches. After the experience of Charleville, a separate meeting for women had been arranged in the Ball Court where a large platform had been erected. By the afternoon the weather had become fine and the meeting began at three o'clock attended by approximately one thousand women. A few men were admitted, principally the clergy invited to sit on the platform, but some other men had managed to scramble on to the walls surrounding the meeting-place. Father Sheehy took the chair and once more endorsed the activities of the L.L.L., although he was careful to describe the L.L.L. as a national relief organization.

When she came to speak, Anna Parnell first expressed her concern that women in the audience might be crushed, and she asked for care to be taken and silence kept during her speech. She made use of two analogies suggested by the circumstances of the meeting. Responding to a resolution praising Michael Davitt as the co-founder of the L.L.L., she stated that the formation of the L.L.L. had been, in fact, solely Michael Davitt's idea. After her reference to the proven militant patriotism of the women of Cork and Limerick, Anna Parnell, somewhat humorously, but unequivocally, declined to be the leader of any militant or violent movement. The importance of good organization was stressed again.

(Text of the **Kilmallock speech** as reported in the *Cork Examiner*, Saturday 26th March 1881)

Miss Parnell, who was received with the most marked enthusiasm, then spoke as follows: Ladies, first I have to ask you not to crush each other. I believe if you keep quiet I can make myself heard quite well as far as the cottage, (A Voice- "God enable you"). There are some people near the platform who are being crushed. I would also ask you to keep silence I have a prejudice against other people talking while I am talking myself (laughter). Now, I think we may congratulate ourselves upon having such a fine day after the violent storm of this morning. Perhaps that storm and

the subsequent fine weather is emblematical of the future of Ireland ("hear, hear"). Perhaps the stormy way in which this year has begun will give place before the year is over to fine weather, in a political sense ("hear, hear"). We have had nothing to do with making it fine to-day, so the analogy stops there, as we may succeed in having something to do with getting fine weather on the political horizon of Ireland (applause). There is a second omen which I have observed to-day. You see before you the ruins of a time when Ireland had something to ruin. There is not anything left in a material sense to ruin in Ireland now. I observe that we have succeeded to-day in getting rid of the men nearly entirely (laughter), and I am sure that we all feel much more comfortable in consequence (renewed laughter). The consequence of this is that the men have been driven to get on top of the ruin of one of the ruins of Ireland, so perhaps it is an omen of what is to come, and that the Ladies' Land League may succeed in forcing the men of Ireland to plant their feet once more and forever on the ruin of England's greatness (applause). Now, I see some gentlemen are getting over the wall. Well, I have a word to say about that. I have promised if they behave properly to say something to them afterwards, but if they make a noise or come to disturb us, then I shall not feel bound to keep that promise, so that if they want to hear they will have to stop outside, and they will have to keep quiet.

The second resolution and the fourth describe this Ladies' League as being jointly my work and that of Michael Davitt. Now, it was wholly his work. I didn't have anything to say to it till it was done. We did not put our heads together about it. Mr Davitt settled it all in his own mind, and then he informed the world that I was going to do it, to carry his ideas out, and never asked my consent at all. I am glad now that he did not, because I might have hesitated, but now I see that he was right, and that this Ladies' League was the proper thing to form in the crisis at which we have arrived (applause). I think that certain people in Dublin Castle have the same opinion, because I observe that, of all those who have been arrested, it is the special friends of the Ladies' League who have been pounced upon. Michael Davitt was the first. Now, ladies, I think that we ought to feel, and I know that I feel myself that we have been honoured in a way in which very few women have ever been honoured in being chosen as the instruments of Michael Davitt's plans and in being honoured with his confidence. I think the confidence of Michael Davitt is worth the confidence of a great many other men or women either in Ireland or anywhere else (applause). Well, ladies, I don't know whether I am keeping my word to you, and whether you can all hear me. If you cannot, say so (cries of "Yes," and "We can"). I think that we ought to make it our business to show, not so much that we are womanly, or all those fine things, but to show that we deserve the confidence of a man like Michael Davitt, and that we can do what he gave us to do (a Voice- We will do everything for him). Well, you know that you have also the confidence of another man whose name is well known, not only in Kilmallock but throughout Ireland, and that is Father Sheehy (loud applause). So I don't think there is any reason for us to be ashamed of ourselves so far, but there would be every reason to be ashamed if, after we have had the confidence of such men given to us, we proved unworthy of it through any motive, whether from fear of newspaper articles or letters from members of Parliament or any other form of criticism to which we may be exposed.

Now, I have to go over a well-worn theme, which I am beginning to know by heart- the objects of the Ladies' Land League. The women of Cork and Limerick- Limerick especially (1)- are so patriotic that they might possibly think that their energies were not directed into the proper channel- they might possibly take it into their heads to attack a police barracks or something of the sort (laughter). Well, at present there is no talk of us doing that. I must confess that I think if it had to be done by the women of Ireland that I should be found somewhere in the background on the occasion (laughter), because I never got any training in the art of war (great laughter); so if you

want to do that you will have to find some other lady to lead you. I don't know whether the president of the Kilmallock branch, Mrs Walsh, would be willing or not (renewed laughter). Now, you know that one of the objects for which our league was formed was to look after the persons who might be imprisoned under the Habeas Corpus Act. Well, there have not been as many imprisonments as I expected. This may either be a good sign or a bad one. It may be a sign that the Government does not see much use in imprisoning many people, or else it may be a sign that the Government thinks it can crush the people without imprisoning many men. I do not think that if the Government were here to-day it would hold the last theory upon the matter. I think the Government does not know how many women there are in Ireland (a laugh). If it did know it would understand that crushing the country is not an easy matter (applause). If anyone ever tried to crush one woman they would know it was hard, but if they try to crush two and a half millions, they will find it will take them somewhere into the 21st century of Christianity before they can accomplish it (applause).

Perhaps the reason why there have not been so many arrests as there might have been is that Mr. Forster (groans) wanted to deprive you of the consolation of ministering to Father Sheehy's wants (a woman in the crowd here said in Irish, "Down with him"). If that lady was referring to Mr. Forster at that time, I don't think he deserves to be mentioned in Irish at all (laughter and applause). But although you have not the pleasure of knowing that you have Father Sheehy in your power- that is to say, in your power to help him now- there may come a time when you will be called upon to fulfil this branch of your work. A short while ago it looked very much like as if they were trying to deprive you of Father Sheehy. (2) They have thought better of it since; but if there is such a stand made against rents here in Limerick as I expect and hope to see made between this and next May, then be assured that the doors of the prison will open. (A Voice- "God grant it.") So you must be ready to see that if any of the persons imprisoned are in such circumstances, that their families will suffer by their imprisonment, you will have to take care to be ready to report their cases to us.

Now, with respect to evictions, I think I have heard that there are none here, that there are not even any expected. That is so much the better. But there are some of you here to-day that came from other places than Kilmallock. You know that the object of our league is to provide an organised system to secure that the relief which the Land League provides for evicted families shall reach those for whom it is intended. Now, the Land League has plenty of money, but it has not enough to waste. Organisation is the only means by which the relief of the Land League can be given to those for whom it is intended, and at the same time not wasted. We know the secretaries of every league. We know the secretary of the league is to be trusted. But the secretary ought in her turn to know every member of her league, and know whether the information they give her can be trusted, or whether it cannot. Remember that the Land League doesn't undertake to relieve all the distress of Ireland. It desires to stop the causes of the distress; but while it is engaged in the work of stopping the causes of distress, it will relieve any distress which might befall those who are carrying out its programme in consequence of their faithful allegiance to it (hear, hear). I think one of the resolutions, as well as I remember, said that I was willing to work as well as weep. Now, I may say that I don't intend to weep (a laugh). I think for the present we shall have to leave the weeping to the gentlemen (renewed laughter). You will have to keep your sight undimmed by tears if you want to do the work of the Ladies' League; so I advise you to make up your minds to keep any weeping that you want to do until about this time next twelve months, and then, perhaps, you won't feel a need to weep at all, (applause). Now, ladies, I have done. The gentlemen are waiting very patiently outside; and I think if the Ladies' League

has done nothing else, it ought to be thanked for showing that everything in the world, speeches included, was not intended for their exclusive benefit (loud and prolonged applause).

Later in the afternoon at half-past four a larger meeting of men and women (4-5,000) gathered before a platform erected in front of the Land League rooms. After an introductory speech by Father Sheehy, Anna Parnell gave her second speech of the day. She first thanked the men for allowing the women to have their meeting, and again announced her decision that in future she would be addressing women-only meetings. After making a mocking comparison of the two League organizations, she continued by saying that she was not there to give them "political advice" for they had their own leaders, although she hoped they would listen to their female relatives. At this point there was a disturbance in the crowd. A sub-inspector of police Frazer, and his men, who had made their presence too obvious by sneering and laughing during the course of Anna Parnell's speech, were turned upon. Trapped by the closely packed crowd which was pushed forward to the platform in order to hear Anna Parnell, the policemen were in considerable danger. A group of clergymen used words and fists to protect the interlopers before they received any serious injuries, and hustled them to the safety of a nearby house. Eventually, order was restored and the meeting resumed. Anna Parnell had remained on the platform the whole time and when she spoke again she defused the situation further by suggesting that the crowd found the police more interesting than herself. It was the only occasion during these early weeks that violence erupted at a L.L.L. meeting.

[Second **Kilmallock speech** given outside of the Kilmallock Land League rooms, the text taken from the *Cork Examiner*, Saturday 26th March 1881]

Miss Parnell, on coming forward, was received with every manifestation of enthusiasm, the crowd of men waving their hats and cheering again and again, so that Miss Parnell had to stand in front of the platform for fully five minutes before the enthusiasm subsided. When the cheering ceased, she said Gentlemen, I am sure you will listen with the greatest attention when I tell you that the ladies, as well as the priests who have been exerting themselves to-day in the interests of the ladies, are all waiting for our [sic] dinners (a laugh). My reason for addressing you is, to thank you for the kindness and consideration, with which you kept away from our meeting over there. (A Voice- "Three cheers for Charley"). Because I need not tell you that if you had insisted on going in, there would not have been any room for the ladies (hear, hear, and a Voice- "We would wait from night till morning for you"). Remember that I don't propose to address meetings, excepting meetings of the ladies. You ought all of you to know much more than I can tell you by this time, if you have been in the habit of taking the advice which has been given you from so many platforms in Ireland by the leaders of the Land League. If you have not been taking that advice- well, so much the worse for you.

I just want to ask a question, because you all know that women are inquisitive (laughter). I want to know why you have not got your Land League cards in your hats. (A Voice- "We have them, in our hearts"). I can assure you there is not anything more becoming to a gentleman than the orange and green card in his hat (hear, hear, and a Voice- "we hate the orange"). We have not got such fine cards as you. We have too much to do to spend our time in inventing fine cards. Our cards are very business-like things, not ornamental at all; so it remains for you to do the decorative part of the business (laughter; and cheers "for Parnell and his sister too"). It is all very well to have the Land League cards in your hearts, but you cannot succeed unless

you have them in your heads, too. It is not my place to give you political advice for that matter; as long as you have Father Sheehy. (A Voice- "We are all Parnellites"). You don't require any from me. The only advice that I can give you is that you will be guided by your female relations, provided they are members of the Land League (cheers).

[Here there was some commotion among the crowd.....]

When silence was once more restored, Miss Parnell continued:

Gentlemen, I am very sorry I was not able to say anything interesting enough to prevent you from running after a sub-inspector (laughter). What I was going to say at that moment was, that I was sure you could be trusted to go on and do your duty, but I am afraid that if you do as you have done to-day, and allow the Royal Irish Constabulary to entice you away from your real friends, such as myself and Father Sheehy, there is not much chance for you. So I hope you won't repeat this day's performance, and that you won't do anything to frighten those poor fellows unnecessarily (laughter and cheers). Well, gentlemen, I feel very grateful to you for having allowed me to address the ladies in peace to-day, and I wish you to remember how much you owe Father Sheehy, and I now want you to give three cheers for Father Sheehy and the rest. (Great cheering, amid which Miss Parnell retired).

Father Sheehy rounded off the meeting with a further condemnation of the policeman foolish enough to be disrespectful at such a meeting. The day's events at Kilmallock were concluded with a banquet in the evening. Anna Parnell's visit to County Limerick brought forth a virulently hostile editorial in the Limerick Chronicle for Saturday 26th March, 1881. Apart from a vicious description of the L.L.L. speakers and organisers as tragedy-queens flaunting themselves before the foot-lights, much of the venom in the editorial was directed towards the advice given to the women at Charleville the day before to boycott their men if they failed to follow Land League policy.

Kanturk Co.Cork. Sunday. 27th March 1881

On the morning of Sunday, 27th March, Anna Parnell was driven the thirty miles from Kilmallock to Kanturk. She was escorted once more by Father Eugene Sheehy and her hosts, the Walshes. At 1 o'clock they were met outside the town by a large and enthusiastic crowd; a procession was formed in the customary manner, and it was nearly 3 o'clock before the party reached the site of the meeting, the Egmont Arms Hotel. A large platform had been erected outside and a crowd of upwards of 8,000 assembled. A large force of police were present in the town, but were kept well away from the crowds.

When she came forward to speak, the large attendance by the men prevented the women in the audience from approaching the platform. A meeting for the women was then transferred to the hotel garden, but the men again intruded in large numbers and Anna Parnell, as at Kilmallock, offered an alternative meeting to the men. Although the women's meeting was allowed to proceed there was still some noise and Anna Parnell asked a woman in the outer reaches of the audience to indicate by using an appropriate signal, that she could hear. In the short speech given to the women she congratulated the Kanturk L.L.L. for being established, like the men's League, on political principles. After reiterating the main tasks of the organisation, in particular the care of prisoners, she boldly remarked that the non-

payment of rent by the tenants would ensure the prisoners' rapid release, (although she hastened to add that non-payment of rent was not as yet accepted as policy by the women). The "ready money plan" first presented at Charleville was given again.

[Text of the **Kanturk speech** taken from the *Cork Daily Herald*, Tuesday 29th March 1881]

Miss Parnell, who was received with loud cheering, said- Ladies, if you keep quiet, I can make myself heard at the outskirts of the crowd, but if you talk and make a noise I cannot be heard at all. This Land League of Kanturk is the first Ladies Land League that has been established in Ireland (1), and more power to the women of Kanturk for that (applause). I don't know how you had the courage to do such a thing, because I believe you started your league as one in all respects analogous to the men's league. You did not merely start a relief league. Well, to judge by the storm which has been created by our starting a relief league in Dublin, it is surprising that the ladies of Kanturk have not been, to punish them for their audacity in starting a political league, entirely annihilated (applause and laughter); but it is quite plain to me that all of them have not been annihilated. Now, as a branch of the central organisation in Dublin, your duties as members of our league are very definite. In the first place it is your duty to make the fullest provision for the relief of evicted families whenever that relief may become necessary. Now, I don't know that there are any landlords about here (laughter). I suppose there are, but I don't know whether they are bad cases or not, perhaps some of you would be able to inform me on that point.

A Voice- "There are a great many bad ones."

Miss Parnell- Well, so much the better, if the landlords are bad, because it will give you an opportunity of showing what you are able to do. I am always sorry when I come into a place, and am told there are no writs being served there. I feel that the ladies wont [sic] have much work to do, and that they may get into mischief in consequence (laughter). You see, if writs are being served, your duties are very distinct. You have got to let us in Dublin know all about those writs, and all about the landlords who are serving them. And, I think, when we know every writ that has been served in this district, how it is that it has been served, we may be able to arrange matters, so that the writs will be the last part of the business. I am sure that when the landlords know that such steps have been taken, that every tenant and his wife and family whom he may evict will be planted right under his nose, and kept there until the day of judgement, if that is necessary, he won't be very anxious to evict tenants. That is just what you have to make arrangements for- you have to find out the way to keep the evicted tenants and the evicting landlords as close together as possible, so that there may be a chance of a better feeling growing up between them. Now, your second duty will be ...

There was some noise made here by some men who were sitting on the walls and in the garden.

Miss Parnell said- I think your first duty will be to evict the men if they don't keep quiet (laughter, and a Voice- "We'll be quiet, Miss"). Well, now, I was going to say that your second duty will be to look after the prisoners. I confess, ladies, that we are not so well adapted to protect the interests of the prisoners as the men are, because I believe to provide for the comforts of the prisoners, and the way to get them out of prison altogether, in double-quick time, would be for the tenant farmers to stop paying any rents at all (cheers). The ladies have not made up their minds yet to do that, and it is not our business to tell them to do so. Although there is no reason why we should not have our own opinions on the subject- there is no law against it. Now,

ladies, we are a very large crowd, and I don't know if I can be heard by all. If that young lady standing outside the crowd, with the umbrella with black silk ribbons at the top, would just close her umbrella for a moment it would be a signal that I am heard.

(The umbrella was closed, and Miss Parnell continued)

How in the world, can I make myself heard, ladies, if you make such a noise.

(There was some talking going on amongst the audience)

It is quite plain you don't know what it is to make speeches in public. Now, I am going to give you most important advice, but it is not strictly connected with relief at all. It may be described as political and domestic economy rolled into one. One great cause of the power that the landlords have in this country is the stupid and dishonest habit that the tenant farmers have in many cases fallen into of going into debt to their shopkeepers for the necessaries of life, and giving all that they can beg, borrow, or steal to the landlords. I think it is just the same as stealing for you to give money to the landlords which you owe to the shopkeepers for the means of living. Now, I think if all of you here would make up your minds henceforward to pay nothing but ready money, and to get nothing that you cannot pay for on the spot one great door to rack-renting would be closed, because if your husbands knew that you would give them nothing to eat unless you got the money for it they would not be so ready, as they have been in some cases, to sneak off to the landlords and pay their rent (hisses and applause). If you make up your minds to the ready-money plan you will find that you will make a tremendous change, and the change will be made where it is most wanted, because it follows that the farmer cannot pay an unjust rent if he has not got it and if he could not borrow it. Now, ladies, this is all I have got to say. I hope you will make it as troublesome for the landlord to talk to you as some of you have made it for me to talk to you (laughter). If you only persevere in making yourselves heard as you have done to-day whenever there are evictions threatened you may be sure that Kanturk will be a model for all Ireland (applause and cheers).

The second speech given from a platform outside the hotel in Egmont Place was substantially a repetition of that given to the women: a Government note-taker taking advantage of the open meeting was present. The size of the crowd meant that many would not be able to hear her and she advised them to check the newspapers for reports. This speech was interrupted by a minor incident; Anna Parnell, as ever, kept calm, but the incident illustrated how difficult it was to keep the largest meetings in order.

[The second **Kanturk speech** taken from the text in the *Cork Daily Herald*, Tuesday, 29th March 1881]

Miss Parnell, who, on coming forward, was received with loud cheering and waving of hats and handkerchiefs. She said- Rev. Chairman, ladies and gentleman, I think it is impossible for all of you to hear me, but those who cannot must not mind. They must be contented to read it in the papers, and if the papers don't publish it, why the only thing left to do will be to murder the editors (laughter). I know it is very wrong to say that, because there are some of the editors in Ireland that the English Government would like to see murdered.

A Voice- T.D. Sullivan. (2)

Miss Parnell- That's so. Your [sic] quite right. Now, gentlemen, I promised to say all over again what I said to the ladies, you have behaved very well to-day, and it is a good sign, for if you know how to control yourself, I am sure you will very soon learn how to control the landlords (cheers). Miss Parnell continued to say, and it was only right the men should be anxious to know what advice she gave their family relations. One thing she said was that this league in Kanturk was the first established in Ireland, and the ladies must be courageous to establish the League, as she believed it was at first a political league, and not merely a relief league. For starting simply a relief league she and the women of Ireland brought a most fearful storm and clatter about their ears, and judging from this she was surprised, and the ladies of Kanturk, who did something much worse, were not entirely annihilated. I notice one remarkable difference between this and any other meeting, and I think it must be owing to the fact there has been a Ladies' Land League in Kanturk so long. At every meeting a number of the Royal Irish always honoured us with their presence (groans). Well, I was going to tell you that to day they have not ventured to come nearer than a quarter of a mile, or perhaps by the time this Ladies Land League is firmly established in Ireland they will not venture to come nearer than a hundred miles (cheers, and laughter).

The first thing I told the women was the duties they had to perform as members of this league. We did not think it a good thing that the women should take everything into their own hands, and go in deputations to the landlords and tell them that they have been thinking that the rent is too high (cheers). It is not the women's business until the men are locked up, and then, perhaps, they will do it. Coercion would soon be over if the rents were not paid until it was over, but it is not the ladies' business to interfere in this. She told the ladies to pay ready money for everything, for nothing could be more dishonest than the practice amongst the tenant-farmers of Ireland of giving all they could scrape together to the landlord (cheers).

[A wagon carrying members of the Meelin fife and drum band, passed through the town, and someone drew attention to the fact that a bailiff's son was one of the bandsmen. The wagon was surrounded by a crowd, and made to drive off amidst great groaning.]

Miss Parnell, said they should leave the bailiff's son alone. Perhaps he wanted advice just as much as anyone. She concluded by saying that if ready cash was paid for everything there would not be one evicted, because there would be no rack-rents to pay (cheers).

That evening Anna Parnell attended a banquet given for a hundred guests, including thirty women, in the Young Men's Society Hall. According to one newspaper report **(3) ?** she left Kanturk that evening and travelled to a nearby station to catch the night mail for Dublin. She might have returned quickly to Dublin, it is not known, but by Wednesday the 30th March she was in Ballydehob to give the last speech of this tour in the south.

Ballydehob. Co.Cork. Wednesday. 30th March 1881

On Wednesday 30th March, Anna Parnell travelled down on the West Cork line to Skibbereen en route for Ballydehob. She was escorted once more by Miss Power and Mrs Walsh, and by J.O'Connor of the Cork Land League. Crowds had gathered for their arrival at Skibbereen station, and after the formal reception at the Beecher Arms Hotel a long procession was formed which included five hundred men on horseback. Anna Parnell insisted that she travel on an outside car the nine or so

miles to the meeting-place at Ballydehob where three to four thousand people had gathered to hear her. A large platform had been constructed in a field, but this was to prove unsafe:

"It (the platform) was about nine feet high (another report made it twelve feet), supported by fir trees, and some iron rails run as girders underneath the planking, but the trees were left their full height, some with foliage on, and as they swayed to and fro in a strong easterly wind, the result was that the platform was continuously weakened." (1)

The crowded platform began to give way as soon as the meeting started, (fortunately no serious injuries were sustained), and Anna Parnell was obliged to address the meeting from a more secure position on a nearby hillock. The meeting was good humoured and Anna Parnell gave a spirited and confident speech, which included a nicely improvised political fable. After a light-hearted introduction she took the opportunity to comment on a statement in a speech made by T.M.Healy (2) in Dublin the previous day. Healy had suggested that evicted tenants might claim outdoor relief, presumably to save Land League expenses. Anna Parnell demonstrated that this was impractical, despite the increased numbers of tenant farmers appointed as poor law guardians. Her main concern, as head of the relief organisation, was to correct the impression that there had been a reversal in policy; the tenants facing eviction were not to be confused, neither were the Irish donors overseas. She assured the audience that half the funds raised by the Land League were pledged to relief. This difference anticipated the final split that was to occur between the men's and the women's leagues; the L.L.L. were to remain steadfast in their commitment to use the funds raised for relief for that purpose.

[Report of the **Ballydehob speech** taken from the *Cork Daily Herald*, Friday 1st April 1881]

After some remarks from the Chairman, Miss Parnell, who was introduced to the meeting, and who on coming forward was received with loud cheering, said- Ladies and Gentlemen, the first thing I have to tell you is, if there is any noise I won't talk at all; because there is so much wind. A month ago I did not know there was such a place as Ballydehob at all (laughter). Well, now I know there is such a place, and I think it is the grandest place in the world (cheers). Do you know what I thought when I first heard of the name of Ballydehob. I thought to myself there is a sound about that name that looks as if there was some backbone in the place- there is a kind of fighting sound in the word Ballydehob, and I am sure from what I have seen that Ballydehob will not be the first place to go back of the Land League (cheers, and a Voice-"We're true here").

Now, I will tell you that, in my opinion, besides being the grandest place in Ireland you have the best band in Ireland (cheers). It is a capital band, and it shows there must be something in temperance after all, for I believe it is a temperance band. To-day I feel that I am a real land leaguer for the first time (cheers), because it is the first time that I went to a meeting on an outside car (laughter). That is the proper way to go to meetings in Ireland, and not in any English invention (cheers). Now, ladies and gentlemen, I don't think there are any of you [who] have seen the newspapers to-day, because you have been too busy, but I suppose you will see them to-morrow. Well, there is something in the newspapers to-day that I thought might do harm in Ireland if it were not rightly understood. You have all heard of Mr. Healy ("Yes," and "cheers for him"). He is a first rate young man and a good land leaguer, but I have to find fault with something he said yesterday in Dublin ("Oh," and a voice- "We're sorry for it"). He proposed that the evicted tenants might go on the

poor relief ("no, no"). You know in some places you have turned out the landlord guardians, and you put in the tenant guardians (cheers, and a voice- "We did it here"). Well, Mr. Healy thought that when that is the case those Land League guardians ought [to] strike a special rate for evicted families (cheers), because he thought that if the landlords evicted all their tenants then the landlords themselves would have to pay all the poor rates. Well, no doubt, if all the tenants are evicted in any parish in Ireland where there are Land League guardians, those guardians will put a stiff poor rate on to the landlords (cheers); but that theory would only work if all the tenants were evicted, because as long as there were any tenants in a place they would have to pay half.

I feel sure from what I see before me that there will be no parish in Ireland from which all the tenants, or half the tenants, or quarter [of] the tenants will be evicted (cheers); so it follows that Mr. Healy's plan of relieving evicted tenants won't have a chance of being brought into practice (cheers, and cries of "right"). It will not, if we can help it (cheers). Besides, there is another thing in the matter, for the Government would step in and it would protect the landlords against having to pay more than they felt inclined to (groans for the Government). Now, I must tell you that if you hear any talk about this speech of Mr. Healy's don't let yourselves be frightened, because the Land League has no choice in the matter. Half the money which the Land League has been subscribing is for nothing else but to relieve evicted tenants (cheers). As long as there is a penny of that left, the Land League is bound to spend it on relieving evicted tenants, according to the promises it made when it appealed for those funds (cheers), that is to say- that it will help all the tenants who show that they don't mean to allow themselves to be turned out and starved like sheep. All tenants who may be turned out, no matter what their condition in life is, if they act and continue to act on the principles of the Land League, they are bound to receive the relief of the Land League if they want it (cheers), and I may tell you more, the money of the Land league is in the hands of trustees. Perhaps you all don't know what trustees are. Well, trustees are people to whom you trust money, and sometimes they are people who should not be trusted with money, but I know that the trustees of the Land League money are to be trusted (cheers). I know that it is not their intention- that it is not the intention of a single trustee of the Land League money to allow a single tenant to want if he is evicted, provided he has acted and continues to act up to the principles of the Land League (cheers).

I have heard some people say that if the Land League money goes to relieve all the evicted tenants that there would not be enough money, but that is nonsense. I know something of the feeling of the Irish people, and of the children of the Irish people in America, and I say here to-day, and I believe as firmly as I ever believed anything, that if the Irish people were to say to-morrow that they would never pay any more rent as long as this Coercion Bill and this Arms Bill is in force in Ireland- if they were to say that to-morrow, and were all evicted in consequence the Irish people in America would subscribe enough to keep the whole country for five years if once they saw that the Irish people were determined (loud cheers). But there is one trouble about this, for I am sure I don't know who will subscribe to keep the landlord for five years ("no, no," and cheers). I tell you this, because I believe it my duty as Secretary of the Relief Branch of the Irish National Land League, to tell you that you have no cause whatever to distrust the promises which the Land League has made you (cheers). If you remain faithful to the Land League the Land League will remain faithful to you (renewed cheers, and cries of "we will"). There is another kind of idea- the danger of getting a false idea about the relief branch of the Land League. I had lately had letters from people who ought to know better, asking me to give the money of the Land League to poor people in Ireland who wanted it badly no doubt, but for whose relief it was never intended. I have letters asking me for the honour of

womanhood to do a kind of board of guardians' work for the whole of Ireland, but I did not as an honourable woman give the money which has been subscribed in order to enable the farmers of Ireland to fight a fight which will eventually put a stop to hunger and misery in Ireland altogether (cheers). We could not spend this money on any purpose for which it was not intended by the people who gave it to us (hear, hear). Now, I know there are plenty of people in Ireland who have no land to live on, and who are in some want, but they must be left to private charity until the cause of Ireland's distress is removed (hear, hear).

There are many persons who have expressed themselves in the very strongest terms against our particular work, relieving evicted tenants, (groans). They say they admire charity, but not the particular charity that we are about. Very well; let them show it then. Let the gentlemen who have condemned us in no measured terms and let the ladies with whom they have influence undertake the charge of all the poor in Ireland who don't come under our sphere of work. Well, I am afraid they won't, and I make an appeal to a different class of persons- the tenant farmers themselves (cheers). The tenant farmers of Ireland have practically the whole wealth of the country in their hands; and I think they might seriously ask themselves whether it is their duty, not only to keep money to feed themselves and their families, but also to ask themselves whether they are entitled to give too much to the landlord while numbers of poor tenant farmers are starving at their gates. The tenant farmers of Ireland are a class who really have the power of relieving, not only their own distress, but the distress of all the rest of Ireland (cheers). Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have said all this to you to-day, because I feel that we cannot let our position to be ambiguous in this matter. Our work is hard enough, and there is enough of [sic] call on the money which the Land League has at its disposal without undertaking, asking, or spending the funds of the Land League for any objects for which they were not subscribers (cheers).

I don't know whether an intelligent audience like this requires to have the objects of the Ladies Land League explained to it. The ladies have got to know the innermost thoughts of every landlord. They have got to know the innermost thoughts of every agent, and of the secret soul of the bailiff (cheers and laughter). I don't know now that there would be any harm if you knew a little about the thoughts of the Royal Irish Constabulary (groans). But, ladies, the way to find out the thoughts of those gentlemen is not to ask them or talk to them about what they intend (laughter); it is to judge them by their actions. You may thus find out what they are; but if you talk to them they will tell you nothing but lies (renewed laughter and cheers). Well, I don't think that you are proclaimed. You are not, I believe, proclaimed down here...

Mr. Hodnett (chairman) (3)- "I am sorry to tell you that we are already."

Miss Parnell- Well I feel proud that I am addressing a proclaimed audience (cheers). I knew that Ballydehob was a grand place, (continued cheering). I will just tell you an anecdote of what happened to me last Sunday- there is a moral in it, so please listen to it. We were driving to a meeting in Kanturk and we were going along with four horses and a very great amount of bluster, as if there was nothing that could stand before us for a moment. Well, in the middle of the road we saw a donkey lying at full length. He was right in our path, and he did not look as if he minded us at all (laughter). We went on and on, and nearer and nearer, and I thought the donkey would be annihilated, but he did not stir. And what do you suppose we had to do with all our four horses? We had to turn out of the way for the donkey (renewed laughter). Now, ladies, some people will say that the donkey showed he was a donkey, and that he had not any sense, but I think that the truth was that this donkey understood politics (cheers and laughter). That donkey knew that if we ran over him it would be

apt to hurt us a great deal more than it would him (laughter). Now, ladies and gentlemen, and especially ladies, because they have the most sense, you are very much in the position of that donkey. The Government and the landlords are coming along- at least they were a short time ago- with a great deal of bluster, as if they intended to annihilate us. Well, they are not making much fuss about it now, and I don't know why; perhaps it is that they want to give the Ladies' Land League more time to be ready for them, and, perhaps, if we all stop exactly where we are, and don't pay any particular attention to their bluster, perhaps the landlords will think, as we thought, that if they run over the tenants they will be apt to be the most hurt of the two (loud cheers, and cries of "so they will"). There could not be a better illustration of the condition of Ireland; but the Irish people have not always shown the sense of the donkey (cheers and laughter).

It is very cold standing here, and I am sure you don't require any more advice from me. I don't know who it was put-up the platform, but you see we were able to find twice as good a platform (cheers).

A Voice- "The landlords will have to give way like the platform" (cheers).

Miss Parnell- Well, I hope you won't take as much trouble to prop up the landlords as you did to prop the ladies up on that platform (laughter and several Voices- "Indeed, we won't"). If there come any rumours or stories that you don't like about any talk of the Land League deserting you, or if you hear it said that we are not able to protect the tenant farmers of Ireland against eviction, just write to me in Dublin to know whether it is true or not before you believe it (cheers), for when we are not able to protect you any longer be sure that I will give you notice. (loud cheers, during which Miss Parnell retired)

A final speech was made by J.O'Connor and the meeting was concluded. Anna Parnell returned to Skibbereen and was met by a large crowd carrying blazing tar-barrels to illuminate the procession. She stayed the night at the Beecher Arms Hotel, and the following morning drove to Cork. She chose to avoid more demonstrations and was driven to Blarney where she boarded a train for Dublin. Anna Parnell's first campaign in the south was a propaganda triumph for the L.L.L., and the meetings, although large, had resulted in little incident, instead, there had been celebration and great enthusiasm. As the numbers of evictions grew, public meetings, generally, became scenes of angry protest and demonstration. The L.L.L. meetings held in Ireland from May 1881 onwards were not to be without scenes of confrontation and Anna Parnell, in order to protect the defenceless, would make great efforts to prevent violence from breaking out either at meetings or at evictions she attended.

Castletown-Kinneigh. Co.Cork. Sunday. 1st May 1881

During April 1881 Anna Parnell gave no major speeches, instead, she concentrated on the increase in L.L.L. business brought on by the rise in evictions.(1) It is likely that she attended, the Land League convention held in the Rotunda, Dublin, although as a member of the audience. [2] . She paid a quick visit to England on L.L.L. business; and was unable to attend a meeting planned in Athy in the week after Easter.(3) On the 1st of May, however, she returned to the public platform to give a speech in the West Cork village of Castletown-Kinneigh, to which she was escorted by P.P.O'Neill, secretary of the Cork Land League. She was cheered at stations on the way and welcomed at Ballyneen by a large crowd. A procession of one hundred outside cars was formed, (with Anna Parnell in a small wagon), and this moved

slowly through the stony countryside to Castletown-Kinneigh. A platform had been erected in the middle of the village and the meeting began at 3 o'clock. The large attendance by men was again to alter the nature of the meeting and the speech reflected this. Responding to the reports from other areas, she warned members against any co-operation with the authorities during process-serving and evictions, reminding them of the shooting at Kiltamagh of the young woman. () ? This incident was one amongst many in the escalation of violence as the authorities attempted to enforce evictions. The speech contained a first reference to the Land Bill, although discussion of the Bill itself was dismissed as she concentrated on the emigration clauses, countering the propaganda for emigration to North America by stressing the harshness of the economic and climatic conditions found there, and describing the plagues of insects, which with some audience participation, became analogous to the landlords at home.

[Text of the **Castletown-Kinneigh speech** as reported in the *Cork Examiner* Monday, 2nd May 1881]

Miss Anna Parnell, on coming forward to speak, was received with prolonged applause. She said:- Ladies and gentlemen- You are aware that this is a meeting of the Ladies' Land League; unless you knew it before you would not think it, for you boycotted the ladies entirely, to-day, so I hope you will keep as quiet as possible so that if they have a chance of hearing me where they are you may not deprive them of it. As there are so few ladies here near the platform I will not talk much about the Ladies' Land League in particular. By this time its duties are, I think, generally understood, and if any one who has a right to know is still uncertain the secretary of this League, Miss Harrington (4) will be able to inform them (cheers). We hear a great deal about the duties of charity, and we are sometimes highly lauded for our charitableness, and sometimes we are not; but I hope that the ladies all round the country will try to remember that there is a limit even to charity. Because I have heard- and I was very sorry to hear it- that the ladies of our League have extended their charity to the police and the Emergency men (laughter). Now, as far as you are concerned, I wish to tell you at once and for all that the ladies of our league, if they happen to be the owners of a car, they must not let the police or the bailiffs, or the process-servers or the landlord use it either for evictions or for process-serving, nor for any work of that kind (applause). No member of our league must put a penny in their pockets got out of evictions or process-serving. Some people have drawn a distinction between evictions and process-serving. They think that if they don't hire their cars for an eviction itself that process-serving does not matter; but, remember, it was at process-serving that a policeman of the name of Roche tried to murder a poor young girl named Kate Byrne.(5)

A Voice- "Begor he was a dacent man." (laughter).

Another Voice- "May the d---- fly away with him." (laughter).

Miss Parnell- Now, the Government are not satisfied with having sent their agents to half-murder this poor girl they are now going to send her to gaol if they can (a Voice- "That they mightn't ever see it"). So now, remember that you are to have nothing to do with process-serving if you wish to be members of our league. I don't know whether you have any Emergency gentlemen here, but if you ever have you must remember that no member of our league can sell anything except whiskey to the Emergency men (laughter) (6), but you may sell them as much whiskey as you like, because if they have nothing but whiskey to live on they will very likely soon go to another country, and this country will be rid of them (renewed laughter). Now,

there is another thing that you must all be ready to do. In some places, when a Land Leaguer is imprisoned, the people of the country round come together and crop his ground for him, but in other places they don't. Now it is the business of the men to crop a Land Leaguer's ground whenever it is necessary to do so; but if the men don't do it, then the women ought to (cheers and laughter).

Now, we have heard a great deal about the Land Bill. I think we have heard too much about it. For my part I think the less a Ladies' Land League or a men's Land League thinks or says about the Land Bill the better. But I think that one portion of it is dangerous, and that a warning might not be amiss, especially to the women, because if they are deluded by this portion they will suffer far more by it than the men. There is a clause in the Land Bill empowering the Government to pay passages to Canada or other countries (6)- I am not sure whether the United States of America are included. Now, I have never been in Canada, but I have been in the United States, and I know this much, that whatever disadvantages there may be in emigrating to America, they are doubled and tripled and quadrupled in Canada. Last year, fortunately for this country, work was plenty in America, but only a very short time before that famine of last year work had been very scarce in America. When I was going to America three years ago, about this time, there was already great distress in Ireland at that time, and yet there was as many Irish emigrants returning to Ireland as there were going out, because there was distress in America amongst the working people also.

Well, that ought to be a warning to you all not to rush to America because you hear of this or that person getting on there, because every one who goes makes it harder for those who are there already.

(A Voice- "They will come back again").

And because times of prosperity don't last for ever in America; there come times when work is scarce, and then you would be coming back here to look for work and you would find that perhaps if you had stopped at home and put your shoulders to the wheel you would never have had to emigrate at all. Now, I often think if Irish fathers and mothers knew how hard the lot of the poor often is in America- how hard they have to toil for the money that they send home to Ireland- (a Voice- "For the landlords")- that they would not be so ready to take this hard-earned money to give it to the landlords (cheers). Well, you hear a great deal about the beautiful land that is to be had in America for nothing, but you don't hear of how you are to get there, you don't hear of who is to keep you for a year after you get there while your crops are growing; you don't hear of those who are to give you money to build a house for yourselves and your cattle. Now, it has been calculated that even if you got to America cost free, even if this generous Government paid your passages out there if you want to go where you can have a farm of your own you would require from £200 to £500 per family.

(A Voice- "We won't emigrate at all").

I think if all Irish tenants had from £200 to £500 a piece they would stop at home and live on it for four or five years while they starve out the landlords and then after they had done they would have their own land for nothing (applause). But, gentlemen, even if you have this £200 or this £500 don't suppose that it would be an advantage to you; I don't want you to suppose that if you were to take this amount of money to America you would be happy for ever afterwards.

I will tell you why. My opinion is that the climate of America is a very disagreeable one to live in. I know that some persons differ from me, but remember that I am Irish born and bred (applause), and you also are Irish born and bred, and what one person who is used to an Irish climate finds, it is very likely that a great many other people who are used to the Irish climate will find also. It is a very hot country in summer- in summer you are roasted- but it is a very cold country in winter- in winter you are frozen (laughter). But there is another impediment that a farmer has to struggle against in America which he has not met here. In this country there are different kinds of insects, but you know them all; you know how to take measures against them. The insects in Ireland are the descendants of those which were in the ark with Noah, but in America it is not so; there is a new kind created every three or four years.

A Voice- "The landlord is the worst insect in Ireland." (laughter).

Another Voice- "The landlord is a serpent, not an insect."

Miss Parnell- And the remarkable fact about each new species is that each one can eat up more crops than the last one. You all remember hearing of the Colorado beetle, I believe, and he had a terrible appetite (laughter). But last year, just as I was leaving for Ireland there was a new insect invented called the army worm, and he could eat twice as much as the Colorado beetle. As to the next insect that is to come, I don't know what he will be like. I think that in America the only insect that they have not got is a landlord (laughter), and I think if you got rid of that insect very likely you would find the Americans would be emigrating to Ireland, because I can tell you in strict confidence- it would offend Americans very much if they heard it that this country is worth six times the whole of the United States of America (prolonged cheering).

The speech was followed by the presentation of a series of addresses by local Ladies' Land Leagues. That evening, on the return journey to Cork, crowds assembled once more at stations along the line, and the train was delayed by one and a half hours, not reaching Cork until 11.30 p.m.

Drogheda. Co. Louth. Sunday. 8th May 1881

The following Sunday, a great demonstration was organised to celebrate the visit of Anna Parnell to Drogheda. The town, until recently controlled by moderates, had become more militantly nationalist since the violent dispersal of a Land League meeting by Clifford Lloyd, R.M., on the last New Year's Day.(1) Thousands had assembled in the warm sunshine to greet Anna Parnell as she arrived from Dublin just before noon and amidst loud cheers a great procession was formed to escort her wagon into town. There was a pause at the White Horse Hotel for refreshment, (the short journey was made in clouds of dust), and then the wagon was unyoked and drawn to the Mayoralty Rooms. Before entering, she gave a short address to the men. Asking for their co-operation, she said that she had come to speak to the women only, but added that she would be staying overnight in order to attend the evictions and sales on Lord Gormanston's estate the next day. The meeting, restricted to members of the L.L.L., was chaired by a Maggie Kirk, president of the local branch. Anna Parnell spoke once more on the need for efficient organisation and stressed that the women had a right to take part in political action. Commenting on the size of the grants that had been made she emphasised that they were for relief and not for rent; and that payment of debts to shop-keepers and the support of sacked labourers should take priority over payments to landlords. She was to correct

the reporting of this statement, for it was not the L.L.L. that had been criticised for the size of its grants but those first made by the Land League.(2) Emigration, and in particular the emigration of young women, was attacked once more. The speech is more militant in tone when compared to preceding ones and reflected the rise in the number of incidents between the people and the authorities.

[Text of the **Drogheda speech** as reported in the *Dundalk Democrat* 14th May 1881]

Miss Parnell, in reply, thanked the ladies for their handsome address, and for the enthusiastic welcome bestowed on her. She had been at more numerous attended meetings, but certainly at none so sincere, so enthusiastic and so successful. If the ladies were to unite in this cause they must take care and do everything properly, as bad work was the worst of all. The great consideration was organisation, and it was that which brings out and make[s] the most of the power of each when any good work is to be done. It makes and consolidates the weakness of each individual, and imparts strength to all. Organisation is not common amongst women, and this feature has always been lacking, especially in Ireland. It seems that it is only in this feature that we differ from the women of other European countries. Women have meddled in politics long before this age, whatever people might say to the contrary. They have even gone the length of making speeches before those terrible fellows, the representatives of the press. From the beginning we have been impressed with the necessity of organisation.

The present condition of Ireland might be likened to the condition of a ship on fire at sea, or a house on fire. There was no escape at all for people or goods, except to go overboard or through the windows. In the west of Ireland shooting parties had been organised by the Royal Irish Constabulary, the game they shoot being women and children. They did not come to that stage of affairs here yet. But if much of that went on in the west, there would be expeditions from the south and east to stop it. She did not think that the men of Ireland would allow their grandmothers and sisters to be kicked, shot, and beaten on the highway. There were more women than men in Ireland, and an association of that kind such as the Ladies' Land League could be of much advantage to their brothers and fathers. The Land League enjoined people not to shoot landlords, but evictions were going on in full swing in despite of the few landlords who were shot. The Land League told the tenants not to cringe to the landlords, and it has done more for the tenants than any of the means hitherto at their disposal. The grants dispensed by the Ladies Land League were often talked of as being small, but the money granted was only given to relieve pressing necessities, and not to pay rents.

She would wish to impress on farmers' wives to pay ready money, and so keep out of debt to shop-keepers. It was very dishonest to pay rent, and still owe money to the shop-keeper. The shop-keepers of Ireland stood well by the Land League. There was yet another class who remained firm to the farmers of Ireland- the labourers, men who did not rent land, herds, caretakers, and day labourers. These men were ever ready to give up all their situations at the call of the Land League. In many cases where landlords gave reductions to their tenants, they made it up by discharging, or reducing the wages of, their labourers. They often get applications to relieve such cases, but she trusted the farmers of Ireland had enough of spirit and manhood to keep such men employed, and above the sense of want. The farmers of Ireland would never win in the struggle with the British Government if they did not throw overboard all selfish motives.

With regard to the emigration scheme recommended by the Land Bill, Miss Parnell disapproved of it. Poor girls should try and support themselves at home, as for the

one who succeeds in America, ninety-nine fall into a state of great wretchedness. America has had the great advantages of equality and free institutions, and it was this equality that kept a check on over grown wealth absorbing the spirit and liberty of the people. The Irish people seldom brought anything in the way of capital to America, and a man not doing so had his labour used for the advantage of others. Ireland's poverty is making the working classes in America and England poor, by the competition for unskilled labour. Every Irish girl going to America makes it harder for those already there, and many girls who went to America often begged to be sent back. Miss Parnell again thanked the meeting for the honour done to her. As long as women do right they will always be in their sphere. It was better for them to do right out of it, than to do wrong in it.

After the resolutions were proposed and accepted, Anna Parnell made a few concluding remarks that are notable for the confidence expressed in the potential of the movement:

IN FULL ?

"... if they all persevered they would make Ireland a new country, and Davitt would not recognise it when he was liberated. She trusted in the realization of making Ireland a happy and prosperous nation ere they would dissolve the League."

The Gormanston evictions. Monday 9th May 1881

On the Monday, Anna Parnell attended execution sales and a proposed eviction on the Gormanston Estate, a few miles to the south of Drogheda. It was to be her first visit to the scene of an eviction. Norris Goddard, a Dublin solicitor and the chief officer of the Emergency Committee (1) and some Emergency Men, together with the military and police, were present. Anna Parnell arrived in a wagon accompanied by L.L.L. members and escorted by two bands and a large crowd of people. Timothy Harrington, representing the Land League executive, also attended (2). As with evictions elsewhere, the event became the opportunity for defiant nationalist celebration, and there were to be moments of humour when both Anna Parnell and Harrington, successfully bid for cattle against Goddard. The eviction was postponed due to a legal difficulty, and later, when Anna Parnell gave a short address, she made a mock complaint that she had yet to witness an eviction.

[Text of the **Gormanstown address** taken from the longer report on the Gormanstown evictions in the *Dundalk Democrat* 14th May 1881]

Miss Parnell, on rising in the wagon, was welcomed with a storm of cheers.

She said- Well, ladies and gentlemen, I think we have been very badly treated to-day by being brought so far and kept so long in this broiling sun and deprived of our eviction after all (cheers). Perhaps it is a strange thing that I who have lived so long in Ireland have never seen an eviction, and perhaps I shall never see one - (Cries of "Never") for it appears to me that the time is coming when evictions will be out of fashion (cheers and laughter). I like much better going to a sale at an eviction than to a meeting, because at a meeting I have much of the hard work thrown upon me, but at a sale Mr Goddard does most of that (groans and laughter) and I can sit and enjoy the sight. Now, gentlemen, you are to be congratulated on the order you have kept to-day, but I see there are still some Irishmen who have not learned not to break the law. I have seen to-day one of the police, a young man, insult and assault a respectable man who might be his father (groans). I think my name is down as one of the witnesses of that assault (cheers). I do not know the name of that policeman, but I think I should always know him again, for I noticed he was not altogether a bad-

looking young fellow, and that he had one peculiarity, that he carried his head and chin high in the air, in the way you see a flock of geese carrying theirs when on the war path (laughter and cheers) (3). I did not come here to make a speech to-day. Mr Harrington is dying to make one, I know, and will make one. If all the men in Ireland had as much to boast of to-day as he has to be proud of there would be no standing them, they would think so much of themselves (cheers and laughter).

Bohola Co.Mayo Sunday 22nd Mav 1881

A fortnight later Anna Parnell returned to Co.Mayo to address a large L.L.L. meeting in Bohola where the recent evictions of twenty-five families had made one hundred and sixty individuals homeless. On Sunday 22nd May, accompanied by May Nally of the Dublin L.L.L (1), she travelled by rail to Balla, and then by brougham to Bohola. They arrived at approximately 4 o'clock to a welcome by the local leagues and three bands; a large force of police drawn from surrounding towns was present in the village, but the day was to be peaceful. When Anna Parnell came forward to speak she asked that the men draw back and allow the women to come near the front; a government reporter, who failed to move back, was identified to the crowd. In the speech she recalled the early history of the land movement in the area, and the example set to the rest of the country. She asked the people of Mayo, despite all their current difficulties, to continue to support the agitation. (2)

[Text of the **Bohola speech** as reported in the *Mayo Examiner* Saturday 28th May 1881]

I see that the men are pressing forward again and preventing the women from hearing me. I came down on purpose to speak to the women ("You are welcome"), and I will not speak at all unless the men let the ladies come to the front.

(After much bustle and confusion this was partly complied with).

I am much obliged to you for complying with my request, there is only one gentleman (referring to the Government short-hand reporter), who refuses, and he is employed by Mr Forster (groans for him), and I suppose he has learnt his manners from Mr Forster ("groans for buckshot, and to h--l with him"). Now, ladies, I want you to go back with me two years ago, or nearly two years. Many people in Mayo are discouraged now between buckshot and landlords, their spirits are not now so good, and they are not as hopeful for the future as I should like them to be. So I would ask you to remember the condition of Mayo two years ago. At that time it was believed that nothing could prevent during the winter of 1879 and 1880 the plains of Mayo being covered with the dead bodies of a famine stricken populace. I thought of this when I was in America, and made up my mind in the winter of 1879 to read the history of the famine in 1847 in the newspapers over again, but bad as things were last year in Ireland, they were not as bad as this. (3)

You, the people of Mayo, although your cause did, in truth, seem hopeless to even the most reasonable people and courageous, you stood up for yourselves and you won the cause, you kept the life in you, and more than that you kept the life in thousands upon thousands of people all over Ireland, who were not doing anything for themselves. What money you still had left you kept it, and by the time that it was gone the machinery to feed the people was in working order. Much of the money

subscribed by your countrymen in other lands fell into the hands of landlords, but they were obliged to use it more or less for the benefit of the people, because the attitude that you had taken up earned the sympathy and respect of other countries, and the landlord relief (4). I remember in the autumn of '79 a poor woman in Connemara who was stabbed by a policeman, (groans for them), and I at first thought it was fatally but fortunately she lived. This woman, Miss Connelly was her name- this woman's adventure was the turning point for Ireland last year (5), and if we wait a little perhaps the shooting of Kate Byrne in Kiltimagh will prove to be the turning point in Irish history for this year (6).

Well you triumphed last year by your own courage and your own exertions, and you "live to fight another day." In the meantime the people in other parts of Ireland who were not dreaming of taking a stand for their rights awoke, and now the rich farmers of Meath, and the rich farmers of Limerick and Cork are standing up and fighting your battles for you- it is not left upon your shoulders now, as it was once ("we wanted that"). They are fighting for you, and there may at any moment come such a state of things that the landlords will have to recognise the rights of the Irish people to live ("Lord love you"), and once they recognise it, the Government will recognise it also ("thank your brother for it"). Now, Mayo was the cradle of the new spirit which sprang up in Ireland last year; but although the whole of Ireland is now more advanced than Mayo was this time last year, still, if Mayo is broken down, if Limerick and Cork see Mayo giving up or giving way, then they would be very much discouraged. So I would ask you, now that you have gone so far, and have been so successful- when you have triumphed when everything seemed against you- I would ask you still to keep up that spirit, (applause and waving of handkerchiefs, and cheers for Misses Nally, Clarke, and Walshe), and the end of all this, that is making our hearts sick, may come much sooner than you expect. Miss Parnell, after some further observations, concluded, amidst enthusiastic cheers.

That evening Anna Parnell, local clergymen, and members of the L.L.L. were entertained at the house of the Clarke sisters (7). The next day, accompanied by Anne Clarke and May Nally, she visited the recently evicted families in the parish. In the afternoon they returned to the ladies' committee room, where Anna Parnell audited the accounts and praised the efficiency of the branch. Later, a torchlight procession was formed to escort Anna Parnell as she left Bohola for Balla and the return journey to Dublin.

Tulla. Co.Clare. Sunday. 5th June 1881

On the first Sunday in June a large L.L.L. demonstration was held in Tulla, Co.Clare. Clare, along with Limerick and Cork, had become in recent weeks the areas most troublesome to the authorities, and reports of an incident in nearby Bodyke the previous Wednesday overshadowed the visit. As part of an attempt to disrupt a process-serving, bee-hives had been upset amongst the mounted police, and amidst the confusion, a John Moloney had tried to release an arrested man and was severely beaten.(1) Early on the Saturday morning, en route to the meeting at Tulla, Anna Parnell was herself to witness a clash between people and police at Limerick station. Two hundred police returning from enforcing the evictions at New Pallas, Co.Limerick, where there had been determined armed resistance by the tenants, mistook the welcome for Anna Parnell for a hostile demonstration against themselves. There was great confusion, but no serious injury. Later that day, Anna Parnell continued her journey, arriving at Quin at 8'o'clock in the evening. A large crowd had gathered in heavy rain to escort her carriage to Tulla, where she stayed the night at Shank's Hotel. Despite rumours during the week that she could not

attend, the meeting on the Sunday proved to be one of the largest of the Land League demonstrations, with the newspaper reports giving upwards of 20,000 people, mostly men, crowding into the small hill-top town. The authorities, no doubt alarmed by recent events and the large crowd, drafted 100 police and 100 soldiers into the town for the day.

A platform had been erected at the top of the hill, but again, because of the crush of men, few women were able to get near. The noise from the crowd was so great that Anna Parnell was unable to make herself heard, and a women's meeting was re-assembled behind closed gates in the chapel-yard. Here, Anna Parnell stood on a chair to address the women. Unwilling to exploit the Bodyke incident, she made a brief allusion to the incident to illustrate the need for self-restraint in the face of hostile police action, counselling caution rather than retaliation. She did, however, use the rest of the speech to make a sustained attack on the R.I.C., advising the women to avoid communication with the police and to remember at all times that the R.I.C. were agents of the British Government. She described the recent circular issued from Dublin to County Inspectors covering the new system of police surveillance of local leaders and agitators .(2) Warning them of police attempts to incite disturbances and riots, she again advocated that the people have as few dealings with the police as was possible.

[Report of the **Tulla speech** taken from the *Clare Examiner* Saturday, 11th June 1881]

Miss Parnell, standing on a chair, then addressed the meeting. She said she hoped they would keep silence. It was not her fault if she could not be heard by all, but that was no reason why those who could not hear should prevent those who had a chance from doing so. She would not allude to the very distressing thing that had occurred at Bodyke the other day more than to point out from it how necessary caution was for all of them at this moment. The Irish people were now determined to live, and the English Government had determined that they should not live. Well, the people intended to get the victory, and the Government also intended to get the victory if they could. And the people had on their side the advantage of a good position, both as regarded right and as regarded the power to carry out this intention if they were sufficiently resolute and united.

A short time ago Mr. Forster issued a secret circular to the County Inspectors. This secret circular was drawn in a guarded manner, but the principal gist of its instructions was that the County Inspectors were to try to identify the leaders of popular movements with resistance, armed resistance to the law. Now, it was left to the police themselves to find ways of carrying out the secretly expressed wishes of the Government. Naturally the easiest way for them to gratify the Government was whenever they saw the leaders of the Land League, whether the local leaders or the central leaders, who were by this time nearly all in prison, the easiest way was for the police to get up disturbances, and to manage to irritate the people so that there might appear to be an armed resistance to the law. And then it was the easiest thing in the world to say of any man whom they might not like, or whom they might desire to imprison, that he was the cause, the instigator of this resistance. Therefore, they ought all to show, women as well as men, the greatest self-control, and take care that they did not allow themselves ever to lose sight of what was prudent. She did not mean to preach the immoral and cowardly doctrine that it was wrong ever to resist the law. The law was not always, and especially in this country, the same thing as right. God Almighty could not make wrong right, and yet 600 sinners in the House of Commons claimed the power to do it. All she wanted to say was that they should

never allow the other side to choose the time and the place for the people to resist the law (cheers).

All sorts of traps were being laid for the people at this moment. Even before the secret circular became public, she herself had been an eye-witness of these traps, and there was nothing for them but to show themselves cleverer than the Royal Irish Constabulary (cheers). She wanted to say a word to them, and it was especially necessary for women- it was about what seemed to her to be the proper conduct for them to adopt towards the police in this crisis. When they first started she remembered that she cautioned her audience at Claremorris against the police. She knew from experience that they were in the habit of worming themselves into the confidence of the people for the purpose of finding something that they might afterwards use against them. At that time she confessed she was simple enough to believe that these proceedings on the part of constabulary were spontaneous on their part, but they found from recent disclosures of the secret instructions which were kept for the use of those Irishmen who had adopted the Queen's livery, that this Judas-like conduct was part of their duty, a duty which they were bound to perform as soon as they put on the coat.

Now many people had a very tolerant way of acting and speaking towards the Royal Irish Constabulary. She confessed that this had always seemed to her to be not only foolish, but wrong, because theirs was an infamous profession. It could never be anything else. She did not mean to say that they were all bad, but their duties were such as slowly and surely to develop [sic] all the bad that was in them and banish all the good. Many of these men, especially the older ones, must be the sons of fathers and mothers who died from the famine and the fever of 33 or 34 years ago. Perhaps some of them had a mother who put the last morsel of bread into their mouths and lay down to die herself. And now they found these men who, if they were not all children of those who had died in the famine, must at least very nearly all be children of those who are in constant danger of dying from these ever recurring famines in Ireland. They found them upholding, by all their might, and by the most treacherous and unmanly conduct, a system which made it impossible for their own brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers to live at all sometimes, and to live at any time [in] peace, security, and comfort.

Now, she did not think that the attitude which Irishwomen ought to adopt towards these men should be a friendly attitude. She did not mean to say that they were to do anything to hurt them, nor even to groan and scream at them, because that always seemed to her rather silly. But if they were friends of theirs, if they allowed them inside their houses when they were not obliged to, if they treated them in fact, as if they were anything else but enemies, and all the worse enemies because they were men who ought to be their friends, how could they suppose that the English Government and the English people would think that they were really sincere in the protests that they made from time to time against the system that was almost entirely upheld by the Royal Irish Constabulary and a system which she was quite sure could not exist without them (Cheers). She did not mean that they ought to refuse to supply them with food, because they could very easily get that in some other way, but they certainly ought never voluntarily give them their cars or assist them to serve processes and ejectments, and to carry out evictions. She knew that the Government was taking cars by force for this purpose, but that did not alter the duty of the people in the matter. (2). It was due to their self-respect and consistency not to do anything to assist evictions. It did not alter the right and wrong of the case that the Government was able to do these things without their help- it was their duty all the same not to help them.

Miss Parnell concluded by thanking the ladies for coming there in such numbers, and for the patience with which they had listened to her. She expressed a hope that by adopting a dignified and consistent course for the next few months, being ready to make sacrifices if necessary, and to meet danger if necessary in fulfilment of their duty, that they would materially assist in bringing about a better state of things in the country. (applause).

Although the town was very crowded the rest of the day passed off peacefully, and at 7 o'clock that evening Anna Parnell was escorted to Sixmilebridge to meet the mail train for her return journey to Dublin.

Tullow. Co. Carlow. Sunday 19th June 1881

Following a brief visit to England, Anna Parnell travelled down to Tullow, Co. Carlow (1). At Athy she had been welcomed by most of the town, but at Carlow heavy rain kept away the crowds and she was escorted to Tullow by a small group of members. By midday, however, the local Land League branches had gathered there in strength. A field near the chapel had been set aside for the meeting, and although an admission fee was charged, it was crowded with men and women. There were to be several noisy interruptions to the speech, not least that caused by the ringing of the chapel bell, but the meeting took place in a far less charged atmosphere than that at Tulla. A government note-taker gained admission and he was pointed out with some humour at the end of the meeting. Anna Parnell came forward to speak just after 1 o'clock. She referred to her recent English visit, but then concentrated on a clause that had been inserted into the Land Bill during its passage through Parliament. The proposed clause would allow landlords to apply to the land courts for rent reviews, as well as tenants, and as such was a threat to future action by the tenants (2). Anna Parnell urged her audience to do all that they could to reject the Land Bill, intimating that rent rises would be the result of the new clause, and that there would be many more evictions to strain further the resources of the L.L.L. An interruption from the floor, led her to speak on the Government's threat to withdraw the licences of public-house owners who refused to co-operate with the police, and she outlined a novel strategy to decrease the government revenue from the sale of alcohol. She began her conclusion by speculating on the possible effect on Forster if two million Irishwomen were to join the League.

[Report of the **Tullow speech** taken from the *Carlow Sentinel*
Saturday 25th June 1881]

Miss Parnell came forward and said- Ladies, when I was over in England I told them all that was happening in Ireland, and I suppose you would like to hear what is happening in England. The first thing that I have to tell you is that they are all very anxious to help you over here, and the more you help yourselves the more they will help you. I was asked to stay a week in London, and if I had done so I should have had a meeting to address every day; but I was obliged to return for the Tullow meeting, and I hope you will not now make my coming here no use. [sic]. One important thing, however, happened while I was in England. It is something the great importance of which it would not do to neglect, and it makes the necessity for your Land League all the greater. You have all heard of Mr. Gladstone's wonderful Land Bill, I suppose?

Voices- "It's no good."

Well, up to last Friday Mr. Gladstone's Bill was no good, but at the same time it was no harm. The Land Bill, if it had passed in the shape in which it was introduced, could not have hurt any tenant farmer unless he had chosen to let it hurt him. If he had stopped away from the court and treated the Land Bill as if it had no existence it could have done him no harm. But last Friday Mr. Gladstone said he was going to allow the landlords to apply to the court- that is, if they desired it- to fix their rents. The result of this is that the landlords will be able to go to court and get their rents raised. They will not have the trouble of getting the tenants to agree to the rise of rents. The Land Bill will raise their rents for them without the consent of the tenants if the Land Bill be allowed to pass. Well, this is a very serious state of affairs, because I suppose you will all agree that there is no necessity for a Land Bill to raise the rents in Ireland; so that if you, if the men of Ireland do not make up their minds in time not to allow the Land Bill to pass with this alternative, the work for the Ladies' Land League will be doubled and trebled next year. But I have great fear that the men of Ireland will do as men very often do- make a stupid mistake in this matter, and that they will give the women of Ireland a great deal of trouble in saving them from the consequences of their own stupidity (laughter). I would, therefore, advise all the ladies present to join the Ladies' Land League; that is the only possible proof of their sincerity.

Now, I would just like to ask you, who I suppose are the tenant farmers of the County Carlow, and the wives and daughters of tenants of Carlow, what you intend to do with regard to Mr. Gladstone's Land Bill.

A Voice- "Throw it out," and groans.

I have told you that when I was in London Mr. Gladstone announced his intention of introducing an alteration into it, the effect of which will be that when the landlord wants to get his rents raised, all he will have to do is to go quietly to the court and get the court to raise the rent for him, whether the tenant consents or no. You see you have left off consenting in have [sic] your rents raised so that Mr. Gladstone is determined to do it without your consent (groans). Well, if you would make up your minds in time to instruct your representatives not to allow this Bill to pass under these circumstances, that would be the proper thing to do, but I am afraid you will be not be quick enough in coming to a decision to do this, and I am afraid, while you are turning the matter over in your mind, that Mr. Gladstone will carry out his little scheme to raise the rents (groans), and; perhaps, he will add a few more little schemes to[o]. Perhaps he will sentence every farmer to penal servitude who doesn't want his rent raised.

However, it is not my business to advise you. You have got plenty of women belonging to you who know how to advise you when it is necessary, I suppose. I should very much like to know- in time, however- what it is you intend to do. If you let Mr. Gladstone go on with his little game the way he is going on, there will be a fearful lot of work for me to do; because, instead of a few hundred evictions which we have to deal with now, I am afraid that the whole of Ireland would be evicted (cries of "Never"). Well, it need not be for ever if you chose. I am not afraid if you only let us know- if you only let the ladies of the Land League know in time whether you are going to allow Mr. Gladstone to carry out his new idea of having a Land Bill to raise [rents] without any trouble from you, without even the trouble of asking your leave; and he [sic] will make extensive preparations to accommodate you all against you are evicted [sic]. But I hope you won't throw on us the responsibility of protecting you against your own folly. I can assure you we have quite enough to do as it is to manage the landlords without any Land Bill to help them.

A Voice- "Drink no more Guinness's porter."

Miss Parnell- That is a very good idea. If we could stop drinking Guinness's porter it would be a grand day for Ireland.(3). That just reminds me that there are some honest public-house keepers who won't give their cars to the police to carry out evictions (groans for the police). Well, the landlords are threatening to take away their licences. Now, the Government cannot take, or rather they won't take away the licences from all the publicans' houses in Ireland, because the Government get £400,000 a year out of the whiskey that you drink. I don't mean the ladies (laughter) (4). The Government may take away the licences of a few publicans in order to frighten the rest. I don't know whether it can do this- I think not. But suppose the Government did take away a publican's licence. If all the men of the town did become total abstainers for six months, and give the publican half the money they would otherwise spend in whiskey, it would do the Government no good, and it would do you no harm. If the Irish people would do this, if they could be brought to do this, I for one would feel sure that the day of Ireland's deliverance was not far off.

I hope that the ladies will all join the Land League here, because there is no use in coming to meetings and looking charming, unless you mean to be useful as well. Nothing would strike more terror into Mr. Forster's soul than to hear that there were two millions of ladies in the Ladies' Land League. I believe it would be the death of him.

A Voice- "That same would be no harm."

Miss Parnell- However, I don't like to advise you directly to have two million ladies in the League, because that might be "inciting to murder" (a laugh) ; but if two million ladies choose to join, I can promise you that we shall perform such wonders that the world never heard before. I have great confidence in the prudence and discretion of the ladies of Carlow, and I will relate an anecdote before I finish to prove it. A young man- no less a person than a Government reporter- did us the honour to come to our meeting. He was a very handsome man, and the sergeant of police was afraid that if he came unprotected amongst so many ladies they might, in the unprotected state of the country run away with him (a laugh). So the sergeant wanted to send a constable with him to take care of him. He knew that you would not go within three yards of a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary (groans for the Constabulary). I assured him that if he trusted the Government reporter to us he would go home to his wife, if he has one, quite safe. I felt sure that none of you would carry him off (pointing to the Government reporter beneath the Platform), and you see I was right. Miss Parnell then retired, amid loud cheers.

After a dinner at the Slaney Hotel, Anna Parnell, returned to Carlow and took the evening train to Dublin. She was cheered at stations along the line.

Dromcolliher. Co.Limerick. Sunday. 26th June 1881

The next Saturday night Anna Parnell returned to Co. Limerick, to speak at a meeting at Dromcolliher. She travelled down to Kilmallock the previous evening and stayed at Bank Place, the home of Miss Collins (1); in the morning she was driven the fifteen miles to the meeting-place. In a brief speech of thanks to the L.L.L. contingents who welcomed her she mentioned the importance of sending accurate

information to Dublin on the actions of the police, the military, and magistrates. This was to be the theme of her speech later in the afternoon. A large force of police had been drafted into Dromcolliher for the day, and these, it had been agreed with Anna Parnell, would stay in the barracks if a government note-taker was allowed on to the platform. The crowd in the town square was so dense, (the 6,000 men in the square overwhelmed the women present), the platform so full, and the noise and confusion so great, that when Anna Parnell came forward to speak, she commented wryly that they needed Clifford Lloyd to keep order (2). The speech she gave was critical of the efforts made by the women to gather accurate information on police attacks, information that could be used very effectively as propaganda against the Government. To mitigate the sternness of her reprimand, she referred to the singing and whistling of the ballad "Harvey Duff," which had become so absurdly provoking to the police that a number of arrests had been made.(3) She concluded by advising how best to resist the law without breaking it, especially when attending evictions, and stressed the importance of providing adequate temporary shelter for evicted families (4).

[Report of the **Dromcolliher speech** taken from the *Munster News and Limerick and Clare Advocate*, Wednesday 29th June 1881]

Miss Parnell said- Gentlemen, I tell you what I think you want, I think you want Clifford Lloyd to keep order amongst you (groans and laughter). I must ask you to keep silence; and I am sure that the gentlemen will keep silence when they hear that I am about to give the ladies a scolding (laughter). I confess with feelings of great humiliation that I am not quite satisfied with the way the Ladies Leagues are doing their duty.

[There was more disturbance as people behind tried to get up on the platform, and number of the clergymen went down amongst the crowd, and succeeded in pushing them back. Several ballad singers contributed to the noise by singing at the edge of the crowd. When order had been restored Anna Parnell began once again]

Miss Parnell said- Well, ladies and gentlemen, this is no new thing to me for on Sunday and Saturday [and] I am brought two hundred miles to ladies' meetings that always make such a noise when I get to them. When these meetings are over I must get two hundred miles back again, and I must think there is amusement in it for somebody, but I know there is not for me. What I was going to say when the interruption occurred was, that I am not satisfied with the Ladies Leagues. They don't do in all cases what they ought to do. I won't say that they even do anything that they ought not to do; but they leave undone sometimes those things that they ought to do. I know that you are very charitable; I know when there is an evicted tenant who wants money, or when there is a prisoner's family that wants money, that the ladies perform very well that part of their duty which consists in asking for money; but asking for money is not all that we want the Ladies Leagues to do. I can assure you that sometimes the less money we are asked for the better pleased we are (a laugh). That is human nature.

When I travel through the country, I am told that the police and magistrates have done dreadful things- that they imprisoned people for looking at them ("hear, hear"). Well, now, I want to know why the Ladies Land Leagues do not tell us all these things, when it happens that it is their duty, and they ought not to neglect it. It doesn't do to say that "there are some parties who saw some other parties who had been subjected to violence or outrage by the police." That is generally the way in which information comes to us, but it's not the right way; if there are ladies in any

place of sufficient intelligence to do the work that we require, and I know that in every place there are ladies of sufficient intelligence, we ought to be told immediately when any outrage is committed by the representatives of the British Government when it happened. We ought also be told who it was done by, and we ought to be told the names of the persons who suffered ("hear, hear"). Sometimes the way we are told things it would be impossible for us to know whether they happened twenty years ago or whether they happened yesterday, and we cannot know whether they happened in the middle of the day or the middle of the night. Besides, it does not do to leave out any part of the story, because the other day a heartrending history was told me about a landlord who threatened to shoot a tenant, but on investigating the story a little closer we found that the tenant had begun by threatening to shoot the landlord. (A Voice- "Right he was"). Well, I will not now go into the question whether he was right or not. I don't think he was because he had not anything to shoot him with (laughter), and you ought never to threaten that which you know you have no power to carry out. When you relate things to us you should never try in any way to present your own case better than it is. It is our business to do that if we choose.

Now, you know the tune of "Harvey Duff" (laughter.) You would not think that the Royal Irish Constabulary are so delicately organised that the tune "Harvey Duff..." (hear, hear).

[In parts of the assembly several persons began to whistle the tune]

It should not break any one's bones, but somehow it seems to do them a great deal of harm. They can't stand it at all, and to whistle "Harvey Duff" is one of the worst outrages known to the law. So if the people attacked by the police have just been whistling "Harvey Duff" you ought not leave out that little circumstance. It was mentioned in the House of Commons, but I don't think they know the tune there. I wish Mr Healy or some of the other Irish members could whistle it for Mr. Forster so that he might know it and so that the House of Commons might have an opportunity of seeing if it was wise to keep an army of men in Ireland who are so delicate that they can't stand that much. (groans and shouts of "Buckshot")

I hope the Ladies Leagues will all be determined to do better in regard to this part of their duties than they have done before. Remember that we require of the members of our league that they should be policemen, or rather policewomen, towards the police and the magistrates. I do not mean to say that you ought to do what, I am sorry to say, the gentlemen in blue sometimes do; I don't want you to break their heads with the butt end of a rifle, or even to put a bayonet through them; but I want you to let us know when and where they persecute the people ("hear, hear") We wish to let the Irish in England know, and the Irish in America, who have supported you so nobly in your efforts to save yourselves- we wish to let them know what this is you have to contend with- both because they have a right to know, and because we know it is the recital of what is done in Ireland that brings the dollars which have enable you to live for the last two years (cheers for America). And I remind the members of our League, on whom we have always especially imposed the duty of attending to this point- that they are keeping thousands of pounds out of the hands of those who intend to use it to help the people if they neglect this part of their duty.

Before I conclude I have a word to say about the question of eviction. I believe that here in Drumcollogher [sic] you have not many evictions; but there must be some people who come from places where there are evictions. You know that Mr Forster has lately invented a new law, and that new law of his is that any one who goes to an eviction is to be shot if the police think proper. Now, I must explain to you that you

have a perfect right to go to evictions (hear, hear.) You have not a right to interfere with the sheriff or with the police, or with the soldiers, but as long as you go as peaceable spectators you are within your right, and Mr. Forster himself (groans) will not venture to say inside the House of Commons that people may not go to evictions as spectators, and to help the persons who are evicted, and I believe that you ought to go to evictions, because I think that while there are men in the country with arms, it is a shame that whole families, that sick persons, and babies in arms should be left outside their homes a whole night, or two or three nights, without shelter over their heads. I would entreat you to make up your minds that when you get "wind" of an eviction going to take place you will take measures to run up some sort of a shelter, then and there, for the family until time can be found to provide them with proper lodgings. To do this, you will have to go to evictions, and I think you ought to for this purpose, and you will find that Mr Forster will not venture to deny your right in the House of Commons to do this (loud cheers).

The meeting was followed by a banquet, and later, Anna Parnell met with Richard J. McCoy, President of the Kilcolman and Coolacapa Labour League, to discuss the farmers' support for distressed labourers. In the evening she returned to Kilmallock, staying the night once more with Miss Collins, before returning to Dublin on the Monday morning. She was to return to Kilmallock on Friday, 8th July, in order to attend the Petty Sessions on the Saturday to which four L.L.L. members had been summoned. The police, following Clifford Lloyd's orders, had summoned the women for causing an obstruction in a Kilmallock street as they waited for the wagon that was to take them to the Dromcolliher meeting.

Kiltyclogher Co. Leitrim Sunday 3rd July 1881

At the beginning of July, Anna Parnell visited Kiltyclogher on the border between Leitrim and Fermanagh and the site of recent evictions on the Tottenham Estate.⁽¹⁾ On the Saturday evening she arrived at Glenfaren Station having travelled via Enniskillen Junction, and from there she was driven to Kiltyclogher to stay the night at the Bredin house. On the next day, thousands had assembled for the meeting near the platform erected outside the house of the Rev. Charles Flynn, C.C. who was to chair the meeting. Fifty police were in the town and two government note takers attended, although they were not allowed on to the platform, (Anna Parnell was to make fun of their inadequate skills). A sore throat meant she gave a brief speech, and the visit as a whole was inadequately reported. Dismissing discussion of the Land Bill once more, she impressed upon her audience the need to gain their land themselves and referred for the first time to the policy to pay rent only at the point of a bayonet.

[Report of the Kiltyclogher speech taken from the Roscommon Herald, Saturday 9th July 1881]

Miss Parnell, on coming forward, was received with quite an ovation, which was renewed again and again, together with cheers for her brother. She complained of a sore throat, and requested those present to keep as quiet [sic] as possible. She said she thought it as well to wait a minute between every sentence for the two policemen who were reporting. She was not aware that the Government reporting was well paid, but she was sure it was not well done. When Father McTiernan was speaking No. 1 reporter only wrote an occasional word.
(To the Government reporter)- "Have you that down?" (Laughter).

No.2 took his time, wrote a word, and scratched it out. They wrote about two words in every sentence. She would not be so unmerciful as the previous speakers; she would give more time.

Before proceeding she ought to return thanks to Col. Tottenham because he built the railway to bring her to Kiltyclogher. Colonel Tottenham had much to do with the business of the meeting. Nothing could be got for them except through themselves. Members of Parliament might help their exertions. What they could do was very little to what they could do themselves. No one could get the land for them. No one could get fair rent for them. They must get them for themselves, and certainly the Land Bill would get nothing for them worth speaking of. Now, let them make up their minds as to what they were going to do. Miss Parnell then described the action of tenants paying rent at the point of the bayonet, and afterwards starving, as wrong, and recommended farmers so situated to depend on the Land League, which had been proved not to be a broken stick. She also said she would not again interest herself if another famine struck the land, as the people had the means of preventing it, and wound up by asking those present to do their work well, and let not the women of Ireland be afraid of anything. (prolonged cheering).

On the Monday she visited the Tottenham estate and spent the night at Enniskillen, returning to Dublin on the Tuesday. Many years later, in 1908, Anna Parnell was to write to a Mrs Lennon, the former secretary of the Kiltyclogher L.L.L., on the occasion of her visit to North Leitrim to support C.J.Dolan the first Sinn Fein candidate to stand in a parliamentary election. In the speech made at Kiltyclogher at this much later date she was to recall the Land League days. (2)

Athea. Co.Limerick. Sunday 10th July 1881

The following Sunday Anna Parnell returned to Limerick to address a meeting at Athea in the west of the county. Arriving at Kilmallock on the Friday night, she first attended the Saturday Petty Sessions to support the four Lady Leaguers charged with obstructing the streets at the time of her last visit to Kilmallock. Another visitor to the Sessions was Jessie Craigen, a member of the English Democratic Federation then touring Ireland, who had arrived from Cork where she had been attending evictions.(1) The Sessions were notable for the fact that Clifford Lloyd, the resident magistrate of "exceptional vigour," who had signed the summons, was vanquished by the L.L.L. and their legal counsel, and the charges against the women were dismissed. The case had received much publicity in the press and the result added to the criticisms being made of Lloyd's methods. (2)

On the Sunday, a crowd of 5,000 people gathered in Athea to attend the open-air meeting. Anna Parnell arrived at 2'o'clock, having driven from the station at Newcastle West: she was greeted at the entrance of the town and her carriage was unyoked and drawn to the house of James K. Rynan, secretary to the local League. During the meeting there was a crush near the platform and some fear for the safety of the government note-taker. In her speech Anna Parnell emphasized the importance of "holding the harvest" so as to sustain the agitation, and that after the needs of the farmers and their families were met and contributions made to the League, it was unlikely that anything could be spared for that year's rent.

[Report of the Athea speech taken from the *Cork Daily Herald* Monday, 11th July 1881]

Miss Parnell then came forward, and was received with great cheering. She said they were now entering on a very important epoch. They were now beginning to collect and gather the harvest of 1881. What did that mean? It meant that from the present time to the end of next October they would be collecting that upon which the whole country would have to live for the next year to come and until the harvest of 1882 - that was a very serious thing. The harvest should not be wasted or thrown away, but should be used for the purposes for which it was intended (cheers). There were 600,000 tenant farmers in Ireland, and a grave responsibility was thrown on them. The harvest is in their hands, and they are responsible for it. What were the claims on the harvest? What was it that it would have to do? The harvest was to do three things. First of all, they should see that they kept enough of the harvest to feed themselves and their families, until there was another harvest.

(A Voice- "That is good advice").

She supposed they all agreed to do this; that they all intended to do it if they could. But there was more than that to be done. They could not keep enough of the harvest for themselves without the Land League (cheers). Therefore, it followed, if they wished to keep the harvest for themselves, they should keep up the Land League, and the Land League requires a great deal of money to keep it up. In one sense the Land League is the Government of Ireland (great cheering), and they knew that the first duty of a government was to see after the interests of the people; but the legal Government of this country does not attend to a single interest of the people (hear, hear). The Land League endeavours to attend to the most important of the interests that are neglected, and in that sense it had more right to the name of Government than any other Government (cheers). Then, if it fulfilled the most important functions of a Government it must need money, because there never was a Government that did not require money. Most Governments required millions, but she thought the Land League, with £500, 000 would settle the question.

(A Voice-"It will have more")

The first claim on the funds of the League was the prisoners.

[At this stage there was considerable crushing among the crowd.]

Miss Parnell continued to say that there was danger they might fall on the Government reporter, and she was afraid he would get some of them hanged (laughter), and then there would be no chance of gathering the harvest. The Land League must provide for the prisoners, and she was sure that there was not one of those present who must not feel that money was required for those men who had so cheerfully gone to prison to be locked up for 18 hours of the day, in a cell, seven feet by four feet, for eighteen months. There was not one present who would not say that those men had the best possible right to the proceeds of the harvest. The Land League had another claim on its funds, that of the evicted tenants (cheers). She did not think there was one of them who would wish that a man who had resigned his farm, and who had refused to pay rackrents, and who was evicted in consequence, should be one bit the worse off for the loss of his farm (cheers), and as for those poor people who have no choice whether they will pay or not because they could not pay and have been evicted, and although their claim on the Land League is not of the same nature as the other claims, she was sure that those present must wish that they would be supported (cheers). To do that at the present rate of evictions they would require at least £50,000 or, perhaps, £100,000 in the course of the year.

The last claim was the law costs. She could not give them any idea of what they would be, but they must be very large, because when people are prosecuted for looking at a policeman- when two people are prosecuted for standing on the street together, and when people are prosecuted for whistling the national air of Harvey Duff (laughter), then it stood to reason that the law costs must be very heavy; but she did not at all see why that should frighten them. There was plenty of money in the country for all this, or rather there would be after the harvest is gathered, and if they made up their minds that the money would be devoted to these purposes they need not be afraid. The third claim [sic] on the harvest is a very important one. She wanted to tell the tenant-farmers that they were responsible for the lives of the people of Ireland. They are responsible for those who are known as the labourers. She meant by the labourers those who either have no land, or have not enough to live upon even if they paid no rent. Many of the labourers are employed by the landlords, and she noticed when these landlords are called on and have to give a reduction in the rents they then cease to employ the labourer, and in this way they very cleverly managed to take the reduction out of the pockets of the labourers instead of their own. It was the duty of the tenant farmers to see to the labourers, and it was a duty they could not neglect. The organisers of the league required the union of the whole country, barring the landlords and their wives, and the police and their sweethearts (laughter). They could do without those two classes, but they wanted all the rest of the country united, otherwise the Land League could not, and would not succeed.

She had almost forgotten the fourth claim on the harvest, it was the landlord's rent, and she had kept it last of all, because it would have to come last (cheers). They would have to see that there was enough of money for all the rest, and that must be about half a million of money, she thought the people should be prepared to pay into the exchequer of the Land League, or if the League should be suppressed to pay into the hands of local persons at least half a million of money if they wanted to keep up the fight during the next nine months between one harvest and the next. If the Government went on in the way they were going on and threw such expenses on the League and imprisoned so many of them to maintain their just right, she thought it might be as well if they waited for the harvest of 1882 before the landlords got any rent (cheers). (A Voice- "It is time enough for them"). Because for anything she knew they might want the whole of the money to defend themselves against violence and injustice (cheers). They should make up their minds, as the Government had made up its mind. It had made up its mind that it would crush the people (A Voice- "Buckshot Forster"). It had made up its mind that the landlords should get their rents (A Voice- "Not a penny"), and that the people should starve and that those arrested should be destroyed. They should make up their minds that they would not be crushed out if it took the whole twenty millions of the rent of Ireland to prevent it (cheers), or they should make up their minds to return to the old system, that is, to lie down at the feet of the landlord and let him fix the rent, and the consequences would be that a large proportion of them would starve. She hoped none of those present was depending on the money coming from America. The money coming from that country was a sign that there are Irish hearts beating, three thousand miles away in unison with theirs (cheers).

If they depended on the money sent from America to do the work, or part of it, she would tell them that, no matter what money was sent, the people of Ireland had not the spirit in them which would ensure success, and without which she did not believe they could succeed (cheers).

Afterwards Anna Parnell spoke to the women in a separate meeting to give them details of the Kilmallock Prosecutions. This meeting was not reported.

Clara. King's County (Co.Offaly). Sunday. 17th July 1881

At Clara the next weekend, Anna Parnell again urged her audience to hold the coming harvest. She had travelled down from Dublin and was met at Moate station by a large crowd; Mrs P. J. White, president of the Clara L.L.L., and other members, escorted her to Clara. She spoke in the evening to a crowd that was nearly as large as the one that had gathered there to hear Charles Stewart Parnell in February 1881. Speaking with some force, she warned that it was a critical time for the movement and that as the leaders continued to be arrested they themselves would have to maintain the agitation. She also warned of the great spate of evictions that would occur when the check of a sitting Parliament was removed in the autumn; the actions of the authorities were to be countered by the withholding of rent.

[Report of the Clara speech taken from the *Irish Times* Monday, 18th July, 1881]

Miss Parnell who was received with great enthusiasm, then addressed the meeting. She said at that late hour of the evening she would not detain them long, particularly as they had already listened to many excellent speeches. This, she said, is a very serious moment in the history of Ireland. The next few months must decide, I think, the fate of Ireland for one generation at least. You must not suppose that because things are going tolerably easy with you now you have nothing worse to look forward to. What you must now look to is how you will act when Parliament has risen, and when the great struggle for the harvest of 1881 begins things will be changed. There is some check while Ministers are still responsible to Parliament for their doings. The check is a small one, but still it is one. (Cheers.) They had all heard of the Coercion Act, and she supposed also they did not care very much about it. (Cries of "No") She did not think the Act could do harm, because all they can do is to arrest a few leaders, and they ought to be able to do without leaders. (Cheers.)

When Parliament rises this autumn, you will then have to prepare yourselves either to crush or be crushed. (Hear, hear.) Now, from what I see before me, I think you know how to crush each other; but you must crush somebody else. The Government means to crush you: they mean that next winter there shall be one hundred thousand families without food or shelter except what the mercy of the landlords will allow them. They are to hand you over to mercenary and grasping companies, which will endeavour to make fortunes for themselves by using the money granted for emigration and sacrificing you and your children to their greed. (Cheers). Nothing has been done lately more infamous than the Emigration Clauses. The ostensible reason is to assist emigration, but the real object is to get rid of the Irish poor, no matter what the consequences may be. (Cheers.) The Irish people should prevent their doing so; and they could if they choose, as notwithstanding that the Government may imprison when it likes man, woman, or child, it does not amount to much, nor does the power which it exercises through the magistrates in summary jurisdiction with their pretended trial and perversion of justice amount to much.

There are certainly very pretty magistrates in this county. The people of Clara do not want to hear about Mr Lestrangle. (Groans.) When a man like Mr Lestrangle (1) and a man like Sub-Inspector Allen (2) can break the laws of the Government they serve-when they can in open court commit a crime against the peace, and call abusive names in open court, as they did not long ago, they could judge what they had to contend against if they wished to hold their own. Some of these magistrates are landlords, and if they got a hint that if they were too fond of summary jurisdiction there would be summary justice on their own rent by the tenants it would not be a bad thing. (Cheers.) But the best way was to watch them and make their acts public,

as they cannot stand publicity, and wither away before it. Besides the Coercion Act and summary jurisdiction, the Government have the brutal force of bayonet, buckshot, and rifle. (Groans for Buckshot). They need not go near these, but could follow them at a respectful distance, so that they would know what the authorities were doing without going too much in their power. The people had a higher power than theirs; they had the power of self-control, determination, and of money. (Cheers.) She had to reluctantly criticise what a previous speaker said, as he said the Irish farmers are poor, and cannot do much, Now, the Irish people are poor because they choose to be poor. The country is rich, and its wealth is in the hands of the tenant-farmer. If they choose they can keep up the Land League. A short time ago they had to get Indian meal bought with foreign money in order that they might live, but now the people have learned that they can support themselves out of the land provided it be at a fair rent; and any person that told them they should look to America alone for keeping up the Land League organisation, and give but little to the League, does not know what he is talking about; for if people have a right to support themselves out of the land they should also support the organisation which helped them to live on it.

Rents must, according to the landlord, be paid, whether they are unfair or not, and as long as the rents are paid there is a fear on the part of the landlords that by exasperating the people they will lose them, so coming near the rent-paying time the landlords try soft soap, but I would advise you not to be in too big a hurry in paying the autumn rents, as during the long cold days of winter if they persist in looking for their rents they would have work to do, they should see the payment enforced by bayonet and rifle if the demand was unjust. (Cheers.) She hoped the labourer's question would be settled, and trusted that the attitude of the people of the King's County and Westmeath as regards rents, would show how untruthful was the boast made in a letter to an English newspaper that there was no discontent either in King's County or Westmeath, as all tenants had paid their rents. The landlords attempted to make capital for themselves out of the distress of the labouring classes, for when they found their incomes reduced they tried to make up their deficiency by dismissing them. They left off paying the Protestant clergy and they left off paying the poor people who derived a precarious existence from them. (Cheers.) The farmers should see that rent reduction does not indirectly come from the pockets of the labourers, and they could do that by employing the labouring class during the winter, and at profitable work. The movement was supported by the money and the sympathy of America, and that assistance should place the tenant-farmers in a position to give work to the labourer, no matter what destitution existed.

Miss Parnell said in conclusion that as long as the present state of things existed and the Government are throwing people into jail as they are doing, they should be chary of giving the landlords their unjust demands, but when a brighter era comes and the Government knock under, she would say pay a fair rent. (Loud cheers.)

Anna Parnell left Clara later that evening; she was accompanied on her drive to the station by local fife and drum and brass bands.

Dunmanway. Co.Cork. Sunday. 7th August 1881

During early August Anna Parnell re-visited Co. Cork where many evictions, most notably those on the Mitchelstown estate, were taking place.(1) On Sunday, 7th August, she arrived in Dunmanway, in the south-west of the county, to attend a large demonstration. She had sent in advance detailed instructions concerning the

attendance by the police and government note takers. It was an attempt to control the numbers of armed men attending and a means to identify the authors of government reports, and the interviews conducted with the note-takers prior to the meeting were given in the newspaper accounts. The meeting was held on a hill outside the town, and Anna Parnell began by issuing a warning against the paying of rents by instalments as tenants had done at nearby Castleberehaven. At this point her speech was interrupted by a heavy fall of rain, and despite her offer to continue without an umbrella, the crowd returned to the town. When the meeting reassembled in the town square, she gave a recent example of the abuse of power by the local authorities. A ballad-singer had been arrested and sentenced on charges of sedition, and to illustrate the absurdity of the case, she read out an offending ballad, challenging the authorities to arrest her as well. She urged her audience to continue to support the League and emphasized once more that the income from the harvest would be needed to sustain the agitation during the autumn and winter.

[Report of the Dunmanway speech taken from the *Cork Examiner*, Monday, 8th August 1881]

After some preliminary remarks, she said- Now, that I am here, I may as well allude to something that I read in the papers the other day. I read that there had been some evictions attempted at Castletown-Berehaven, and I think that is near here. The newspaper account said that the tenants, in order to escape eviction, had paid what rent they could on account, and proposed to pay the rest. Well, I know that to be evicted is a very unpleasant thing; but at the same time there is a word of warning necessary here. Well, the people who pay rent on account now, I may tell you, forfeit all claim upon the Land League. If they are not able to pay the rest of the rent that at the time they undertook to pay, and if the landlord chooses to evict them for the remainder, they will not be entitled to receive any support from the Land League. The tenants of Ireland have been taught long enough now (cheers). They ought to know what their duty is, and there is no use in trying to hold on by both the old plan and the new one (cheers).

[At this point the meeting was adjourned temporarily]

About four o'clock, Miss Parnell again addressed a crowd in front of the hotel. She said- I must confess that I am very much humiliated, as an Irishwoman, by what I have seen to-day: I should not have supposed that the people of Cork minded a little drop of rain (laughter). We are not made of salt or sugar, fortunately for ourselves; and I don't see why you should have run away from the meeting when it began to rain. If you mind a trifle like that, I don't know how you expect to contend against the forces of the British Government (cheers); and remember that it is the force of the British Government that you have to contend against. As I was coming to the meeting to-day a letter was put into my hand which illustrates very powerfully what the people of this country have to contend with in these times. I don't know whether what it says is true or not for the writer is a stranger, but I think it is true, because it tallies with much that I myself have noticed. The writer says that he was arrested at the fair of Goleen on the 19th of July for singing some ballads; that he and his wife were brought before the Hon. Oliver Plunket (hisses) (2); that his wife was discharged- because there is a theory in law that a woman is obliged to do whatever her husband tells her to do.

A Voice- "She sometimes doesn't, faith" (laughter).

Miss Parnell- And therefore she can't be punished for anything she does by his orders; but he was sentenced to six month's imprisonment in the county gaol if he

could not find bails for his good behaviour. The magistrate, he goes on to say, tried him for sedition, and warned him in future not to sing anything about the Land League (cries of "Down with Plunket.")

Mr O'Neill- "The coward flew from Ballydehob. It was too hot for him."

Miss Parnell- The magistrate beside this seized a large quantity of his ballads and burned them, thus destroying this man's stock in trade. And; he says, "I am confident I could make him pay for confiscating my property, if only I had the means. "Well, I am not confident of that; because although this man had clearly no right to destroy his property, there is no law in Ireland for the poor man if he is against the Government- and for the matter of that there is not much law for the rich man either if he is against the Government (cheers). Now, I can't sing this ballad, because I don't know how, but I can read it, and if it was wrong to sing this ballad then it is wrong to read it also; and I suppose I am reading it now to about ten times the number of persons who heard it sung. So if this ballad is seditious let the police, and there are plenty of them, arrest me (cheers). There are other ballads besides this, but I take this one because it is the only one that is good from an artistic point of view, although they are all equally harmless. It is called "We will all go back to Ireland when the landlords go" (cheers). (3)

Miss Parnell then read the ballad, which was loudly cheered. She then continued- I must make haste and finish what I have got to say before I am arrested and taken to Schull (laughter). The action of this man Plunket in twisting and distorting the law because there was no eye on him, his action in seizing and destroying this man's property, is a very fair illustration of what is going on all over Ireland now. It is against men like this as landlords, against these men as judges and juries, and very often as executioners that you have to contend, and it will require all your courage to defeat these people and get a victory over them, as you have power to do [hear, hear]. And let me tell you that you have no excuse if you are beaten in this struggle, because even if the Central Land League were entirely crushed, you would still have the power of gaining a victory for yourselves, without the help of any central body. All that you really require is union; you require union, courage and money, and there is no part of Ireland which is so poor that it could not supply enough of money, if all that is available were kept for the purpose. Remember that in the case of this happening that the Land League would be suppressed- you would have to keep all the money. There would not be any of it to spare for rents.

You remember that the first thing the tenant farmers of Ireland were told to do was to refuse to pay more than they could, if they were to live beside. Well, they did this, but the landlords were not satisfied, and they determined to drive them out of this position and into paying the old rents. And there are signs that with the help of one of the most powerful Governments in the world, they are succeeding, and will succeed, in driving the people out of this position. Now, it does not follow that if you are driven from this position you need be driven back into paying the old rents. But you must, if you are driven from this position of paying fair rents- if you find the forces brought against you too much- you must be either driven to paying the old rents or to paying no rent at all (cheers). And you have to remember that in these autumn rents that are coming due now you have no hostages for the good behaviour of the landlords and the Government, and if you do not hold them until you see what their behaviour is going to be they will be next spring able easily to crush you (cheers). You have to remember that you are responsible for the maintenance of the combination which has enabled you to live and to escape from beggary, and that out of the proceeds of the next harvest you will have to keep the means of fighting the

landlords and the Government, no matter what steps they may take against you (cheers). You should see that you pay your just debts to the shopkeepers, and especially to those men who have gone to prison to benefit you (loud cheers). Any man who does not pay his debts due to any of those men as far as he is able is a scoundrel and nothing else, and he will never succeed (applause).

After further speeches and resolutions the meeting ended. It is likely that Anna Parnell returned to Cork that evening where she had been invited to speak the next day.

Cork Monday 8th August 1881

On Monday the 8th August, Anna Parnell, attended two meetings in Cork. The first, in the afternoon, was a crowded meeting of women held in the Land League Rooms, Prince's Street; the second later that evening, was a larger meeting held in the Mechanics' Hall, Duncan Street. The speech to the women was lengthy; she began by correcting the chairman, Dr.T.W.Irwin, for stating in his speech of welcome that her mother, Delia Parnell, was an Irishwoman, (the welcome was interrupted by the noisy booing outside the hall of a Rev.Webster, a local clergyman who had angered the local League.(1) But the main part of her speech was sombre and formed an indictment of recent violent police and military action and its endorsement by the Government. This action, she pointed out, had been checked only by the visit to the region by members of the English Democratic Federation.(2) The importance of the witnessing of evictions and the accurate reporting of police outrages was stressed again, and particular reference was made again to the circumstances of the shooting of the young woman Kate Byrne in Kiltymagh, Co.Mayo.(3) The cost to the movement, in terms of medical and legal fees, as a result of such incidents, was mentioned as a spur to increased fund-raising. The events at the Kilmallock Sessions in June was used as an example of the successful use of publicity against heavy-handed policing and law enforcement. In addition to these legal challenges she listed the tactics of passive resistance as espoused by Jessie Craigen.(4) She ended by urging the women of Cork to continue to join the movement and to sustain it during the coming winter months.

[The first speech given in Cork as reported in the *Cork Examiner*, Tuesday, 9th August, 1881]

Miss Parnell, who was received with prolonged applause, said- I am glad that I have heard Dr Irwin's speech, for it gives me an opportunity of correcting a mistake that he made. He says that I was encouraged by another who was above all things an Irish woman. My mother is an American, unfortunately for herself (laughter), but she is the daughter of an Irish American, which is the next best thing to being an Irishwoman. There was also an implied moral in Dr Irwin's discourse about Dr. Webster, which I don't quite like to pass over. You might, some of you, imagine from what he said that it would be your duty when you joined the Ladies' Land League to go and hiss Dr. Webster whenever he was seen passing in the street. But I may explain that for the present you may leave that to little boys; that is a practice they are better adapted for than you are (laughter).

And now to proceed to the business of our meeting. We have arrived at a period in our history which seems to offer very serious grounds for thought to us. Now, but a few weeks ago we seemed to be upon the brink of civil war- only a civil war that

would be on one side instead of on two sides. Civil war on two sides is a disagreeable thing enough, but civil war on one side is much worse, because in that there would only be brutal attacks upon unarmed men, women and children. You know that the Government issued proclamations, the effect of which was to give the police power to destroy people whom they might meet in their evictions, process serving, and cattle selling excursions through the country. The proclamation stated that they were entitled to disperse by force any assembly of people that they might meet on those excursions, as there was reason to believe that those persons were summoned for the purpose of obstructing them. Now, an assembly of people, in law, is any number more than two, so that where the policemen met anywhere more than two persons they were entitled to smash them with the butt ends of their rifles. As a matter of fact they did smash Mr O'Neill in this way, not, happily, with fatal results.

This kind of thing had a stoppage put to it though in this way. There is a society of English people who are not satisfied with the present Government- which is not at all surprising- and they hit upon a very ingenious expedient, and a very satisfactory expedient so far as we are concerned, for expressing their disapprobation of the Government. They sent over a delegation of their members to inquire what the Government were doing in Ireland. Several gentlemen came over; my opinion is that this one lady did as much as all the gentlemen put together (applause and laughter). When she arrived she asked us where she should go to; I looked into the newspapers and I saw there were evictions going on in your county near Mitchelstown, on the estate of Lady Kingston. This lady was evicting a number of tenants: she had applied to the Government for protection for the evictors, and the protectors of the evictors, the police, applied also for leave and licence to dispose of the people of the place as they liked. And this was the way they proceeded. There was one stone thrown at the police during the course of the evictions by somebody or other; but there was opposition and obstruction offered to the evictions in other ways beside this one stone thrown. Amongst other things, they cut down trees and placed them across the roads so that the police and the soldiers had to climb over them; and this disturbed their tempers considerably. Beside this the people would not allow the police to get any water to drink. In the absence of water they had to have recourse to whiskey, and that did not improve their tempers.

When the evictions were over the military formed a cordon around the town where the people were, and the police then proceeded to beat the people with the butt ends of their rifles. The people had no way of escape, and if they had they would have been bayoneted; they remained and were beaten. Had we been able to send Miss Creggen [sic], the English lady, down there a little sooner we might have saved many broken bones, but she did not arrive until the battle was over. She went round and examined all the people who had been hurt. I may say as he is not here that Mr.O'Neill excited her highest admiration, because when he was being beaten by the police he not alone offered no resistance, but called on the people to keep quiet, because he knew this was the only way of saving a great deal of bloodshed. She thought, and thought rightly, that this was an amount of self-control which is not easy to find in any country, and which is more to be admired than the rough and ready kind of courage which induces a man to hit back when he is being hit. She approved of the cutting down of trees and all that kind of thing, which she called passive resistance; she said that she approved of that when carried to its utmost point. When I asked what passive resistance carried to its proper point meant she instanced the cutting down of trees, the breaking down of bridges, and other things which I had not hitherto thought were included in passive resistance; but I think as we have the authority of an English lady the throwing up of earthworks and those other military operations may be included under the head of "passive resistance," and therefore we ought not to condemn them. But she was a Quaker, and had a great dislike to

bloodshed; I think that all women are Quakers in that sense- that they have a dislike to bloodshed if it can possibly be avoided.

Well, the result of Miss Creggen's labours and the results of the investigations of the other English delegates were that those attacks of the police seem to have been stopped for some time. We have not read since this Mitchelstown affair anything like those brutal, unprovoked attacks by a drunken, infuriated constabulary on a harmless people, men, women, and children (applause). And I may say here that there is no more harm in attacking women and children than in attacking men when they are unarmed. No Irishman and no Irishwoman could have produced the same effect on the Government in the way of causing them to moderate their action for a time as a few English people did. And no Irishman could do anything like it, because the Irishman who made it his business to go around and watch the conduct of the officers of the Government at evictions and sales and process serving would be immediately popped into prison. But you may get a great deal in this way, and I wish they had done more than they have done. During this time of the evictions at Mitchelston I would have wished to see some ladies representing the city of Cork at Mitchelstown. I think there should be at every one of those evictions a lady representing the city of Cork to watch the proceeding on the behalf of the people who were being turned out. This watching has a considerable effect, because it generally prevents those outrages.

Very recently we saw the effect which a little publicity had on one of the worse tyrants in Ireland, a man called Clifford Lloyd. I happened to pass through Kilmallock on my way to a meeting at Drumcollogher, and when I was there I was horrified at the accounts which the inhabitants gave me of the state in which the town of Kilmallock was placed. A lady did not dare stand at her own door to talk to a passer by. A man was summoned for leaning against the window sill of his own house. The police need habitually make raids on them. This was the kind of thing going on up to the other day. Well, when I was there the other day Mr. Clifford Lloyd went a step further than he had hitherto done. He attacked the Ladies Land League of Kilmallock and summoned them for obstructing the thoroughfare. You all know about that prosecution which is a famous one now, and you know that this first formal attack upon the Ladies Land League resulted in the utter discomfiture of the Government. But there was a further effect which you don't know of, and that is that the publicity given to Mr. Clifford Lloyd's proceedings not only drove him away from Kilmallock, but has put a stop to the persecution and violence of the police (applause). Therefore I would ask you to give all publicity to every kind of oppression that may be practised on the people, and if the newspapers will not publish them boycott the newspapers.

Now, ladies, to return to serious matters, I don't think this cessation of the hostilities on the part of the Government towards the people is at all likely to be permanent. I believe that we shall see very much worse practised upon the people than we have seen heretofore. I am afraid that there will be much more bloodshed than there has been before next harvest. The very best way possible to prevent this is by being so organised that you will be in a position to give publicity to every illegal action on the part of the police and the Government. I should say illegal or brutal acts, because it is very hard to say what is illegal and what is not. You must not be discouraged if, after having done all in your power to do this, you find that the outrages were more than they were before. You might remember that only for your action they would be much worse. At present the police are under orders not to fire on the people without provocation, and the reason for this order was given. I think we know last spring a young girl of 17 was shot by a policeman named Roche. The young girl was hanging at death's door for a long time, but she recovered, and

when she recovered she was prosecuted for assaulting the policeman. She prosecuted the policeman. However at the petty sessions she was returned for trial to the assizes, and the policeman was highly praised for his gallant conduct. The Government did not, however, bring her to trial; perhaps they thought they had better not, as there were at that moment certain people watching them, and with no very friendly eyes either, and they were English people not Irish people. This shooting of Kate Byrne in Mayo was the last piece of buckshot we got. After this the buckshot was withdrawn, and only the bayonet and the butt end of the rifle were administered as correctives. I think this shooting of Kate Byrne attracted attention in France and America, and this was, I think, the reason the order not to fire without provocation was given. I think this order will lie rescinded some time and not before many months are over, and we must be prepared for that.

This brings me to the question of funds. It would not do for us to pass over this shooting of Kate Byrne; and it cost the Land League somewhere about £90 between doctors and lawyers. It was, of course, the duty of the Land League to do everything possible for her to protect her and to cure her and bring the policemen to justice, but suppose the funds of the Land League happened to run low then there would not be £80 or £90 to spend on everyone who was injured by the Government, because I don't feel it is fair to speak of the police as if they were the origin of the evil. They are simply tools in the hands of Gladstone, Bright and Forster, the real authors of buckshot, bayonets and bullets. We are getting those 3 B's, and I don't know whether we will get the three F's or not from those three good men we have in England Gladstone, Bright and Forster. You will see that when one case like this can cost as much as that the need for large subscriptions is very great. The Land League has at present about £56,000, and they spend always over a £1,000 a week, so that at this rate £56,000 would not last a year, and it would not practically last as long, because the expenditure must necessarily increase with the efforts the Government make to crush the tenantry. I think if the Land League has to spend £50,000 next autumn nobody ought be surprised, and the country ought [to] be prepared to provide the funds. I don't think that we ought ask a penny from the Irish in America. Of course the people at home cannot spend their present money to provide the sinews of war on the scale of £1,000 a week; but the sinews of war will have to be taken out of the landlords' rents.

Unless the people are really prepared to take the sinews of war out of the landlords' rents, and even to stop the landlords' rents altogether, if necessary, I don't think they can get the victory in this struggle. Unless they are resolute and in thorough going order their fall will be most disastrous, and their position much worse than it was before; because they will drown the only means of success in which they have really strength; they have the rents and the Government have not the rents, and in this simple fact lies their strength in defeating the Government if they choose to make use of it. I don't know if you are all prepared to arm yourselves with notebooks and go about the country as amateur reporters for the Land League. Neither do I know if you are prepared to institute a crusade against rents, but I certainly think you ought to be prepared to do something. I certainly should not make anyone who does not approve of the Ladies Land League, join it, but I think I have the right to ask that those who don't approve of the Ladies' Land League, should find some way in which they can help the people. Our country is on the brink of being deluged in blood; it is also on the brink of famine. Famine shall certainly follow on a very large scale if the Land League is once beaten down, and bloodshed may come even without that.

There is no doubt that next harvest a very violent attempt and the most wicked means possible will be resorted to get the landlords rents, and once the rents are got in anything like the old style, once the tenants begin to pay without reductions,

without the reductions they ask for, or upon account of leaving themselves at the mercy of the landlords- once they begin to go into the agent's office again with their hats off, then the Land League will be beaten down. There will be some who will resist, and there will be nothing left them but to drown that resistance in bloodshed. As long as the resistance is a universal one in the country it is impossible to drown it in blood, because the landlords are too anxious to get what they can, but if the resistance is only confined to a section of the people, we will find bloodshed in the country, and we shall also find famine. I am afraid in every case that there will be a good deal of bloodshed, and you should strive [in] some way to mitigate the evil. If you don't like the ways I am pointing out to you, which is the only one that appears to me. I think the women of Ireland should try and find some other way.

(A Voice- "There is no better")

I really cannot believe that the women of a city like Cork should really contemplate sitting down with their hands tranquilly before them, and see during the winter the Mitchelstown, Ballyadhereen, and Bodyke tragedies repeated on a large scale, for unless something is done they will be repeated on a large scale. The Government has now passed what in name it calls a remedial measure. It is not so, and it would not have been even if the Lords had never touched it. Names go a long way, and if Mr Gladstone can say he has passed a Land Bill to remedy the evils the Irish peasants suffer under, he will consider himself entitled, and the great majority of the English public will consider him entitled, to do just as he liked in Ireland, and what he liked will not be very nice for the people. There are two alternatives- submission or resistance. Submission will bring famine and bloodshed; resistance will not bring famine; it will keep off famine if it is successful, and if it is managed with sufficient adroitness it will keep off bloodshed too, although it may not keep it off entirely. It is our business to resist the carrying into effect of Mr Gladstone's intention. I have pointed out the means by which the Ladies' Land League intend to resist them. We intend to get as much publicity in England, Ireland, France, and America for the evil-doing of the Government as we can, and we intend to raise as much money as we can to protect and compensate the victims of the Government outrages. If any man or woman can find a way they would like better than I would ask them to do it. The only thing I would ask them not to do is to sit down quietly with their hands before them and do nothing (applause).

After thanks were given, the meeting ended.

That evening the Mechanics' Hall was so crowded inside and out that Anna Parnell could not gain admittance. In order to disperse the crowd her car was driven off, apparently back to her hotel, to return in half an hour when the entrance had cleared. The hall she entered was still very crowded and noisy, with the hot atmosphere described as resembling "a veritable Turkish bath without the usual charge." (6). Despite the lack of order caused by her audience's enthusiasm, Anna Parnell was able to speak on the importance of supporting Irish trades, (5). In a speech that was often humorous, she began with a gibe at the ability of speakers to speak from their ignorance, but made the telling point that it was useless to encourage manufacture until the population as a whole could afford to buy the products. After a patriotic description of the superiority of Irish over English boots, she developed her theme that a more prosperous country would become, inevitably, an independent country, and that the way to ensure that was to support the League, keep money in the country, and buy Irish products whenever possible.

[Speech made at the Mechanics' Hall, Cork, as reported in the *Cork Examiner*, Tuesday, 9th August 1881]

Miss Parnell, on coming forward, was cheered again and again. She said- Ladies and gentlemen, when I was asked to address this meeting by Mr. M'Carthy I answered that I could not speak about trades and manufactures because I was ignorant of the subject. That was an unthinking answer, because if I had reflected for a short time I should have seen that the less you know about a subject the easier it is for you to speak about it (laughter). Therefore, if you will give me fair play, I don't see any reason why I should not make an excellent speech, because no one could possibly know less than I do about what I am going to speak, and therefore I have no sort of check upon my eloquence (laughter). I see your association has for its object the encouragement of Irish industry; and just before I started to come here I was told to bear in mind that there were no manufactures in Ireland to encourage, but that it was my business to point out the way to encourage them notwithstanding. I will do my best- that is not easy, I think, as I understand the question, there are only three articles manufactured in Ireland. One is poplin, but this is an article for which the bulk of the people have very little use. Another article- the second article- is hose; and the third manufacture is that [of] shoes and boots. Now shoes and boots, and stockings, are more extensively used in Ireland than poplins, but at the same time as for the shoes the majority of the Irish people do not use them at all, or use them very little- in fact a large proportion of our population go barefoot. As long, therefore, as the only articles which we manufacture are not used by the population extensively it must follow that they cannot be encouraged, and for this reason- that we have manufactures in Ireland now in a drooping condition simply because the Irish people are not in a position to buy them.

It seems to me that it is not necessary for the present for us to talk of establishing fresh manufactures in Ireland (hear, hear). When we are in such a position every Irishman will require two pairs of boots in the year and every Irishwoman six (laughter), then I am sure we will find the Irish manufactures shall spring up of themselves, and there will not be the slightest necessity for me to come and talk to such a very enthusiastic, but at the same time such a very uncomfortable audience to address as the present (laughter). The first thing, therefore, that we have to do seems to me to be not so much to encourage the Irish people to patronise their own manufactures as to enable them to use them. As to the stockings, I will begin with the stockings first as they naturally come first. We all know that Irish stockings have a very great superiority over other stockings, and that if the old custom was revived of wearing hand-made knitted stockings the superiority would be still more marked. Now, on the question of boots. Irish boots have also a certain fame over the world for good make. In this respect we are far ahead of the English with all their boast and brag. The English don't know how to make boots (hear, hear). I know that as I have lived myself for years in England, and I had consequently to buy my boots in that country, and my own experience was that English boots will hurt you for the first three weeks, and at the end of those three weeks a nail will be sure to spring in the sole and give you a lock jaw (laughter). If there are any shoemakers amongst you will know that it is very bad workmanship to have a nail spring in the sole of a boot. That does not happen I am happy to say in the case of Irish boots. I will not speak of the poplin manufacture at the present. It is not sufficiently used by the people of Ireland at the present day to justify my detaining you talking about it.

You all have trades besides this- the shoemakers and stocking makers. You have blacksmiths and carpenters, and coopers, and I suppose you have tailors (laughter), and the manufacturers of what the Yankees call Irish "ulcers" (laughter). When I was in America I was astonished at hearing Irish "ulcers" talked about in general society.

I did not know that the Irish were more addicted to ulsters than anyone else, but thought that perhaps this was a political way of alluding to landlords (laughter), but I found that what they did mean was the ulster (laughter); and in this manufacture again we have the fact presented to us that there are a great many people in Ireland who would be coming to buy ulsters if they could, and I see I have proof of this before me. It is not necessary for me to discuss the question of how we are to encourage people to buy articles of Irish make, so much as we are to enable them to do it. Now why is it that so many of the Irish people go barefoot. Why is it that so many of the Irish people who would be glad to wear Irish ulsters don't? It is because they haven't got enough of money to buy them with. And why is it they haven't enough of money to buy them with? One reason, and the great reason is that we are cursed by a foreign government in this country (hear, hear). But one of the principal ways in which this foreign government renders it impossible for the Irish people to be prosperous in their manufactures is that it places the country in a second degree under the government of a class called landlords.

You see, ladies and gentlemen, it is quite impossible, no matter what you do, to prevent yourselves from falling into the Land League. I didn't mean to mention the landlords or the Land League when I came here to-night, but I find I am going to make a speech about them (laughter). It is perfectly natural, because you can see that I have been brought up to this result by a perfectly logical series of facts. The landlords sustain the Government, and the Government sustains the landlords. The landlords sustain the Government by keeping the country poor. They take every year all the money out of the country which is required to develop [sic] the country, to develop its people, and to develop the resources of the country; and unless they did this, let me tell you, they would not be sustaining the Government, because a prosperous Ireland- an Ireland where the men and women had boots and shoes and ulsters to wear, and food to eat is a certainty [sic], which is and would be entirely uncomfortable with foreign rule (hear, hear), because such a country would sooner or later (it would be only a question of time) throw off foreign rule (hear, hear).

As [sic] encourage Irish industries it follows in the first place, we must try to keep a greater portion of the money in the country than is kept at present (hear, hear). Just now, there is only one institution which is practically doing that, and that institution is the Land League (hear, hear). Now, I suppose you all approve of the Land League, and I will say no more about that. If the Land League succeeds you will find that there will be plenty of encouragement for Irish industry, but in the mean time there are other things and other ways in which you can encourage Irish industry. One is- let each man and each woman for himself and herself seek to buy those things which are made in Ireland, and the first step necessary to enable people to do this is to find out what shopkeepers sell Irish goods; and if the manufacturing associations of Ireland would issue a pamphlet, giving the names and addresses of those tradespeople who have agreed to do this, and setting forth what are the goods which are solely or exclusively of Irish manufacture, they would be conferring a great benefit on the country because it would be then open to every one if he chose to encourage Irish manufactures (hear, hear). At present it is quite impossible, because nobody knows what are Irish manufactures and what are not. Shopkeepers who are willing to sell English articles instead of Irish manufactures should be unflinchingly boycotted (hear, hear). That follows as a matter of course (hear, hear).

As the heat is very great, I hope you will be satisfied with what I have told you. I do not know whether you have learnt anything that you did not know before, but if so that is not my fault, because I commenced by explaining that I did not know anything myself and could not teach you (applause).

Fermoy, Friday 12th August 1881

At the time of Anna Parnell's visit to Co.Cork, the evictions on the Kingston estate near Mitchelstown, some miles to the north of Fermoy, were entering a new phase. For the third time since May the military had been sent in to support the work of the sub-sheriff and the bailiffs. A combined force of military and police totalling in excess of five hundred men was gathered under the command of Mr.Eaton, R.M., to supervise the two hundred evictions taking place (1). These evictions were to start on the morning of Wednesday, 9th August, and Anna Parnell left Cork at 4' o 'clock the same morning and travelled to Fermoy in order to attend. The events were reported in detail and Anna Parnell's active participation and her attempts to persuade tenants not to pay were given much publicity. (2) Escorted by members of the Mitchelstown Ladies Land League, she spent much of the day crossing fields, fences, ditches and streams, in an attempt to reach tenants ahead of the bailiffs, but, she was soon prevented from entering yards and houses on the orders of the R.M. She responded by sending him a brief note:

"Sir- I have been sent here by a society which has undertaken the duty of watching the interests of evicted tenants, in order that they may not be exposed unnecessarily to hardships through ignorance or undue impetuosity. In order to enable me to perform this duty, I applied for admission to the yard; you refused me, but now that you have heard my reasons, you will, perhaps, reconsider this decision. - Respectfully, Anna Parnell." (3)

It was to no effect, but she was not deterred from attending the evictions on Thursday and Friday on the Montgomery and the Kingston estates. Proceedings were slow as barricaded doors and other forms of defiance impeded the officials, and rent, for the most part, was paid at the point of the bayonet. Protesters following the evictions on foot were in danger of being trampled by the horses of the mounted soldiers. Late on the Friday night, Anna Parnell, returned to Fermoy, escorted by members of the Mitchelstown Ladies and Men's Leagues; the house windows were illuminated and two large bonfires lit in her honour. She gave a short impromptu speech outside Walsh's Hotel in Bank Street, in which she described the course of the evictions, and the importance of the presence of the local reporters. She argued that the rents should not have been paid so as to leave the costs to the landlords, and emphasized again the importance of supporting the League at this critical period.

Report of the **Fermoy** speech taken from the *Cork Examiner* Monday, 15th August 1881

Miss Parnell, in addressing the multitude, said-

Ladies and gentlemen- I suppose the best way I can thank you for your cordial welcome is to tell you what has been taking place at Mitchelstown (cheers). For the first day, everyone engaged in the work of evicting was as mild as milk. On that day there were 18 evictions, on the next day 15, and on to-day only 5, and perhaps they will dwindle down still lower (cheers). The Sheriff, the resident magistrate, and the sub-inspector did not like to have any prying into their business, and they did not like

to have the reporters watching them, and the sheriff said to-day he did not intend to proceed further this week, so the reporters left for Cork, and the work of the eviction was, notwithstanding, recommenced (groans). The troopers galloped after people. This evening I had my fingers stained with blood- the blood of a poor woman who had her head broken with a policeman's baton (sensation).

A Voice- "We will have satisfaction yet."

A female voice here recited some lines commencing- "They have done so to our fathers before." (cheers). (4)

Miss Parnell- The policemen stole milk from the poor people they went to put on [sic] the ditch (groans). I hope there will be some reporters present when they go at these Mitchelstown evictions again. It takes more than reporters to stop this sort of thing always. I asked the tenants whether they were going to pay, and whether they had the money. They replied that they were going to borrow it, and that they owed money to the shopkeepers. Now, is it not folly to have people in this position to go on paying rents- (cheers). If the thirty-eight evicted tenants had not paid the rents, then Lady Kingston would have to pay £400 out of her own pocket; and do you think that Lady Kingston would go on evicting if she had to pay £800 a week for it and get no rents? I am sure that she would not, and no landlord in Ireland would either. If the first tenants had not paid the rents and left the costs on the landlord there would not be more than four or five evictions instead of forty (cheers). I will not detain you much longer.

A Voice- "You are worthy of your name, Miss "(cheers).

Miss Parnell- I have to tell you that this is the first time since the land was taken from the people, more than 200 years ago, that you had an opportunity of refusing to pay rackrents (cheers), and also that you had strong funds to back you, and to preserve those that refused from starving; and if you lose this opportunity you will not have such another for a hundred years to come, perhaps, and you will regret your failure to support the Land League. (great cheering, amidst which the popular lady retired).

Anna Parnell returned to Dublin the next day on the 12.14 pm. train, and in a letter published in the Freeman's Journal, on the following Monday, gave details of the cruelties and beatings inflicted and asked that a reporter be sent to cover the evictions.(5) These speeches in Co.Cork were the last public speeches given in Ireland by Anna Parnell. The proclamation of the League in October 1881 prevented large demonstrations from taking place, and in the autumn and the winter of 1881/2 she was to concentrate on publicizing Irish events at meetings in England and Scotland.

The Speeches in Scotland and the North of England, Autumn 1881

The visits Anna Parnell made to Scotland and England in the autumn and winter of 1881/82 were made in response to invitations made by both Land League and L.L.L. branches. Although there had been a steady growth of the L.L.L. in the metropolitan centres and their districts, the formation of more branches was needed for fund-raising and propaganda purposes. This, together with the need to recognise the work of existing branches, formed the background to the visits. The content of the speeches delivered, however, was to be determined by her experience of the recent

Mitchelstown evictions and similar events, and by the Land League response to the passing of the Land Act on the 22nd August. The devastating criticisms of government policy and action, and not least, the new Act, were reported in full in the major provincial newspapers of the cities she visited. She reminded her audiences forcibly of the human results of government policy as demonstrated by the actions of the resident magistrates and the R.I.C. The scenes she had witnessed at Mitchelstown fuelled her anger and she gave stark descriptions of evictions and details of individual suffering, thus providing counter-propaganda to the "State of Ireland" columns in the British press. Her purposes in narrating these incidents was also to ensure that the Irish population at home and abroad, and in particular the Irish electorate, would never forget these actions of a Liberal government. Always prepared with information on the most recent government outrages, she was well-briefed on the political events and the personalities of the areas she visited.

These major speeches are remarkable for their passion, incisiveness and energy and demonstrate her ability to grasp both Land League and government policy. They were given at a critical time for the L.L.L., for by the end of October, with the proclamation of the Land League and the imprisonment of the leaders and many organisers, the L.L.L. took over the role assigned at their formation, that of administering and sustaining the agitation. The practical details of the visits; the letters concerning arrangements, the telegrams covering last-minute changes of plan, the missed sea-crossings and slow trains, the fatigue of travelling, build up a picture of exhausting and demanding schedules, occurring at the time when the L.L.L. business increased dramatically. The compensations for Anna Parnell were in the warm receptions, the crowded halls, the bouquets and the appreciation of her work for the nationalist cause by the Irish communities on the mainland.

Anna Parnell arrived in Scotland on Saturday 27th August. Accompanied by John Ferguson, a Land League organiser in England, and John Redmond M.P.(1), she attended an open-air meeting of over ten thousand people at Bankton Park, Govan. Having travelled the previous night she was too tired to give more than a short address, but it was long enough for her to make a violent denunciation of Gladstone, then M.P. for East-Midlothian and, as the Nation put it "the great idol of Scotch liberals." (2)

[Report of the Govan address 27th August 1881 taken from the *Glasgow Evening Times*, Monday 29th August 1881.

Irishmen and Irishwomen of Glasgow, I would ask you to give me a chance for a few minutes. I won't trouble you long, because just now I would rather be sleeping than speaking. I had no sleep last night, and I want to take forty winks very badly now. (laughter and cheers). You have been listening to Mr. Ferguson's eloquent speech, and by-and-by you will hear Mr. Redmond. I will ask you while you are listening to their speeches to remember that in Ireland, if you were home this day, you might be having something different to do than listen to speeches.

Last Saturday I was attending a certain legal process known as eviction on a large estate in Ireland.(1) I saw harmless and inoffensive men and women struck down in their own fields by order of Mr. Gladstone's agents- (hisses)- and I want to ask you, the people of Glasgow- the electors of Glasgow- to promise me now that whenever you get a chance you will work each one of you as ten men to put out any follower of that wretched, hypocritical, bloodthirsty miscreant, William Gladstone. (cheers and hisses)- this man who is having your own countrymen and countrywomen slaughtered now at home to suit his own vanity. (hisses). If you will promise me this,

perhaps before long there will be a chance. I want you all to say that you will never vote for any supporter of Gladstone or John Bright. (cheers, and cries of "Never, never").

There was to be no retraction of this widely reported denunciation, but a repetition, which was received with loud cheering at the City Hall, Glasgow, the following Monday.

Glasgow, 29th August 1881

At the evening meeting at the City Hall, Glasgow, Anna Parnell was accompanied once more by John Redmond.(1) In a speech laced with sarcasm she made a brief reference to the Land Act and the appointment of the "landlord" commissioners, and went on to outline the disadvantages facing the tenants who applied to the land courts for a rent reduction, advising them to abstain. There followed an extended description of the Mitchelstown evictions, given as an example of what might continue to occur as the government sought to force acceptance of the Act. She dismissed the supposed legal remedies available to tenants in the event of attack or injury at the hands of the R.I.C. At a mention of Forster there was an interruption from the floor as to what might be done with him; Anna Parnell did little to counteract the violent suggestion and was to be criticised in the press reports.

[Report of the Glasgow speech taken from the *Glasgow Herald* 30th August 1881]

Miss Parnell, who was received with protracted cheering, then addressed the meeting. On Saturday at an open-air meeting, I said a few words and although few they seem to have made up in quality for what they wanted in quantity. I said that "Mr. Gladstone - (hisses) - was a hypocritical, bloodthirsty miscreant, who is having the Irish people murdered at home to gratify his own vanity." (Loud cheers) That is an assertion, and, as it is now my business to prove it, these words will be the text of my discourse. Mr. Gladstone has brought in and passed what he called, and what the English and Scotch people, and probably the Welsh also, if we knew what they were talking about, would call a beneficent healing measure for Ireland. (Laughter). I need not tell you it is nothing of the sort. (Cheers). If it were, would the landlords of the House of Commons and the House of Lords have voted for it? (Hisses for the House of Lords). There is no use hissing the House of Lords unless you hiss the House of Commons also. (Cheers). But Mr. Gladstone is ambitious above everything else to be called a reformer, and a reformer in Ireland. In order to be able to say that he has healed the ills of Ireland, it is necessary that he should be able to say that the Irish people have adopted his Land Bill. But it is necessary for the Irish people that he should not be able to say this.

The Land Bill is a long and complicated measure, but I think the kernel of it is this. There are three Commissioners who have the power of trying the rents in Ireland on the application of landlord or tenant.(2) These Commissioners are all landlords men more or less- (hear, hear)- and it is quite certain that they will only reduce rents, if they reduce them at all, to what they believe the tenant would pay if there was no Land Court at all. (Cheers). It follows, therefore, from this that the tenants must show before they can get any benefit from the Land Act that they are able to do without the Land Courts. ("Hear, hear" and cheers). Any tenant or body of tenants, who have proved beyond a yea or a nay, that they would pay no more than a fair and reasonable rent, these tenants might reasonably expect to get their rents reduced by the Land Court, and it would no doubt be a satisfaction to them to have them fixed for

a period of 15 years. But if tenants who had not already practically reduced their rents themselves went to the Court, they would look in vain for their rents being lowered. Therefore, any good that can be got from the Land Bill can only be got by people abstaining for some time from seeking to avail themselves of its provisions. If, however, those who are able to pay the costs apply to the new Court, the Land Bill will do worse than nothing for them, for Mr. Gladstone wants the Land Bill to be accepted without delay- first, to gratify his vanity, and second, because he wishes to crush the spirit that is growing in Ireland against his and his fellows infamous injustice. (Cheers). He knows that while the Irish tenants have the Land League at their backs they will not be in any hurry running to the three landlords who constitute the Land Court. He therefore must try to crush the Land League, to crush the Irish tenants, and to force them as the only resource to see what his Land Court will do for them.

I have seen with my own eyes the means he takes in Ireland to force the tenants into the arms of the Land Court. On the 8th of last month I was in Cork, and I there heard that there were to be evictions carried out on the property of Lady Kingston of Mitchelstown, and I went to see how these things were done. (Cheers). The first object that met my eyes was a very large army. There were red coats, green coats, foot soldiers, and horse soldiers. (Laughter). There were two tipsy sub-inspectors of police and one sober one in command of the green coats. (Laughter) (3). There were any number of officers in command of the red coats, and above all there was a man of the name of Richard Eaton; the resident magistrate.(4). So far as I could make out he was in command of the whole countryside- men, women, and children. I did not know at first what all the army was for, but I afterwards found out that it was to protect the Sheriff against me (Laughter)- and if that was their duty I must say they performed it well, for they did not let me within a quarter-mile of the Sheriff. (Renewed laughter).

During the next two days the police were, comparatively speaking, on their good behaviour. Tyrannical they were, but we have got in Ireland not to mind much about mere tyranny when it is not accompanied with violence. On the other hand, the people did not molest the Sheriff, or the police, or the soldiers. I was the only one against whom there was any complaint. After the first two evictions the Sheriff complained that I was obstructing him, and the army was exercised in keeping me away. (Laughter). I may say that all that I did was to advise the tenants not to pay rent. While advising a young lad to ask his mother to apply to the landlord for a reduction of rent, one of the tipsy sub-inspectors told me that if I did not hold my tongue I would be put out of the yard in which I stood. I am sorry to say that they would not allow the lad to convey my advice to his mother, and she paid her rent without any reduction. Now, you know that special powers have been given to the authorities to disperse persons who are charged with obstructing by force the Queen's writ; and this is what is meant by obstruction, advising tenants not to pay their rents, advising them to ask for a reduction. It is against violence and outrage of this sort that a kind of martial law has been established in Ireland. ("Hear, hear").

On the third day the resident magistrate thought he had had enough of that kind of thing. It was too slow for him. (Laughter). So the police were ordered to draw their batons, and the soldiers to canter along the road terrifying and scaring out of their wits unfortunate poor old men and women who were not quick enough to get out of their way. Then the bailiffs began to smash the furniture. I don't know whether you know that the orthodox way to remove a man's furniture in Ireland when he is being evicted. It is to take a crowbar and to smash the article until it is reduced to such proportions that it can be thrown out of the window, to save the trouble of carrying it downstairs. (Hisses). Of course there is an action for the value of the furniture

against the Sheriff but then the judges in Ireland are Mr. Gladstone's creatures. (Hisses). He wants the tenant farmers to accept the Land Act, and there is no better way of making the people accept anything than smashing all their goods and chattels. ("Hear, hear").

Th fourth day, these proceedings had their natural effect. The people threw stones at the policemen. They would hardly have been human if they had not been provoked to something of the kind. I was not there on the fourth day but having read in the newspapers that things were getting pretty lively I returned on the eighth day. We were stopped- that is to say, two ladies and myself- by a row of horse soldiers a quarter of a mile away from the place where the Sheriff was evicting. I suppose they stopped us to prevent us hurting the Sheriff. (Laughter). We did not care to stop there all day looking at the soldiers. They were not amusing. (Laughter). So we turned into a field, intending to get on to the highway again. But four policemen came down the field and intercepted us. They told us with their batons drawn, that we were not to attempt to cross the hedge into a field nearer the Sheriff. There was another field further from the Sheriff, but they refuse to allow us to cross into it also, and we knew better than to attempt to transgress their orders.

There was a hay field near in which a man named O'Keefe was making his hay.(5) He was one of Lady Kingston's tenants who had renegaded and paid his rent. (Hisses). He thought that by making our acquaintance he might be able to rehabilitate himself in the public esteem, for if a man pays his rent, making no resistance, he is more or less boycotted. (Laughter). He called on us to come into his field; but I knew better than accept the invitation. He then began to walk towards us. I don't suppose he wanted to fight the four policemen. I imagined that he wanted to be introduced to me. (Laughter). But the four policemen thought he was a crowd obstructing and intimidating the Sheriff, and they shouted to him, "Get out of that with you" - that was to say, out [of] his own field. Not content with that, they jumped over the hedge, rushed on him, and beat him with all their might. He stood his ground bravely, and walked slowly backwards, the three young fellows beating him with their batons; and when they had got him to the other side of the field one of these gave him a crack on the head which just missed fracturing his skull, (that was what the doctor said) and then left him. The four policemen then returned and gave us information that if we went into that field we should get the same. ("Shame"). This is an important matter to bear in mind, because when the police estimates were passing through the House of Commons, Mr. Forster- (groans, hisses and cries of "Shoot him", "Put a ball in him"). You may go on expressing your feelings for the next half-hour in that way about Mr. Forster, I should not mind. (Cheers)

Mr. Forster said if the people had any grievance against the police they have three remedies. They have a summons at the Petty Sessions, they have complaint to the superior officer, and they have civil action. But if they summons at the Petty Sessions the policemen have the power to prevent anyone from identifying them, because they are entitled to fall on anyone, and half or wholly murder them. I did my best to identify those men, but they took good care not to come near enough me, and if I ventured to cross in to the field they told me they would treat me as they treated O'Keefe. When I found out how seriously O'Keefe had been injured I tried to get an interview with the man who was in command of the police and the soldiers, but he would not let me go near the men. Had I been allowed I have not the slightest doubt I could have pointed out two of the four before they had time to shave their moustaches, to take the stuffing out of their clothes, and changing their appearance generally. But it is no part of Mr. Gladstone's scheme of government that persons who have a grievance against the police should get a chance of identifications. Next morning, with infinite trouble, I got the sub-inspector who was in

charge of the police - the sober one (laughter)- to give me an opportunity of identifying one of these four men. I failed to do so, and because I failed the sub-inspector refused to allow O'Keefe the chance. (Cries of "Shame").

Mr. Forster's second remedy was afterwards adopted, but the superior officer said, "I have no power to ask questions in the matter." That simply means that these men are turned out with their batons and their rifles with no control, and that no officer has power afterwards to inquire into their behaviour; that they can do justice as they please. (Cries of "Shame"). Mr. Forster's two remedies having failed there remains the third civil action - and we shall see whether that means anything more than the first two. One result of this little exploit, however, is that there will be one man fewer who will pay Lady Kingston's next year's rent. (Cheers). There is another peculiarity attending evictions to which I must call your attention. The police have orders to drive people from within a half a mile of the place where the eviction is taking place. Supposing then, you are seen within half a mile you must do one of two things- you must either run away or stand still. If you run away it may be that they think you have been throwing stones and they may make you a prisoner. If you do not run away they are entitled to knock you down and to fracture your skull with their batons in order to secure your person. (Great laughter). That is one way- I have seen it done. I saw a young man knocked down in order that the police might arrest him, though probably he had no idea that they had any notion of taking him into custody. If you stand still they may come up for the purpose of dispersing you, and they may disperse you into the next world. (laughter and hisses). Before I left Mitchelstown I took a statement from an old woman, who told me that her back had been broken by a policeman beating her while she stood on the road gathering twigs. (Shame).(6)

In closing, Miss Parnell said- And now I just wish to tell you to remember how all these things are done. It is to terrify the Irish people to give up the means by which they have hitherto succeeded in reducing their rents. The tenants on Lady Kingston's estate who paid their rents waited before doing so until the Sheriff came to their door, and until most of their furniture had been removed. I think it would have been better if they had gone out of their farms and left them in Lady Kingston's hands. Still, by this action on their part, where tenants who could pay refused to pay until the very last moment, tenants who could not pay were left alone. The Sheriff had enough to do with those who could pay. In this way they saved our fund for evicted tenants. Up to this moment evictions have always been of the class who could not pay. I hope the tenants on Lady Kingston's estate have inaugurated a new era. Eight of those tenants who could have paid have suffered themselves to be evicted, and I see that they intend to remain out. By giving up their houses they have set an example which I hope in six months will be universal all over Ireland. Then the people will be under no necessity of accepting the Land Bill; the landlords will be beaten with a vengeance. I would therefore ask you to see that the tenants on Lady Kingston's estate who remain out and those who follow their example incur no unnecessary loss or suffering. (Applause). In the meantime, Mr. Gladstone is trying to frighten the tenants out of the existing combination, to frighten them into accepting the Land Act. When you think of all that they have to suffer you should be tolerant of their occasional weaknesses and backsliding. It is not easy to be brave when, at the caprice of the nearest landlord, you may be treated to a month's plank bed and hard labour- it is not easy to be brave when at any moment you may have your head broken at the caprice of the nearest policeman. In spite of all this, there are brave men still in Ireland. Do you back them up, give them your money, and encourage them; don't give them up till the very last moment.

(Cries of "Never" and loud cheers, amid which Miss Parnell resumed her seat.)

Edinburgh, Wednesday 31st August 1881

Anna Parnell was not accompanied by John Redmond to the meeting held in the St. Mary Street Hall, Edinburgh, on the Wednesday evening.(1) Organised by the Land League, a crowd of between 800 and 900 were present to carry a resolution to form a L.L.L. branch in the city. In a short speech, Anna Parnell first had to distance herself from any suggestion of support for violent action and dismissed with humour the representations made in the newspapers after the Glasgow speech. She in turn cited examples of the violent policies of the English government, in particular the imprisonment of suspects and the proclaiming of whole districts under the Coercion Act. In addition, she described the arbitrary nature of the magistrates' power and spoke of the fabrication of evidence by the police.

[Report of the Edinburgh speech taken from the *Scotsman*, 1st September 1881]

Miss Parnell, proceeding with her address, the subject of which was announced as "Irish Landlordism," began by stating that she had been represented in the newspaper press, in connection with her Glasgow meeting, as having expressed approval of advice by some one in the meeting to put a bullet into Mr. Buckshot Forster. (Cheers). Now, the advice was very unnecessary, for she did not know how to shoot, and therefore she was not in a position to put a bullet into Mr. Forster, even if he were likely to give her the chance, which he was not. She did not believe the most ardent advocate of dynamite in any part of the world could see any use or advantage in shooting either Mr. Forster or Mr. Gladstone, for Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone alive were doing a service to Ireland that Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone dead could never do- (cheers) for they were teaching the Irish a lesson which they needed to learn, and that was the folly and the wickedness of trusting or believing in English statesmen, or in the English working reforms for Ireland. (Cheers). It was necessary that Ireland should know that they had no dependence or hope, excepting in themselves, that all English Governments, past, present, or future- Whig, Tory, or Radical, Catholic or Protestant- had been, were, and always would be, treacherous, cruel, and murderous. (Cheers).

The first reason, she proceeded, why she had come to Edinburgh was that Mr. Gladstone was keeping 200 men in prison without a trial, that he had entirely ruined the worldly prospects of many of them by this imprisonment, and that he had, she much feared, put a term to the lives of others.

[Here a person on the platform shouted "John Dillon," which was followed by cheers, the individual rising and shaking his fist, and gesticulating in an excited manner]. (2)

Michael Boyton's life had been rendered for ever miserable by that man Gladstone.(3) He had by his imprisonment lost one eye, and the other might follow. What Government was this that kept these men in prison? There was another reason why she was here in Edinburgh, and it was because all over Ireland there was a kind of martial law established. After describing the process of proclaiming districts under the Coercion Act, she went on to cite cases of alleged cruelties perpetrated by the Royal Irish Constabulary towards the people. She mentioned that she herself was ordered three times the other day in the Queen's name to "disperse" (laughter)- but much respect as she had for the Queen's name and for the law

generally, for the life of her she did not see how she could do that. Again, while standing outside a gate, along with some other people, looking at an impending sale or eviction, they were told by a sub-inspector that if they did not go away he would make a riddle of them. (Laughter and "shame"). If a policeman in Ireland was to have power to make a riddle of anybody, she did not see why he should not have power to make them into a double acrostic or rebus. (Laughter).(4)

A third reason why she came here was to tell them of the arbitrary power of the magistrates- the power the landlord[s] had of imprisoning those who displeased them. The barracks of the constabulary were nothing but manufactories of false evidence (shame) - and there was nothing easier than for any landlord to get a man whom he disliked and dreaded six months' imprisonment, with plank bed and hard labour. A young girl, only eighteen, was sentenced the other day to a month of this plank bed for saying a few angry words in the hearing of a bailiff. The plank bed, which had been abolished, seemed to have been revived for the special benefit of women who now offended the landlords. How, she asked, were they to save the people from despair? What the Irish people ought to do, in her opinion, was to let the Land Bill alone; to pay no rent to the landlord until the landlords saw it was to their interest to have them treated as human beings; and to avoid conflict with armed powers. (Cheers). The way to enable them to do that was to give them money and sympathy, and for that reason she appealed, in conclusion, to the ladies present to join the Land League, for she knew ladies made the best collectors of money.

Greenock, Thursday 1st September 1881

Anna Parnell's visit to Greenock on 1st September was memorable for the row with Provost Campbell. The Liberal Provost had been invited to chair the Greenock meeting, but had apparently taken fright at appearing on the same platform as a lady leaguer and had published a letter of withdrawal.(1)

Anna Parnell was particularly infuriated by his suggestion that the meeting would promote a "clamour" that would alienate the English and the Scots from the Irish. Her response was fierce and the Provost received a drubbing at Greenock and at Dundee the following Monday. She herself was to be lampooned in some verses "Miss Parnell and the Provost," published in the Greenock Telegraph Saturday, 10th September 1881.(2)

[Report of the Speech given in Greenock in *The Greenock Advertiser* Friday, 2 September 1881]

Land league meeting in Town Hall

Miss Anna Parnell addressed a meeting in the Town Hall last night, on behalf of the Ladies' National Irish Land League. Admission to the meeting was by ticket, and there was a very large attendance, the area and the gallery being crowded, and the boxes about half filled. Miss Parnell was accompanied to the platform by amongst others, Commissioner Cook, who was called to the chair, Messrs. J.Ferguson, of Glasgow; Hugh Kelly, P.J.Smith etc.

Miss Parnell was presented with a bouquet of flowers immediately she had taken her seat on the platform.

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings said [said] – I have to return you my sincere thanks for the honour you have done me on calling on myself to preside over this large and enthusiastic meeting. Your numbers here to-night show that you are fully alive to the sufferings of the Irish peasant when undergoing that perhaps the most harrowing of all ordeals, eviction. Evictions have not had their origins from to-day or yesterday, as you are aware, and often have the scenes thereof been described by eloquent pens, rousing the most callous and unfeeling to a sense of horror and indignation. Doubtless there may be present in this hall to-night some who have unfortunately experienced the rigours of that harsh and cruel proceeding[s], and it is only those who have experienced such an ordeal can have any idea of the cruelty inflicted. I do not intend to reproduce the terrible picture- I will leave that to the other speakers who will follow; but even the “Thunderer” of Printing House Square, has designated these evictions as “hideous scandals.” Miss Parnell, who has come here on her mission of mercy, has been the means, by her timely thought and interference, assisted by others of her sex, of soothing the hardship which this state of things entails, as only women can. She will relate to you to-night that plain, unvarnished truth, which will appeal to your feelings in a more forcible manner than I can lay claim to. Experience has taught me that the good work of Miss Parnell is much required, especially after such hard and trying times as the famine of two years ago, when many deaths occurred through hunger and exposure by eviction. Possibly many more deaths would have occurred but for the timely aid of Miss Parnell and her lady associates. [Applause.] The Chairman then intimated a letter of apology from Provost Campbell, who, he said, was prevented from being present through a business engagement.

The Provost’s letter was as follows: -

49 Cathcart Street
Greenock, 29th August, 1881.

Mr Commissioner Cook,

Dear Sir, - I am unable to comply with the request of the deputation to be present at the meeting of the Irish Society on Thursday evening. I need not tell you that it is from no want of sympathy with the Irish people that I thus decline, but on account of the very violent and unbecoming language indulged in by the proposed lecturer, Miss Anna Parnell, towards those great statesmen, Messrs Gladstone and Bright, who are so deservedly admired by the people of Scotland, and who have done so much for Ireland. No one can disapprove more strongly than I do of the oppressive manner in which too often the Irish peasantry have been treated in respect of their holdings; but when such an earnest effort has been made by the present Liberal Government to put matters on a better footing, surely the last thing that could be expected was that the measure should have a fair trial before being condemned and denounced. Instead of benefitting Ireland, I know of nothing more calculated to alienate the people of England and Scotland from their Irish brothers than the present inconsiderate and unseemly outburst against the Land Act and its authors before the Act has even been brought into operation. I earnestly hope my Irish fellow-townsmen will not be carried away by more clamour, but that moderate counsels may prevail at your meeting. – I am, yours truly, D.Campbell.

The Chairman then briefly introduced, Mr John Ferguson, who addressed the meeting at some length on the land question.

Miss PARNELL, who was loudly cheered on rising, said that Mr Ferguson had told them what the objects of the Land League were at considerable length. The objects of the Ladies’ Land League were, they knew, to help the Land League; and her object in coming there was to assist the ladies in town to start a branch of the Land League [sic] in Greenock. (Applause). It was the

first place in which she set foot in Scotland, so she hoped when she passed through again that there would be a flourishing branch of the League here. In order to place clearly before them what they intended to do, and what was intended that they should do, she would like to give them a short history of what had already been done in this business of the Land League. They know that the Land League was brought up in a hurry to meet a terrible national emergency, and that was the famine hanging over Ireland this time two years. The Land League set itself to work that calamity, by telling the farmers that they had the right to feed themselves out of the produce of their own labour, and the rent was only a secondary claim. [Applause.] She remembered she was in the United States at the time, and she remembered reading the remarkable speech by Davitt, in which he inaugurated a new era for Ireland. [Applause.] She did not suppose that the idea had not been in men's minds before; but it was he who first gave expression to it; and she knew she felt then that he had said a daring thing, and she should not have been in the least surprised if the Government of that day had ordered him for immediate execution, without judge or jury, for that speech. The Government did not take this course, and it let a great opportunity slip, for that might have crushed the new idea that Irish men and women had a right to live like other people- [applause] – If anyone who preached it had been immediately hung. They might come to that presently, but it would be too late for that course of repression to take effect. The idea had got a start of the English, and had been established past gainsaying. But the Land League was a little too late in proclaiming this new doctrine of averting a famine by this assistance alone, and so about January 1880 they had to call in that evil thing called charity, and between charity and people holding on to their own it came to pass that the famine was averted. She did not know how they looked upon that famine when it was going on here in Scotland, but she knew that they in America looked upon the prevention of the famine as something like a miracle. [Applause]. After it had been done they thought it was very easy, of course.

In the meantime, while this famine was going on, there was a change in the Government. The people who called themselves conservatives went out and the people who called themselves Liberals and Radicals, and many other names too fine to repeat at present, came in. ["Look sharp" and "Silence".] The new men, she might say, they knew that themselves, did just what the old men had done – they did nothing; and the Land League went on its own way gathering strength. Until the season of the famine the Land League had been confined to that part of Ireland called Connaught; but when the work of distributing Indian meal to keep the people alive was over it spread into Munster and Leinster, and there at last, what looked like an impossibility to those who had a superficial acquaintance with the Ulster Presbyterians, the Land League got into Ulster. Then the Government took fright; indeed it [new] that it could not wait any longer, but that it must do something to stop this new idea before it had possession of the whole of Ireland. The first thing they did was to arrest Michael Davitt. [Applause.] That had been generally described as a mistake on the part of the Government; but it was only a mistake, if it was a mistake, for a man to take the very best means to accomplish what he wished to accomplish.

The Government wanted to teach the Irish people that they had no business with any new ideas besides the old ideas; that they were to work and to want, and to starve, and to be kicked, and to be patient. The old idea was good enough for the men, and if they wished anything else they might look out for the consequences, for the British Lion would not stand it [Applause.] And to arrest

and silence the strongest in Ireland, the man who was able to do most work in most different ways, who was able to influence most different classes of people, was the very best way in which they could carry their object, if it was to be carried at all. Then they got up what they called public opinion; but she wanted to point out to them an inconsistency in what the English thought as regarded Ireland. Up to this time she had heard that they had always been told by Englishmen of all sorts, and of course by English newspapers, and by English thinkers, that what was the matter with them was that they always wanted laws to be made to put things right. Why did they not put them right themselves, and not depend upon the laws? Well, they did this. The Irish people stopped depending on the laws, they substituted this- an unwritten law containing a better sense of right and wrong and public duty than had hitherto prevailed in Ireland – [applause] – and then proved in this way that to a certain extent the English moralists who had told them not to rely so much upon the laws were right; for they showed that by this unwritten law the evils of Ireland could be to a very great extent be remedied, and at last be entirely demolished. But then what happened! There was never such a decree out against them before. They had substituted their law for the law of the land- they were setting themselves above the law; but that could not be tolerated.

For a public speaker in Ireland to say he did not trust in the House of Commons was high treason, and could not be allowed. That was one of the charges brought against the Land League during the Coercion debates. They were told not to trust to the House of Commons, but to trust public opinion. That showed the difficulty of pleasing the English. [Applause.] They had also been told, by the way, that if they would confine themselves to constitutional and lawful agitation then it would be all right, but that they could not be allowed to try and upset the Queen and the Queen's Government. But it now appeared that the constitutional and lawful agitation could only be tolerated when it was not successful; that if they had a chance of succeeding in the right way it was just as bad a way as any other- [applause] – for the means adopted to put down the League were just the same as those that had been adopted to put down armed rebellion. [Hear, hear and applause.] Well, they got up this public opinion, and they got it up in a wonderful way; for in a short time when any lady or gentleman resident in Ireland happened to cross the Channel, he or she was perfectly horrified when he or she took up an English newspaper to see the fearful outburst of crime that had taken place in Ireland during the twelve hours he or she had been absent. [Applause]. These crimes were of different kinds. They might be summed up as outrages and violence. Well, there was, they knew, a very extensive manufacture of outrages going on all over the country. Some enterprising gentlemen of the press drove a thriving trade on outrages on paper. If they had only been manufactured on paper, it would not have been so bad; but large temptations and large facilities were given to the manufacture of outrages, in fact, in the interest of the Government. [Applause.]

When they got a bad man, and she supposed there were bad men in Ireland and all over the world, and gave him a certain reward if he could discover a threatening letter, or if he could discover an animal mutilated, was it not reasonable to suppose he would try and earn that reward in the quickest way he could? [Applause.] Michael Davitt – [applause]- came to Ireland just as this outrage manufacture was in full blaze of prosperity. He adopted a very simple way of stopping these manufactured outrages. He directed the farming classes, the sons of the tenant farmers mostly, to organize night patrols, and these night patrols very soon put a stop to these outrages. [Applause.] But

these night patrols were only possible, they must remember, while the ordinary law was in force. [At this stage there was a slight noise in the area, and voices called out "Put him out !"] Miss Parnell immediately said not to put him out, for he {the individual making the noise} would be very much improved by the time she had finished! [Laughter and applause]. Proceeding, she said that she saw some gentlemen looking at her through opera glasses. [Laughter and applause]. That was entirely unnecessary trouble on their part, for she would be in the Council Room, and if they liked to come there and subscribe 10s to the funds of the League, they would have the opportunity of seeing her quite alone. [Renewed laughter and applause.] Those night patrols were only possible when the ordinary law existed-that was to say, when some law existed. Now that there was no law, it was impossible for those young men to adopt a course which might end in their being sent to Kilmainham or some other of Her Majesty's Houses of Detention; so that the Irish people had practically lost through Mr Gladstone's laws the power to check outrages, and he was responsible for them and not the Irish people. [Applause.]

Referring to the blue-books which had been issued regarding offences and resistance to the law, she said that if Mr Gladstone had made all those books himself he could have made his fortune as a penny-a-liner without troubling himself with politics at all. [Applause.] Miss Parnell then gave a description of scenes that had taken place in Ireland at evictions and at the serving of processes, and also related they had some personal experiences at Limerick and elsewhere, most of which had been recounted at her previous meetings in Glasgow and Edinburgh. She went on to say that they had heard it described, and it was unnecessary for her to describe it again that night, how it was that there were fifteen thousand armed men in Ireland now who were practically irresponsible, and if they managed it with any kind of adroitness, could not possibly be brought to trial for what they might choose to do, even if it be the very worse crime known to law – that of taking human life. And it was in the midst of these doings that Mr Gladstone brought in his Land Bill. Until the time this measure was in print, Mr Gladstone did not know what he intended to put before the House of Commons, and she supposed he had been waiting to see how far he could pretend to pass a remedy which should be no remedy at all. [Applause.] That the Land Bill was no remedy was, she thought, the fault of the Irish people themselves. She did not say this in a fault-finding spirit; she thought they had done as much as could be expected from human nature under the circumstances- [hear, hear, and applause.] – but she thought that there had been enough backsliding before all the different kinds of persecutions that she had described to make the Government think that it could proceed to remedy the evils of the Irish farmer, and not to do it. [Applause.]

The effect of the new bill, the Coercion Law, and the setting aside of any remnants of the ordinary law which might have existed hitherto, had so far had the effect of intimidating people here and there, because there were many who were not intimidated at all; but there were so many intimidated here and there that it gave Mr Gladstone and his friends ground for hope that he could force the Irish tenants to say "Thank you" to him for nothing. [Applause.] The question of the hour was whether this thing would come to pass; whether the Irish people would be driven out of the position which they had taken up; whether they would abandon the idea which they had taken up; whether they would abandon the idea which they had been taught by Michael Davitt- [applause]- two years ago- the idea that they had the right to live;

whether they would abandon this and say they were grateful to the worst Government that ever cursed the country. [Applause.] She did not believe that this would be the result, and all of them could help to make that result impossible. There were some things that the Irish must do, and they must do it sooner or later. They must refuse to tolerate the usage to which they were subjected, and they must refuse by saying that if the landlords find it necessary to have them treated in this way to get their rents, the landlords must be taught that they will get nothing at all if they persist on those lines. [Applause.] The Irish people must stop paying tribute to the monster landlords of Ireland; that was the only way she saw; but they must stop until the monster ceased to devour. When Mr Gladstone was willing to restore law to Ireland then let the tenant farmers begin again to pay a fair rent, while they devised means for the abolition of the landlords altogether. [Applause.]

They must also strengthen the rule of public opinion; they must make it impossible for any person to take a farm from which another had been evicted; and they must subscribe, and that was where their functions began to come in, for they must help them. [Applause.] They could not yet expect enough fortitude in Ireland, in the Irish who stood all alone against the powers that were arrayed to destroy them; they must help them to subscribe, and to subscribe such sums that no man need fear pecuniary loss to himself if he was selected for eviction- [applause]- and if he was selected for imprisonment. It was not in human nature to expect a man to throw up all he had in the world, although that might be little, to run the risk of losing it entirely, unless he could see a reasonable chance that he should be rightly compensated for this public sacrifice of his by public money. To meet these requirements they knew, their common sense told them that a fund, a diminishing fund, would not inspire confidence. The funds of the Land League must be kept always at high water. [Applause.] If that was done, then they could confidently continue to appeal to the Irish tenant farmers to have the future of the country, the future of the Irish race in their hands, and trust to the support that they would get from outside if they did their duty manfully.

She would ask them not to be discouraged if what they could do only seemed small. She knew that they were mostly working people who had not got too much to spare; but for every penny that they spent that went towards making it possible for the Irish to live at home, would be pounds upon pounds into the pockets of every working man hereafter in England, Ireland, Scotland, and America- [applause]- because it would stop this constant flow of penniless emigration, which was ruining the working classes of this island, and which was depriving the working class of even that great Republic, the United States, of many of the advantages that they otherwise have from their station. [Applause.] The knowledge that there was all the time in Glasgow, in Edinburgh, in fact, in every city in England, Scotland, and Wales, where there were Irish men and women, a body which was watching over the interests of Ireland- that knowledge was a strong tower of strength to them. Now she would ask the ladies who were there who wished to join the Ladies' Land League and start a branch in Greenock, to remain in the hall for a few minutes after the male portion of the audience left, and then their names and addresses would be taken down- [applause]- and the necessary preliminaries for forming a branch could be got through. Of course, gentlemen who were conveying the ladies would be entitled to remain also, but she hoped that privilege would not be abused. [Cheers.]

Miss Parnell resumed her seat amidst loud applause.

The CHAIRMAN called for a royal cheer for the fair speaker, which was enthusiastically given, the entire audience rising to their feet, and waving of hats and handkerchiefs being general.

This closed the public proceedings.

A number of the females composing the audience remained on the invitation of Miss Parnell, when a branch for Greenock of the Ladies' Irish Land League was formed.

The meeting was of the most orderly description throughout.

Dundee, Monday 5th September 1881

Anna Parnell gave her longest speech in Scotland at the Kinnaird Hall, Dundee on Monday 5th September. She travelled from Glasgow where she had spent the intervening days, and arrived a little late for the evening meeting. Having demolished the Provost once more she continued her attack on Whig policy in Ireland and made a forceful, if not prescient analogy with the future results of the colonisation of India. Referring to a recent local election result she urged that the Irish vote should continue to be used against the Liberal government. Giving details of another violent clash between people and soldiers in Limerick she asked that the deaths and the woundings in Ireland should be matched by the defeats of liberal candidates in elections. Again she emphasised the illegal actions of the authorities and the importance of counteracting the government propaganda at a time when evictions were increasing in Ireland.

[Report of the Dundee speech taken from the *Dundee Weekly News* 10 September 1881]

Miss Parnell was received with protracted and enthusiastic cheering. On the cheers having subsided she said- Ladies, she did not know whether it was necessary to say gentlemen, because she found that that evening they were kept in a state of proper subjection. (Laughter). The ladies were considerably in the majority that night, and were consequently the strongest. She must begin by apologising for having kept them waiting half an hour. The reason was that she thought Scotland was a little country. She thought it was the kind of country in which they could not take a long walk without stepping into the sea on the one hand or into England on the other. (Laughter). She had no idea that it took the best part of a day to get from Glasgow to Dundee, but she knew that now. (Laughter). But then she had had some Dundee marmalade and that was the cause of the delay. (Laughter). This town was the first town in Scotland which sent the League in Ireland any help, and therefore no matter what other cities in Scotland might boast of, they in Dundee would always know that they were the first to send help, because they had her word for it. (Applause) (1)

They had a proper kind of Chairman in the chair. The reason she mentioned that was that there was nearly happening a terrible catastrophe in Greenock owing to the selection of the Chairman there. The Provost of Greenock had been invited to take the chair, and but for an accident he probably would have done so. But he found out before the meeting that he and she would be better apart, and so he wrote a little letter on the subject. (Laughter). She thought she had got it in her pocket.(2) He set forth amongst other things that Messrs. Gladstone and Bright were deservedly

admired by the people of Scotland. She could not undertake to say what the people of Scotland admired or what they did not admire, but she knew that they had their own way of looking at things. She did not see why Scotch people should not honestly admire Messrs Gladstone and Bright. That was a matter of taste with which she had nothing to do. But the Provost of Greenock went on to say that they had done so much for Ireland. And now, what kind of Scotchman was he who undertook to tell them what Gladstone and Bright had done for Ireland? What did he know about Ireland? (Laughter). Had he read the Land Bill? And if he had, what more did he know about it than when he began? (Laughter). If he was the wiser for the reading, he must be a clever man. (Laughter). The Provost of Greenock went on to say that the Land Bill should not have been condemned before it was tried. If it was going to be tried on Scotchmen that would have been all very well, because they could not perhaps tell what it was before it was tried; but in Ireland they had quite enough experience to enable them to judge of the new Land Bill without at all. (Applause).

Then the Provost said that their unseemly clamour- she supposed he meant more especially hers- (laughter)- would alienate the people of England and Scotland from their Irish brethren before the Act was brought into operation. She did not know that the alienation of the English and Scotch people from the Irish could be any more greater than it was. ("Hear" and applause). When English and Scotch working people were willing, for the sake of their hatred towards Ireland, for the sake of their hatred towards the Irish religion- when they were willing to live degraded and impoverished lives themselves from one end of their existence to the other- what greater alienation could there be between the feelings of the two peoples? (Applause). If the Government of India by England were to result in a constant flood of Hindoo coolies to drive the English working men out of their own markets and cut their wages in two, to keep them always at starvation point, then she did not believe that the English working people would tolerate the government of India by the English. (Applause). And this was the result of the government of Ireland by England, and yet the English working people not only tolerate it, but a good many of them gave their lives to keep it up- ("Shame") - out of pure- she did not know what. ("Shame"). But she was talking too much of the Provost of Greenock. All she intended to point out when she began to read portions of his letter was the danger which they, in these English and Scotch cities, were always in of allowing persons like this Provost to make use of them for political ends. Of course, it was very well for people holding elected positions to try and identify themselves a little with the Irish, in order to get some Irish votes when they required them; and she did not object to them making use of such people, but it would be very dangerous for them if they ever allowed the tone of one sentence that they intended to utter to be altered or in any way modified by a desire to conciliate this class of friend or foe, whichever he may be. (Applause).

They were now approaching a general election- that was to say, a general election must come some time or another, and at this general election there can be scarcely any doubt that the word will be passed round to every place where there was an Irish voter, or a man who had a vote and who had an Irish wife, to vote against those benefactors of Ireland,- Mr.Gladstone and Mr.Bright. (Applause and "Choke him"). This would be the policy of the Land League, or, at least it ought to be; and if it was not, she would not have anything more to say for the Land League. (Applause). And these Scotch Whig politicians must be taught- and they may as well be taught beforehand- that the Irish know the difference between deeds and words- (applause)- that they know how to remember treachery and to punish it. (Applause). Indeed, they had begun to teach this lesson elsewhere, and she hoped that every chance that presented itself would be utilised in the same way. She was speaking now of the election that had just terminated in North Durham, where they put Mr.Gladstone

and Mr. Bright's henchman out. (Applause)(3). And when Mr Gladstone found his retinue diminishing by a few more in this way, perhaps then he would begin to think of the necessity of assimilating his professions and his actions as regarded Ireland. It was especially important for women when they came into any movement that had a political connection to bear this in mind, because of the danger of allowing themselves to be compromised by those Whigs who were so fond of Ireland- because under the guise of a love for charity many of these kind men, and perhaps their family belongings also would be making up to them- to use a homely phrase- for their own purposes. As long as you saw that the bargain was in favour of your side very well and good, but never let them get anything out of you. (Applause).

The Provost of Greenock was invited to take the chair, she supposed, in his capacity as a public servant to keep order. She did not imagine that the gentleman who invited him to speak mentioned that he was to instruct the audience in his own political views, but she was sure that if fortune had brought him into that chair he would not have let the opportunity slip, and judging from his letter she should imagine he was one of those men who get up to say three words, but who go on for three-quarters of an hour. (Laughter). So they should have had this Scotchman instructing that Irish audience for three-quarters of an hour as to the benefits Mr.Gladstone and Mr.Bright had conferred on Ireland. And the audience would have asked themselves, what in the world she was there for if Mr.Gladstone and Mr.Bright were such benefactors to Ireland? (Applause). The audience might have felt that they had been cheated out of their money on false pretences, for she was sure the audience did not come to hear any panegyrics on Mr.Gladstone and Mr.Bright. ("Hear" and applause).

She supposed there was not one here who wanted her to say anything in favour of either of them. (Applause). They could understand from that what the feelings of the Greenock audience would have been if they had been treated to three-quarters of an hour's dissertation on Mr.Gladstone's virtues. Then it would have been her duty to speak against the Chairman of her meeting. It would have been her duty to explain that he was all wrong from the beginning to end. (Laughter and applause). That was to say, if she had known what he was talking about. Perhaps he would have had a Scotch accent, and it was mighty difficult for a foreigner to understand the accent for the first time. (Laughter and applause). The first Scotchman she had ever heard talk she thought he was swearing at her-(roars of laughter)- but he was a clergyman, and so she thought it might be his religion. (Renewed laughter). Had the Provost of Greenock taken the chair there might have been an unseemly dispute, and they might even have come to blows over it. (Laughter). So they would all agree with her that it was very fortunate that she had expressed her opinions so very decidedly about these two great statesmen, and driven and frightened the Provost away. (Applause).

Well, she supposed they wanted to hear something of all that Mr. Gladstone had done for Ireland at the present moment. In an evening paper that day she had read an account of an affray in Limerick, and this was the report as given in their papers.(4) There was, first of all, a collision between the soldiers and the people, and the police came to protect the soldiers- (laughter) and the people stoned the police. (Laughter) Don't laugh for it was no laughing matter. The police fired on the people, and there were two men shot dead. ("Shame"). She would tell them what a collision between the soldiers and the people in Ireland meant. It meant that half-a-dozen soldiers would go into a public house and get drunk, that then they would come out and take off their belts and attack any one they see. ("Shame" and hisses). That was to say they would attack mostly women and little children. That was what the soldiers- who were swarming all over Ireland

were allowed and encouraged to do- ("Shame")- by those two great statesmen of whom they had heard. And then, when the people of the town saw women and little children running, and they heard what the matter was, they assembled and go to settle the soldiers. ("Hear" and applause).

And they would settle the soldiers, only that in then come the green coats with loaded rifles, who interfere and protect the soldiers, and the people were driven off, and the soldiers retired to their barracks. The police turned to go back to their barracks, and on the way they amused themselves by some little charges here and there, when they saw an old man going home from market, or an old woman with a sack of potatoes. Then the people would assemble again, and they would give it to the police- ("Quite right" and applause)- and then the police fire in self-defence. Then there was no more of the story, because the people could'nt [sic] fire in self-defence. They would get different versions of this shooting affair in Limerick; and of the affair that had taken place in Cork, where a police patrol shot one single man, for the fear that he would shoot them all down before they had time to shoot him. But it would be her business when she went home to find out from independent testimony the exact truth of both those affairs, and she would send herself the true account for them, so that they could compare the accounts they received from her with what they saw in their Scotch papers. (Applause).

She would now relate a case which came under her own observation in Limerick, which would be a certain guide to them in judging of this affray in Limerick, which had, she feared, resulted fatally.(5). She was going to Limerick in the same train with a posse of police.

A gentleman travelling with them overheard them saying that they would give it to something- creatures [sic] when they got there. ("Shame"). They knew that there would be a large crowd at the Limerick station to receive her. (Cheers). There was a large crowd, and there was a gentleman who had come to pilot her through that crowd, which was a rather necessary operation. The police got out of their carriage, which was nearest the engines, first, and they were just leaving the station when the crowd arrived at the door intending to leave it. They turned, and the police turned, fixed their bayonets and charged the crowd. ("Shame"). The gentleman who had come to give her his arm was knocked down, beaten with the butt-end of a rifle, and stabbed with the bayonet. (A Voice- "Down with them, forever"). The people escaped the best way they could across the carriages of the train on to another platform. In the meanwhile the townspeople had heard what was going on, and they assembled and threw some stones at the police. (A Voice- "They deserved it"). Fortunately in this case the police did not fire. At this time Mr. Gladstone was not being fought at the polls in England by Irish electors. Now, he was, however, and in return he had given, or caused to be given, the order to fire. ("Shame"). She supposed that something of this kind was the origin of the affray in Limerick, the result of which they had heard. ("Hear, hear").

On the Monday she was to return to Dublin, and she had to take the train at Limerick. The police knew this; they know everything- (Laughter, and a Voice- "They know too much"- renewed laughter)- and to every train that started from Limerick for Dublin that day a body of 200 men were marched down fully armed. She did not know what was the reason for this proceeding, but some of the men who were asked said that it was to see her off. (Laughter). The consequence was that the townspeople and the people of the surrounding district thought the police intended to have some more amusement at their expense, and she heard that they stuffed their pockets full of stones and went into the station prepared to take such action as might be expedient. (Hear, hear). She did not like the look of all this, so she asked a priest and another gentleman to go to the Police Office and try to find the reason for

all this extraordinary conduct, and the result was that the officer in command promised that if the priest and the other gentleman would guarantee that there should be no breach of the peace, the police would be kept in barracks. (Laughter). The audience knew enough by this time to be aware that when the police were kept in barracks in was very easy to guarantee there would be no breach of the peace. (Renewed laughter and applause). She did not for a moment say that the object described by the men was a real one; but they could see that these large bodies of armed men tramping about the country were calculated to alarm and irritate and excite the people, and she was sure that this was one of the things that they were intended to do. ("Hear, hear").

Two men shot in Cork and two men shot in Limerick were four of Mr. Gladstone's most recent benefits. Let them, however, be satisfied that for every one of themselves Mr. Gladstone shot there was one of his men knocked over at the polls in England. ("Hear, hear and applause"). The one man that the electors of North Durham had knocked over at the poll was not enough to make the score even. There was Malony's death to be avenged, and also Quin's death, and the death of the two men in Clochar; and although Kate Burn [sic] was still alive, she thought that for each bullet she got there ought to be a man knocked over at the polls in England- ("Hear, hear" and applause)- and that would be twelve. What they had to do, therefore, was to return twelve Tories in place of twelve Whigs- ("Hear, hear," and loud applause)- and by that time they would find that Mr. Gladstone would begin to revise his Irish policy. It was a glorious thing that when they had got this man, who had sold his soul for power, they had the power to take his power from him. ("Hear, hear," and applause). They must remember that the Irish men and women of England and Scotland had a power that their forefathers never dreamt of, and they must be sure to use it right.

She got an account the other day of another instance of the way in which justice was administered in Ireland. A man who was being beaten by a policeman called the attention of the resident magistrate to the performance, and that official said that the policeman ought not to have done it, but he did not order the policeman to be arrested, as he would have ordered any other body who had beaten the policeman. (Laughter). And then the policeman whose services were treated with so much ingratitude went away in disgust to find some one also to beat, and the man who was beaten applied for a summons against the policeman. The man knew the policeman's name, and it was a very rare thing to know the name of an assailant when he was in the Royal Irish. (Laughter) (6). The resident magistrate said to the man that he must get the policeman's Christian name, else he could not give him the summons. She was sure that if she were to go and beat a policeman they would find out her Christian name fast enough- ("Hear, hear" and applause)- but the onus of proof of investigation and identification were thrown upon the people when they had any charge against the police, and in Ireland an infringement of the law by its defenders was now coming to be looked upon in the light of a trifle.

This in itself was sufficient indication of how far they had allowed themselves to drift away from the proper attitude to the authorities. She thought that they had been much to blame, as they had not always in Ireland stood upon the strict letter of their rights. If they had done so they would not have tolerated any illegal action on the part of the powers that be, even when that action was of a nature seriously to inconvenience them. (Applause). She thought that a wholesale attack ought to be made in the courts of law against those men who were using their power so unlawfully and so cruelly. If this power were not checked in some way she was afraid that the people would retaliate, and then what stories of outrage and violence they would be having sent over to their newspapers. They might insist that some

newspaper in Scotland should give the truth as to what was going on in Ireland. She did not know whether their power extended so far as this, but if it did not then they should take special steps to inform themselves.

She hoped when she went back to Ireland to be able to take such steps that there would be a regular chronicle of all illegal and cruel actions on the part of the Magistrates and others in Ireland. ("Hear, hear," and applause). It would then be in their power to circulate the real statement of the case between Gladstone's Government and the people of Ireland if they chose. She should like that the names of men like Clifford Lloyd, Richard Eaton- (hisses) - Plunkett, Hamilton, County Inspector Smith (7), and a few more should become household words in every Irish home in England, Scotland, and America- ("Hear, hear," and applause)- and when every Irish boy and girl, in answer to the sneering question, "What have you got to complain of?" should be able in return to hand to the questioner a few slips of paper showing what the Irish had to complain of. (Applause).

She should like that the story of the girl who was shot in Mayo for running to the assistance of her grandmother, who had been clubbed till she was insensible- ("Shame") -that the story of the two men who were shot in Mayo for standing and looking at a process-server; that the story of the man Maloney, who was clubbed to death for something very much the same; that the story of the man Quin, who also met his death by the butt-end of a rifle for being too near the police; that the story of O'Keefe, who nearly got his skull fractured at the hands of a policeman because he would not go out of his own field; that the story of Mr Smith, which she had described to them that night; that the story of the old woman between seventy and eighty years of age, who told her that her back had been broken by a policeman's baton- ("Shame")- that the story of the little girl, a child of seven years of age ("Shame")- who was beaten by a policeman who came to evict her father; and that the story of the servant woman in the house, who went to protect the little girl and was beaten also, should all be circulated in England, while Mr Gladstone's "snowflakes" were being circulated in Ireland just now. (8).

[Loud and prolonged cheering, the audience rising to their feet and waving their hats and handkerchiefs]

This was the last speech Anna Parnell made in Scotland. On her return to Ireland she attended the Land League convention held at the Rotunda, Dublin, from the 15th to 17th September, when the Land League response to the Land Act was formerly debated, and the policy of testing the Act through the Land Courts agreed upon. For the next few weeks she concentrated on L.L.L. business, and at a weekly meeting held on the 21st September, for example, was able to report that the situation had improved in Mitchelstown:

"a great and very satisfactory improvement had taken place in the conduct of the resident magistrate and the police there." (9)

This, presumably, as a result of the publicity given to the events in August. (10)

Leeds, Monday 10th October 1881

Anna Parnell returned to the mainland the next month to speak in Leeds at a Land League demonstration on the Monday following a visit by Gladstone to the city. Gladstone had given two speeches in Leeds, his son Herbert's constituency, and the second speech, at a banquet at the Cloth Hall on Saturday 8th, showed his determination to force the working of the Land Act in Ireland. It included the uncompromising statement that:

"if the law purged from defect and from any taint of injustice is still to be repelled and refused, and the first condition of political society to remain unfulfilled, then, I say, gentlemen, without hesitation that the resources of civilisation are not yet exhausted..." (1)

Anna Parnell was to make immediate use of these ominous words at the meeting in the Albert Hall, Leeds, the following Monday. She was to have been accompanied by Dr. Commins M.P.(2) and Justin McCarthy M.P.(3), but neither could attend. A letter was read out from C.S. Parnell regretting his inability to take McCarthy's place, thus dashing the prospect of brother and sister sharing the same platform. In her response to Gladstone's "Irish affairs" speech she first denied his claim for the prosperity of many of the tenants, and refuted his other claims for the Land Act. But her main concern was with the threat of action by the government if the Act was ignored. Renaming his "resources of civilisation" she equated them with a policy of massacre and referred her audience to past examples of brutal British suppression, making her own anti-imperialism clearly evident. She closed her speech by asking for contributions to help meet the increasing costs of the agitation.

[Report of the Leeds speech taken from the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* Tuesday 11 October 1881]

Miss Parnell, who was received with a warm ovation, commenced a long address by commenting upon Mr Gladstone's recent observations with reference to Ireland. She said the Premier had told the people of Leeds a great deal about himself, and had dwelt upon the measures passed for the benefit of Ireland. Mr Gladstone had, however, left many gaps in the story of what had been done for Ireland, and she would try and fill in what he had left unsaid. The Premier had tried to prove the prosperity of Ireland by saying that there were thirty millions of deposits in the savings banks of that country. Mr Gladstone was not an ignorant man, but, thinking that the people of Leeds were ignorant, he took for granted that anything he told them would be accepted as being correct. Mr Gladstone knew as well as anyone present that an Irish farmer who wished to borrow £50 or £100 had to deposit about £10 in the bank, and that those deposits served to indicate poverty rather than wealth. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the indebtedness of the Irish farmer was frightful to think upon. If factories could be built in the air, then Ireland would prosper; but if they could so be built Mr Gladstone and the English Parliament would divide the air between themselves and their creatures, just as the land had been divided between Mr Gladstone and his followers.

The Premier had said that those who were advising the Irish tenant farmers not to try the Land Bill at all- of whom she was one - wanted independence for Ireland, and so far he was right. (Applause). If Mr Gladstone's Land Bill could keep the wealth of

Ireland in Ireland and cover the land with material prosperity, he would find that the Irish farmers would fly to his courts, and on the basis of the wealth and prosperity which would follow they would establish a free country. (Applause). If they had wealth to spend in their own country and security as far as material wants went, they would be too strong for Gladstone. (Applause). The Land Act, however, did not give any of that wealth and prosperity which Mr Gladstone predicted. The utmost that it could be expected of it was that it might give security and increased prosperity to a very small fraction of Irish tenant-farmers, and it was averred by some that the small party who would be benefited would be thus detached from the general movement without which peace, prosperity, and security would never be given to Ireland. She was not sure of that, because she did not think that the Land Act would do enough for anyone to make them in love with it, except the commissioners and the lawyers. (Laughter and applause).

The third point of Mr Gladstone's to which she would refer was his threat that if the Irish farmers did not rush to his land courts to get their rents fixed, he would proclaim martial law, something analogous to it, and have them all massacred, for that was what the Premier's "forces of civilisation" meant. (4)

(A Voice : "We might massacre him yet; he is not forced to live over long, the ---- old toad.")

When the Land Act was passed it was permissive. No clause was introduced providing that the farmer who did not go into court to get his rent fixed should be hung. No; I thought anyone who passed hostile criticism on the measure should be shot. Mr Gladstone was, however, now attempting to substitute the word "must" for "may", and unfortunately he had bayonets, bullets, and buckshots at his back to enforce the reading of the law. ("Shame"). The policy of massacre would be resorted to for the purpose of quelling any rising spirit of independence, or of self-reliance or desire for organisation, which was so powerful a weapon, even in the hands of the weakest. The system of massacre had often been called in to quell that kind of thing in Ireland, and unfortunately it had always succeeded for the time being. Possibly it might be resorted to again. There was very little concealment about Mr Gladstone's intentions, and they knew him well enough to know that there was no infamy he would stop at (Applause).

The first time Mr Gladstone had come under her observation was in 1865, and from that time to the present she had entertained a very bad opinion of him.(5) So far as Mr Gladstone was concerned, Ireland might prepare for the worst. Were they, however, going to let themselves be turned back by Mr Gladstone's brutal threat? (Cries of "No," "no"). The subject was a delicate one, but she would for all that say that if Mr Gladstone attempted to bring back '98 in Ireland (6); if he attempted to re[sic] enact in Ireland the horrors of the suppression of the Indian Mutiny (7) or the recent atrocities in Jamaica (8), in order to suppress what he called "the doctrine of sheer lawlessness," for her part she believed she would send to Ireland every penny she had to bring about such a state of things that it would be the last time that the policy of massacre would be tried. (Applause). There were English people all over the world, and they might be made to feel that it was not safe to sit with folded hands and to allow all that hellish tyranny could suggest to be done near home. (Applause). The power which the Irish people had in their own hands was, after all, a real one. She would be very sorry to see them called on to exercise that power, because it meant reprisals which were very terrible, but which had sometimes to be resorted to in order to avoid a worse state of things. She was not sure that it would be the Irish who would make the English feel the inconvenience of their policy for Ireland. (Applause).

Miss Parnell then proceeded to describe some of the results brought about by the working of the "forces of civilisation" already at work in Ireland, and amongst the most powerful of which, she remarked, were "the peelers. (9) After touching upon the general condition of Ireland, she said the Irish could not face their difficulties without courage. She hoped the Irish in England, as well as in Ireland, would have the necessary courage. The tenant-farmers of Ireland would not "rush into" Mr Gladstone's Land Act, no matter what he threatened. If the farmers did accept the bill it would be of no use trying to help them; but if they refused to do so, all Irishmen must share their dangers and help them. (Applause). In order to meet Mr Gladstone's "forces of civilisation" they required not only courage but also money.

The means which she asked them to contribute were needed for the good people in hospitals who had fallen victim to the forces of civilisation. Hospital expenses were no inconsiderable item in the Land League charges. They also required money for printing expenses, in order to spread a knowledge of Mr Gladstone's doings all over the world (applause)- and wherewith to pay people of education to go amongst the helpless classes of the Irish peasantry to encourage them and tell them of their opportunities. (Applause). They also required money to support the families of those who were imprisoned either for nothing or because they told the truth. (Voices: "Shame"). When Mr Gladstone took the next step of abolishing trial by jury the number of prisoners would be largely increased, and the League was also called upon to support the families of those who had been driven from their homes under Mr Gladstone's reign of security and prosperity. It had been stated that the number of evictions under the new Land Act during the first year of its operation would be very much in excess of those which had taken place during the year just closing. In conclusion, Miss Parnell asked all present to join the Land League, and to do their part in the efforts which must be made to drive back Mr Gladstone's "forces of civilisation"-an effort in which she believed they would be successful. (Applause).

[The address by Anna Parnell ended and other speakers followed]

The proclamation of the Land League in October 1881

Events during the days following the Leeds speech changed the course of the agitation dramatically. The arrest of C.S.Parnell on Thursday 13th October, following his speech at Wexford and its specific charge to Gladstone of lack of moral force in his Irish policies, was soon followed by the arrests of the Land League leaders in Dublin.(1) The arrests came at the time that the movement was threatened by an anticipated rush of tenants to the Land Court.(2) The leaders responded to the government action by issuing the *No-Rent Manifesto* from Kilmainham gaol, a move that was inevitable but too late, and with hindsight a policy impossible for the L.L.L. to implement in terms of the support needed for the increased number of evicted tenants and the increased legal costs. The Government replied in turn and on 20th October Forster issued a Proclamation from Dublin Castle declaring the Land League an unlawful and criminal association. The Land League officers who remained free asked the people to offer passive resistance but to abandon public meetings so as not to provoke the authorities.(3)

The Ladies Land League was not named in the Proclamation, either by an oversight or under-valuation by Forster, and against a background of increasing frustration and violent reaction to the imprisonment of the leaders, the women took over the full administration of the movement. A manifesto was issued by the L.L.L. from London (4), and in Ireland continued to distribute relief via the branches, raise funds, publish *United Ireland*, and continue the propaganda against the government. In all £70,000 was used by the L.L.L. between October 1881 and May 1882 to sustain the

agitation.(5.) In order to cope with the increased number of prisoners detained under the P.P.P. Act, an auxiliary body, the Political Prisoners' Aid Society was launched in Dublin on the 2nd November with Helen Taylor as president.(6) It was to be based in London and the move was an insurance measure to protect funds if the government decided to move against the L.L.L. in Ireland. It was at a meeting in mid-November in England in aid of this society that Anna Parnell gave a speech for the first time since the proclamation of the Land League in Ireland.

Blackburn, Friday, 11th November 1881

The meeting in Blackburn was the first of four meetings in the North of England. Seven to eight-hundred people attended the meeting to raise funds for the newly formed P.P.A.S. Anna Parnell arrived an hour late and was hooted and jeered at by a hostile crowd before entering the hall, but once inside she was given a warm welcome. In a short speech she spoke disparagingly of the local liberal M.P., - Briggs (1), who had voted with the government on Coercion. Referring to Gladstone's "resources of civilisation" she related them to the recent tragic events at Belmullet, Co.Mayo.(2) The Land Court, clogged by the rush of tenants was attacked for its inefficiency.

[Report of the Blackburn speech taken from the *Blackburn Times* Saturday 12 November 1881]

Miss Parnell, a tall young lady of prepossessing appearance, who appeared attired in black, and who spoke slowly and quietly, as if she was husbanding her voice, was warmly welcomed on rising to support the resolutions. She referred to Mr Briggs as resembling the fat boy in *Pickwick*, and said if he did not mind he would find, at the next election, that like the fat boy, he had been asleep.(3) (Laughter).

The Government, she declared, hardly dared allow criticism of their doings in Ireland. She thought from Mr Gladstone's declaration at Leeds that "the resources of civilisation" were about to be put in operation, foreshadowed a policy of massacre, for massacre and English civilisation ran in pairs- (cheers)- and she was not mistaken. She declared that Irish landlords broke the law which provided that for holdings of which the valuation was under £4, the landlords should pay all the poor rates, while in other cases the rates should be divided between landlords and tenants, by compelling the tenants, whatever the valuation, to pay the rates. Notwithstanding the illegality of the demand, many of the poorest people were summoned for non-payment.

She afterwards read an account of a fatal affray in county Mayo, and said that prisoners when arrested were often cruelly treated by the police officers, who struck them with their rifles. She stated that one young man was arrested while giving a cup of water to his dying mother, and an officer threw the water on the ground- ("Shame")- while afterwards her sons were not allowed but on bail to visit her.(4). That, she said, was an example of Mr.Gladstone's civilisation. (Applause). None of the sixty policeman present on the occasion were hurt, and therefore they could not urge that they were in danger of their lives in justification of their conduct in pursuing the crowd and wounding them with bayonets. There was nothing that Mr Gladstone could do in Ireland, however outrageous, however contrary to right and justice, that he would not be applauded for in England.

The Land Court had already hopelessly broken down, either from excess of work or from inability to cope with its work.(5). (Applause). The block in the Land Court had been caused by the tenants staying away from it, and not by their going into it. (Applause). Only 17,000 of the 600,000 tenant farmers of Ireland had applied to the Court. At present the Court was bound to do something to tempt tenants to try it, and so it came to pass that, although the reductions that had been made had been very trifling and inadequate, looking at them from the point of view of justice, the landlords were raising a tremendous cry, and The Times was declaring that they must be compensated for the reductions.(6). The result of the two powers of tenants and landlords pulling at the Land Court was that the Court was led to try and do its work so as not entirely to disgust either party. It could not fix the rents so low as to oblige the landlords to settle all with their tenants out of court, because if they did Mr Gladstone would put all the Commissioners in prison. (A laugh). On the other hand it could not yet fix the rent so high as to deter the tenants from applying. The consequence was that only 17,000 tenants were applying, and at the present rate of progress the remainder of the century would be required to fix the rent of those applicants. (Applause) It must have been evident from the very beginning that if the Land Court really tried to do the work it would affect only a very few of the tenants that it was supposed it would benefit. But the Land Court was really trying as far as it could to fix the rent so as to tempt the tenants without injuring the landlords, and that was a very difficult task to perform.

The operations of the Ladies' Land League, which commenced in April, were confined to those districts where they had branches, and between April and the suppression of the Land League, they had been called on to relieve, and, in most cases, to support entirely, something like 400 families, who had been evicted; but the Ladies' League only covered one quarter of Ireland, for there were only in that League about one-quarter or one-third of the number of the branches that the Land League had. The gaols were now full, and many of the magistrates used the power entrusted to them unsparingly, so that what would have been the result of those wholesale imprisonments if there had not been a body with money at its back to go to the assistance of the families of those imprisoned was frightful to contemplate. Money was greatly wanted, and they were obliged to look for help to the Irish in England, America- (loud cheers), -South Africa, New Zealand, and all over the world, and she was sure that they would not look in vain. -(loud cheers)- the resolution was carried unanimously.

Liverpool, Sunday 13 November 1881

Anna Parnell returned to Liverpool the following Sunday, the 13th November, to address a large meeting organised by the local L.L.L. She opened by commenting on all that had occurred since her last visit in March. Speaking on what was in a sense Gladstone's home ground, she congratulated the people of Liverpool for their rejection of Liberal town councillors at a recent poll. Continuing with the catalogue of government outrages she referred to the importance of sending observers to judicial enquiries. She made an emphatic endorsement of the *No-Rent Manifesto* in the light of the government's actions and mentioned that there was the beginning of an attempt to curb L.L.L. activities.

[Report of the speech given in Liverpool in November taken from *Liverpool Daily Post* 14 November 1881]

Miss Parnell, who was received with enthusiastic cheering, said:

It is, I think, some nine months since I was in Liverpool before.

I remember saying when I was here then in this hall that many things would happen before next winter. Well, you see that many things have happened, therefore I can claim to be some sort of prophet, and I hope that you will put some faith in the prophecies that I make tonight in consideration of the accuracy of the prophecies that I made when I was here before. To a certain extent there is a great resemblance in the state of affairs now to the state of affairs then. I remember then that we were all being told that the Land League had been put down. We were also being assured that the tenants of Ireland were hastening to pay their rents, and, although there might be a few who hung back still, that on the whole there was a great and increasing disposition to pay their just debts. Well, the very same thing I find by reading the English papers is being told us to-day from the mouths of those people—the English editors and newspaper-liners. (hisses). They all neglected to explain how it comes to pass that if the Land League was put down nine months ago and all the tenants ran and paid their rents, why it should be necessary now to proclaim the Land League illegal, and why tenants are only just beginning to pay their rents now, seeing that we were assured they all went and did it nine months ago. There may be some explanation to this. Perhaps the explanation is that nine months ago the newspaper men were mistaken. If that is so, perhaps they may be mistaken again. (Laughter and applause).

One thing I find has happened since I was here nine months ago, which I never expected to find happen at all—either now, or in nine years, or in 100 years. I find that Mr. Gladstone (hisses) has become the leader of the Irish people, (laughter, and a Voice: "Never"), at least he says so himself, and I suppose he knows all about it. Certainly Mr. Gladstone requires all the support he can get in Ireland, for it seems to me he is not likely to get very much in Liverpool to-day. (hear, hear and applause). Instead of Mr. Gladstone advancing with rapid steps to the leadership of the Irish people, his followers are being turned out of Liverpool Town Council(1). That episode had brought a ray of comfort into their hearts in Ireland, and I can promise you that if you will again put Mr. Gladstone out of Liverpool, we will do our best to rout him out of his Irish leadership in Ireland. (prolonged cheering).

Before speaking of things which lie near at hand, I will give a brief description of what has happened in Ireland since I was here last. Unfortunately the landmarks of Irish history during that time have been landmarks of blood. You will all remember the first death that occurred on the occasion of collecting rents, and which followed closely upon Mr. Gladstone's announcement in the House of Commons that he intended to enforce the law.(2). You know that after Mr. Gladstone announced in the House of Commons that he intended to enforce the law in Ireland, although he had previously confessed that the law was unjust and murderous, the landlords proceeded to try and recover their rents and to plunge the country into starvation, but fortunately that attempt has not succeeded. Let us hope that the attempts springing out of the present condition of affairs will not succeed either. The first result of these attempts was the death of a man named Quinn, near Claremorris, the birthplace of the Land League (applause). (3). Then, as now, the constabulary (hisses), engaged in protecting process-servers, had primed themselves with drink the better to perform their arduous duties (laughter), and the man was clubbed to death by the butt-end of a rifle. (cries of "Shame"). The witness who saw the deed, and who gave evidence about it at the inquest— a man named Thomas Quinn, brother of the young man who has just been arrested in Dublin, Joseph Quinn, said that this man was not engaged in any act of resistance or violence, but that he was simply a spectator, and that he was knocked down by a rifle, and while he was attempting to rise he was killed by repeated blows on the head. (cries of "Shame"). A verdict of "wilful murder" was

returned by the coroner's jury against the policeman who had been identified as the principal perpetrator of this outrage. Mark what follows.

One of the first men arrested under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, which was intended to be used only against the "dissolute ruffians and village tyrants" was Thomas Quinn, the witness against the police at the inquest. The grand jury at Mayo threw out the bill of murder against the policeman, and so the curtain falls upon the first act of the Irish tragedy. The little landmark of blood that we have is also in Mayo, for two men were shot there. In return the Police-sergeant Armstrong was killed ("hear, hear", and hisses); so that in this instance the story was a little varied, for the war was not entirely upon one side ("hear,hear"). In this case also the coroner's jury returned a verdict of "wilful murder" against the process-server and against two police constables, and in this case also the grand jury, which as you know, in Ireland, are composed of landlords, threw out the bill. I do not know whether the witnesses in this case against the police were also in prison, as I think that it is highly probable that that has been the case generally adopted with witnesses against officers of the Crown. This is one of the ways in which Mr.Gladstone has made himself an Irishman (hisses). Now we come to the shooting of Kate Bury [sic], a young girl of seventeen, also in Mayo.(4) A small crowd of people had gathered...

[Here there was an interruption caused by a number of persons trying to obtain admittance to the hall].

There were, however, a few stragglers women and children, who thought in their innocence that their youth or their sex would save them from attack.

After detailing at length other events which had occurred in Ireland lately, Miss Parnell went on to say that she was glad that Miss Helen Taylor had gone to Belmullet to watch the proceedings at the inquest now being held, as it was very unlikely that Mr.Gladstone would have the witnesses arrested who gave evidence against the police.(5). Referring to the payment of rent, she said that any Irish father, mother, or brother who paid any rent to their landlord, who could with impunity to himself have any old man or woman or young girl slaughtered, would deserve to meet the same fate as had befallen Ellen M'Donough (6) and to her (Miss Parnell's) mind the person who paid rent to those landlords who were adopting the present method of obtaining their rents were subsidising murder. (applause). In Ireland the Ladies' Land League was forbidden to hold their meetings; but when she said that she must also say that it did not apply to the Central League. Mr.Gladstone's courage did not go so far as the organisation in Dublin over which she had the honour to preside. He had begun in a tentative way his war against the ladies, to see how far it might be safe to push matters, and had issued instructions to the sub-constables to prevent the meetings of ladies and children in the village. [sic].

Bradford speech, Monday 14th November 1881

On the following Monday evening Anna Parnell was in Bradford to address a Ladies' Land League meeting at the Mechanics' Institute, and she must have relished the opportunity of speaking in Forster's constituency. She attacked once more the Government's use of force to secure its policies, and she continued the propaganda against the Land Courts and for the *No-Rent Manifesto*.

[Report of the Bradford speech taken from the *Bradford Chronicle and Mail* Tuesday, 15 November 1881]

Miss Parnell then addressed the meeting at some length, strongly condemning the conduct of the English Government. The Land League had been prosecuted, and efforts made to put it down, but the leaders had treated these efforts with contempt. She stated that at coroners' inquests juries had returned verdicts of "murder" against those who had caused the death of those who had been destroyed through the interference [sic] of landlords and the constabulary. The witnesses in some of these cases had been sent to Kilmainham Gaol. The deaths at Belmullet were described as an illustration of the cruel and unjustifiable conduct of the Government authorities in Ireland.(1). The landlords in Ireland were the most inveterate law-breakers in Ireland, and had shown this tendency especially in forcing the tenants to pay the poor rates which the landlord ought to pay; but the Land League put an end to this law-breaking until it was proclaimed, when the landlords returned to their old illegal practice in reference to the payment of poor rates. This was going on when the deaths of Mrs. Dean and Mrs. Macdunna occurred. (2).

She contended from other "illustrations" that there was one law for one man and another law for another man in Ireland. All law was openly set at defiance when it was for the interests of the landlords to do so. The constabulary were allowed to get drunk when Mr. Gladstone was wishful to carry out the objects of the Government. Miss Parnell gave some "illustrations" of alleged cruelty on the part of the representatives of the authorities in the county of Mayo in order unjustly to drive people into the land courts. Evictions were made more disagreeable to the evicted than they need be. The tenants had been told by the Land League to pay no rent. The Land League told the tenants they would support them, so that they need not pay their rents. The landlords had done all they could to make evictions terrible by their violence. Mr. Gladstone had the audacity to say that the tenants were going to the land courts; but despite of all the efforts to force them, those who refused to go to the land courts were larger in number than those who went there.

Batley, Wednesday 16th November 1881

The last meeting of this short tour was organised by the Dewsbury and Batley Land League and held in the Town Hall, Batley. Anna Parnell arrived on the Tuesday evening and stayed with a family called the Osbornes at Crowbank. At the evening meeting on the Wednesday Anna Parnell gave a speech notable for its lengthy and detailed exposition of the consequences of the Land Act. Taking the tenants of a specimen landlord, a relatively "good" landlord, she demonstrated her formidable understanding of the complexities of the Land Act and its failures. Responding to assertions of her recklessness she justified once more the implementation of the No-Rent policy.

[Report of the Batley speech taken from the *Batley Reporter* 19th November 1881]

Miss Parnell, on rising was received with loud and prolonged cheering. She said that instead of doing as she usually did, leaving the Land Act until the last part of her discourse, she would begin with it, because as a rule she found when she had been talking on more interesting subjects for an hour and a quarter there was still the Land Act. Yet it required something to be said about it. First of all she would read an extract of a letter written last March- nearly a year ago.(1) It was speaking of the different landlords and their tenants in the county of Mayo, she said Lord Dillon was one of them.(2) Lord Dillon had an income of £36,000 a year from his estate there, and yet he had never been known to visit it. ("Hear, hear"). The people thereabouts

were in the habit of paying their rents principally by the money they earned in England, and transmitted by post-office orders to their friends at home. In Belmullet alone the orders amounted in 1877 to £30,000, that was within £6,000 of the rents, in 1879 to £24,000, and in 1880 £12,000. She had ascertained that the number of men coming to England in this year had not decreased.

Where she asked was Lord Dillon's rent to come from? They would observe that the incomes of those persons, out of which they expected to pay their rent, had diminished 62 1/2 per cent. last March. Some portions of their income would come of course from the estate itself; but they might take it for granted for what they knew of agriculture, or pastures in Ireland, that the income they might receive from the holdings themselves must have at least diminished in the same proportion. She would now consider the position of those men under the Land Act of 1881. Just look at the rents that they were able to pay from one source and another put together. It had been the case for a long time that very many of the tenant farmers of Ireland, most of them, had been made to pay their rents from money earned in England. The first man who applied to the Land Court and had his rent fixed got his rent principally in that way, and, as they knew, his rent was reduced something like 35 per cent., although he swore he could not live off his holding and pay any rent.

Again referring to the tenants of Lord Dillon, she said she wanted them to observe that he was not a bad landlord, as landlords go, she had heard him described by the friends of the tenants as well as the landlords, as a good landlord, and, therefore she could not be accused of taking an extreme case for the purpose of her argument. These tenants had their income reduced in 1879, twenty-five per cent., and in 1880, sixty-two and a-half per cent. Now the largest reductions the Land Court had ever given, had been 50 per cent., and that had not been in a number of cases, it had been, she thought, in only one case; but, at any rate, it had only been in a very few cases that the rent had been reduced so much as 50 per cent. The average reductions at first were 33 per cent. The tenants, unfortunately for themselves were tempted by that 33 per cent. and applied to the Court. But the more the tenants applied, the more the rate of reduction fell; now she believed they averaged 23 per cent.

Let them imagine that the Land Court, supposing Lord Dillon's tenants all applied, and they reduced all the rents 50 per cent., although such a thing would be entirely out of the question, they knew enough of the Land Court to know it would do nothing of the kind, because the reduction of 33 per cent. had raised a howl of indignation from the landlords, in the English papers, and from the landlords in Ireland. The landlords were the only people who were at liberty to howl in Ireland- ("hear, hear")- and the tenants could not howl, unless it was to the honour and glory of Mr. Gladstone, which they did not choose to do, and therefore had to hold their tongues. (Applause). If Lord Dillon's income were reduced from £36,000 to £17,500 a year, what in the world would be said in England? She thought that the whole of the Commissioners would be sent to Kilmainham. (Laughter and applause). But let them imagine that it was done, that the very outside of what was possible was done for Lord Dillon's tenants. All tenants paying rent of £100 per annum had their incomes reduced, in 1879, twenty-five per cent., and in 1880 sixty-two and a half per cent.

In order to get the benefit of the Land Court they must pay the rents which were due by them last March at least. But how could they pay that two years' rent seeing that one year they had worked at a loss of £62 in the £100, and in the other at a loss of £25 in the £100. They must borrow £87.10s. to pay up to the date of fixing the new rent, and they must pay at least ten per cent. interest every year for this. Thus they

had to pay, in order to get their rent fixed at £50 instead of £100, they must pay interest amounting to £8.15s. every year out of their holdings. Instead of paying £50 they would have to pay £58.16s. They must borrow, also, the deficit left by the difference between the reduction of their incomes, and the reduction in their rents, £12.10s., and for this they must pay £1.5s. interest, supposing they were not able to pay the interest on the money they borrowed out of their holdings, that would increase what they had to pay to £60.1s. the first year, and every year there would be an increase of £1.5s. interest for the £12.10s. borrowed to pay the excess of rent, so that in five years the rent would be increased to £65. 1s. 0d., in ten years to £71.6s.0d., and in fifteen years to £77.11s. 0d. which their holdings would have to produce before they could devote any part of their profits to their maintenance or the improvement of the land. Thus in 15 years the reduction would have come to amount to 22 1/3 per cent. instead of 50 per cent., and the landlord would be receiving £187.10s more than they could afford to pay. They would be in debt that amount as well for the £87.10s. borrowed in the first instance, in all £275.

In applying for another fixture of rent they would have no more reason to expect a reduction in consideration of this debt than in the first instance in consideration of the debt of £87.10s. This was the best that could happen to them, but, then it might be impossible for them to pay even the interest of the money necessary for them to borrow. In that case the only resource left to them would be to sell the interest of their holdings. The interest would not be very much on account of the high rent, but it would probably be sufficient to pay the debt of the tenant to the landlord and the moneylender, and the new tenant would start, in case he had that amount of ready money, unencumbered by debt, and be able to pay for a time until he got involved, and at last applied to sell his interest like the last tenant, for payment of his debts, although nothing would be left for himself. The Act was only retrospective and never made any allowance for what the tenant had been paying in excess of the rent for ten, fifteen or twenty years. This was the best then that Lord Dillon [s tenants] could expect from the working of the Land Act.

Miss Parnell then proceeded to show what would be the effect of the Land Act in the case of the reductions of less amount; and went on to observe that the Land Act, first Land Act of Mr. Gladstone, had resulted in ten years of famine, and predicted that the present Act must break up sooner or later in another famine. What, she asked, would the leaders of the Irish people deserve, if with these facts of arithmetic staring them in the face, they recommended the tenants of Ireland to accept the Land Act? What would they deserve if they ceased to warn the tenants of Ireland against this Land Act? If that Land Act culminated in ten years in another famine, no help such as came from beyond the water two years ago would be forthcoming again. In what she had said she had not spoken at all of the lawyers, and yet something would have to be paid to them before they could avail themselves of the provisions of the Act. She was afraid the poor tenants would be like the man who was induced to travel in a sedan chair out of which the seat had been taken, and who said but for the glory of that thing he would very much have preferred walking, and so with the tenants, but for the glory it would be very like the old unfair rents. (Laughter and cheers). Perhaps they would be ready to agree with her that this vaunted remedy of going to the Land Court was not much of a remedy after all.

After referring to the harsh treatment received by those who rendered help to evicted tenants, she said she had been accused of making reckless assertions, and observed that sometimes one might use reckless assertions, but they were true for all that. The only thing now for the Government to do was to have the houses which they were building for those tenants burned, and then the "resources of civilisation" would be exhausted in that direction. (3). (Applause). But they did not intend to be

disabled. It was to the credit of the Irish people all over the world that in the face of all the obstruction, in the face of this reckless attempt to hoodwink and force the Irish people into the Land Court at the point of the bayonet, or force them into a private settlement to the advantage of the landlords, that so many were bound who would join hands now, go to the landlords and say they will pay nothing until the suspects are released. (Loud applause). With reference to the morality of the "no rent" policy, she contended at some length that this course was justified by circumstances, and in conclusion she read two letters, which she had read to the local branch of the Land League on the previous evening, and had been asked to read again. One of them she characterised as a good illustration of "the resources of civilisation," and the other as showing the spirit of devotion to the cause on the part of the ladies connected with the Ladies' Land League.(4).

[The meeting was brought to a close at half-past eleven, by a vote of thanks to the chairman]

On her return to Dublin Anna Parnell published a letter correcting a statement made by C.S.Parnell from Kilmainham on the administration of relief.(5) He had stated that the relief fund would be withdrawn from tenants on an estate where other tenants had resorted to the Land Courts. To redress this apparent injustice Anna Parnell affirmed that all deserving cases would continue to be supported. The letter publicised once more the problem of how to prevent relief money being used pay rent and the distinction was made between the refusal to pay rent and the failure to do so.

During December the authorities started to move against the women's organization now that it was shown to be prolonging the agitation. A first move was the arrest on the 8th December of Hannah Reynolds, a L.L.L. executive member, for incitement of the non-payment of rent during the evictions on the Earl of Bantry's estate at Castletownbere, Co.Cork.(1) Events at these evictions were brought into further prominence by the presence there of Herbert Gladstone, M.P.(2) On the 16th December, the Inspector-General of the R.I.C, Hillier, issued from Dublin, a circular declaring that the proclamation of the Land League had included the "female" organization. This confirmed that the government was taking the L.L.L.seriously and the executive of the L.L.L. expected action to be taken against them immediately. In a published letter dated 20th December instructions were given that in the event of the mass arrest of the executive and the organizers, all correspondence relating to evictions and imprisonments was to be directed to Helen Taylor in London.(3)

Despite the sense of impending crisis Anna Parnell travelled to the north of England to attend meetings at Huddersfield and Jarrow on the 21st and 22nd December respectively, and to a meeting at Liverpool on the 30th December 1881. Originally, she had intended to speak at Jarrow on Tuesday 20th December, but because of the need to make emergency arrangements in Dublin, she was unable to travel on the Monday, (she was to refer to these difficulties in her speech at Jarrow).

Huddersfield, Wednesday 21st December 1881

At Huddersfield on Wednesday 21st December at a meeting in the Gymnasium Hall, she gave a long speech. She spoke of the determination of the L.L.L. to sustain the agitation in spite of government threats. Her attack on the Land Courts was continued, and referring to the speech Herbert Gladstone made on his return from

Ireland, she attacked him for his support of the constabulary at the Castletownbere evictions and for his support of the dubious activities of the men of the Emergency Committee. He was criticised also for his return to England in cognito so as to avoid a summons to appear as a defence witness for the arrested lady leaguer, Hannah Reynolds. Anna Parnell ended by reporting on the opposition to royal patronage of the proposed Irish Trades Exhibition in the summer of 1882.

[Report of the Huddersfield speech taken from the Huddersfield Daily Examiner Friday, 23rd December 1881]

Miss Parnell, who was the next speaker, was received with continuous cheering. When that had subsided, she said she would not attempt, in what she was going to say, to argue or reason. Argument was a dangerous thing just now. There were certain persons in high places, who were very powerful, who could not bear argument, especially when it was better than their own, so she would confine herself simply to making statements, they could draw their conclusions. She would begin by giving them a short sketch of the history of Ireland for the last two months and seven days, since the date of her brother's arrest. He, they knew, was put in prison because he argued with Mr. Gladstone ("hear,hear," and cheers) (1)- and she was very much afraid that she had been guilty of the same impudence, but she intended to avoid it in future. After that date, the 13th of October, the branches of the Land League began, one by one, to declare for the payment of no rent. On the 18th, the Land League also, by the mouth of its central executive, declared for the payment of no rent. On the 20th, the Government declared the Land League illegal, and warned everyone who belonged to it to dissociate himself from it. Not a single man in all Ireland- and remember this was an important fact in history- did dissociate himself from the Land League- (applause)- with one exception, Archbishop Croke; but he was not a member of the Land League.(2). And they would remember that for, perhaps, about a fortnight after that suppression of the Land League, how there was only one story in the English newspapers, and that was that the Land League had entirely collapsed, that the country had accepted the Land Bill, and that no one expected such an easy victory for the Government. [sic] ("Hear,hear").

Where was this story now? (Cheers.) Did the English papers say that the Land League had collapsed now? Did they say that the country had accepted the Land Act? They seemed to have entirely forgotten that they ever said anything of the sort. (A laugh). Well, when the Land League was suppressed, the Government, and the landlords, and the "Peelers", and the soldiers, and all the powers of iniquity that ever existed under the British Government set to work hand in hand, with heart and soul to do two things to collect the rents and to evict the people. One thing the Government neglected to do at the time was to suppress the Ladies' Land League. (Laughter and cheers). In fact, ungallant as it appeared, the Government did not seem to think the Ladies' Land League was worth notice- (laughter)- and that was surprising when they reflected that the Cabinet were all family men. (Renewed laughter).

One thing the Ladies' Land League were able to do. They were able to house the evicted, and to write out cheques for them, so that no man was obliged to pay for fear of dying afterwards from cold and hunger if he refused. (Cheers). The Irish Land question was a very simple one. It worked in this way: The men who said they owned the land, and whose title the British Government upheld, demanded all that the land would give, except the very smallest pittance to keep life in the body of the man who cultivated and made it yield anything, and not only that, but when, perchance, the yield of the land was less than usual, they then demanded all, and the man who cultivated it must die, unless he was fed by foreign charity. Then people asked, "But why are the Irish people such fools as to pay all in this way?" Why, because the

landlord had the power, if they refused, to put them on the road, and to make them die quickly instead of dying slowly, and people preferred to die slowly, rather than to die quickly, because, as long as they had life, they hoped, like Mr. Micawber, that something would turn up.(3) So they would see that an agency like the Ladies' Land League added a very material something to the Irish land question. It removed the necessity of dying quickly, or dying at all, and that altered the entire political economy of Ireland, and so Mr. Gladstone had found out, because he had ordered one hundred beds for the Ladies' Land League for Grains Gorman prison. (Applause.) (4).

From about the first week in November, little by little, it began to leak out somehow or other that, whatever, the reason might be, there was less rent being paid than ever. This was not a satisfactory discovery for those who had intended to get all their rent, and then to go back on the old system of raising the rents. It was no fault of the landlords or the police, who had been quite energetic enough in using their powers, which were practically unlimited, but still the thing had happened. Then another discovery was made- that the country had not accepted the Land Act. Mr. Herbert Gladstone had made a long speech about his experience in Ireland, and said that the north of Ireland had accepted the Land Act.(5) It was only of the north that this ever had been true. With the exception of one or two counties, and a few spots in the other counties, the north, and part of Connaught also, did accept the Land Act. The reasons why the north accepted the Land Act were, however, entirely different, from the reasons which induced the part of Connaught to which she had referred to accept it. The north accepted it in perfect good faith, believing that Mr. Gladstone was speaking the truth when he said it was intended to heal all their wounds. ("Hear,hear").

What had been the result? The Land League did not interfere with the north, they neither went and shot at them for going to the Court, nor did they denounce them or weep over their backslidings. They left the people of the north to find out the Act for themselves, and they had found it out; and she hoped that another time they would be wiser. The tenants farmers of the north were now crying out against the Land Act- (hear,hear)- and she thought that before another six months were over they would be crying out a great deal more. (Cheers). The reason why a part of Connaught accepted the Land Act had still got to be explained. She could do it in no better way than by repeating the substance of some conversations that a barrister who had been visiting some of the most distressed parts of Mayo told her he had had with some of the farmers who were going to the Court. He said, "Do you expect to be able to pay your rents after the Land Court has fixed them?" and the tenants said, "No, we don't." "Well, do you intend to pay them?" and the tenants said, "No, we don't." (Laughter and cheers). "Well, why do you go to the Court?" "Well, it bothers the landlords, and we are not likely to be evicted if we go to the Court." Although she did not approve of their proceedings, those tenants showed a good deal of shrewdness.

The Land Court was a pet nursling of the British Government. It would look very bad indeed to evict a great many tenants who had applied to the Court; it would be a very disagreeable commentary upon the proceedings of the Court just at present, and so it was true, although there had been evictions of Land Court tenants, still they were more tenderly dealt with, as a rule, than others. (Applause). She did not know whether they would always be tenderly dealt with when the landlords and the Government found out the snare and the delusion that these tenants were. (Applause). Sometimes, though, tenants who applied to the Court were not very tenderly dealt with. Not long ago the tenantry on an estate wanted to go to the Court. They were, though, as might be expected a cowardly lot of men, and they were all afraid of serving the copies of the originating notices on the landlord. One man was

braver than the rest. He said he "wasn't afraid of the mather," and he went and served the notice, and that landlord rose to the emergency, and had that tenant arrested under the Coercion Act, and sent to gaol; and she thought that was one man, at least, who did deserve to be reasonably suspected. ("Hear, hear" and applause).

The Land Court itself had been going on in a way which reminded her very much of the fable of the man and the boy who had a donkey. (Laughter) First of all the Land Court tried to please the tenant as much as it dared, and reduced the rents greatly. A tremendous howl went up from all the landlords in England and Ireland, and all the landlord papers, and that was pretty nearly all the papers there were in England. ("Hear,hear"). So immediately the Commissioners took the hint, and they diminished the amount of their reductions very considerably; and then a lot of tenants who had gone into the Court, thought the Court was "no go," and went out of it again. Well, that didn't suit, so up the Commissioners got, and they gave larger reductions, and that had been the way the thing had been going on the whole time. The consequence was that they could not, as yet prove the real character of the Land Act, because as long as there was anything left to fall back on in Ireland, the tenants would be wary of the Court, unless the Court would give them enough to make it worth their while to go in. But wait a little while- although she was afraid it would not be in a little while- until there was nothing for the tenants to fall back upon in Ireland except the Land Court, and then the Court would do what it had always been intended to do- raise the rents. (Applause).

But that was only, remember, a conditional prophecy, depending upon the extinction of the Land League in Ireland, and at present that seemed a long way off. Having alleged that it was rumoured that in the interests of law and order, the Ladies' Land League was to be suppressed, because it was said they sent an extract from one of Bishop Nulty's speeches by thousands to the tenant-farmers [sic] of Ireland, Miss Parnell said the Government were leaving no stone unturned to restore law and order.(6) Mr.Herbert Gladstone alluded pathetically to the difficulty of restoring law and order, and said it was not the fault of the constabulary, they did all they could. Did it strike Mr.Gladstone that since the Land League was proclaimed three officers in command of the constabulary had been declared guilty of wilful murder by a constitutional and legal jury of their countrymen? Did it strike Mr.Herbert Gladstone that perhaps, if he wanted to restore order, to imprison men who had a verdict of wilful murder returned against them by coroner's juries, and to bring them to trial, would not be a bad thing to try. ("Hear,hear").

However that might be, it was certain they had not tried it, for those men who had been declared guilty of wilful murder were walking about the country in command of bodies of armed men, and everyone in Ireland knew that they would never be tried. ("Shame"). The constabulary whom Mr.Herbert Gladstone praised had, it was notorious, butchered in cold blood both men and women who were perfectly harmless, and helpless, and defenceless; and these were the men that Mr.Gladstone said were entitled to the highest praise. Wasn't Mr.Herbert Gladstone the son of his own father? (A Voice:"He is," and loud laughter). Well, now, she did not admire Mr.Herbert Gladstone very much, but she found that the text of his speech on Ireland was not at all a bad text for anyone who wished to illustrate the present condition of Ireland. He said that he had seen the poverty of the country at Castletownbere, and he saw how necessary it was to have fair rents fixed. If it were necessary now it must have been necessary four years ago, because then the succession of poor harvests began which made these exorbitant rents impossible rents for the future. (Applause). But Mr.Herbert Gladstone went and stood by, and saw those shivering mortals- she was going to say fellow-Christians, but she was afraid Mr.Gladstone's Christianity

was something different from the Christianity which they understood; but he saw them evicted for the non-payment of rent of those very rents which he had declared with his own lips to be impossible. Was that man who pretended sympathy with the Irish people, and then who went and did that, a scoundrel, or was he not? (A voice, "He is a scoundrel;" hear, hear, and applause).

Another thing that Mr. Herbert Gladstone talked about was the English branch of the Emergency Association.(7). Now what would the money be used for which these English gentlemen- where were they were now subscribing to the Emergency Association? The money they were wanting to subscribe, but which they did not seem to subscribe, was used, it was supposed in committing outrages, and then in getting up false cases against persons on perjured testimony, and then getting them condemned for outrages which the men who condemned them, committed, or had been accessory to committing in many cases. (Cheers). That had been proved, and if it had been proved once, it was not the only case which might be proved if there were persons who had sufficient courage, patience and perseverance, and sufficient opportunities to undertake the proving of them. It was notorious that "a man named Donoghue charged someone with doing something," she forgot what, but he bungled his case so much- probably from long security from long practice he had become careless- that the very magistrates were compelled to commit him for trial for perjury, and to order a search of his house.(8) She could imagine the very great distaste with which the magistrates did it; but it was done, and it was found that this man had been actually engaged in the manufacture of outrages for a long time, and that one of those convictions for agrarian offences which the English press exulted so much over when they took place had been due to the evidence of this man. Did they suppose that that man did all that for nothing? He was paid from the funds of the English taxpayer, and he was paid from the Emergency Association; and it was for things like that that Englishmen would be giving their money if they did give it. ("Hear, hear").

But, simultaneously with the exposure of that man, a constabulary circular was issued, promising the largest rewards to people who would go and do exactly what that man Donoghue had been doing; and those rewards, remember, were paid for out of their money- the money of the English, the Irish, and the Scotch people- ("hear, hear")- and when English people fell victims in a modified way, as they often did, to that system, for it existed everywhere under the British Government, they were not much to be pitied, for it was they who wilfully kept it up. ("Hear, hear"). Another day "a man" was fired at, "a tenant farmer," and he started out to look for the people who had fired at him, and as chance would have it, other men were near, and joined him; and what did they find? The only people that they found anywhere near was a man who had been "Boycotted," and one of the policemen who had been protecting him. How easy, when they thought of it, for one of those loyal and law-abiding inhabitants of Ireland whom the Government said it was obliged to protect, to apply for police protection, and then to use it for purposes of assassination- (shame)- and then, after that, to get rewarded for having someone else convicted. In the light of those two facts which she had related, it would not be, she thought, very hard to guess at one solution of the mystery which surrounded the death of "a man named Brennan"- who was either an evicted tenant, or the brother of one, and who was shot while sitting in his own house the other night- when they knew that he was living within a few yards of the house from which the tenant had been evicted, and which was occupied by emergency men and policemen. She did not say that man might not have met his death from another cause, and not from the hands of those emergency men; but it was at least as probable that those emergency men were at the bottom of the matter as anyone else. (Cheers).

Having, on the authority of "an English lady and gentleman who called at the office of the Land League last summer," related a case of burning a horse to make it draw, by an emergency man who was dismissed, but not prosecuted, but probably taken back under the wings of the society, Miss Parnell remarked that Mr. Herbert Gladstone omitted to mention all those little circumstances when he was expatiating upon the difficulty of discovering the perpetrators of outrages. He omitted to state also another thing. A prosecution of a young lady was got up for Mr. Herbert Gladstone's especial delectation. (9). The young lady wanted his evidence at the trial. They had been doing all in their power for the last week to find him to serve a summons on him- ("hear, hear")- but he had hidden himself so carefully that it could not be done, and the next thing they heard of him was that he had escaped secretly by night to England, just as if he were running away from the Coercion Act. (Laughter.) In England they had no power to serve a summons on him. They had to content themselves with writing to him to tell him his evidence was required. She would not be at all astonished if he thought fit not to put in an appearance at Castletownbere next Friday at the trial. She thought that Mr. Herbert Gladstone and his papa would not care that he should be examined upon oath as to what he saw there; but she might be wronging him, so she advised them all to watch the papers to see if he did go to give evidence in the case of the Queen against Reynolds.

Miss Parnell then spoke of the difference between the way in which evictions were conducted in the presence of important personages and in their absence, when the greatest cruelty was practised, saying she had from a distance seen a man at an equal distance from the scene of an eviction set upon and very nearly killed by four of those constables whom Mr. Gladstone praised so highly- ("Shame")- and the officer in charge refused the wounded man an opportunity of identifying the men before they left. That was the way law and order were preserved in Ireland. She concluded by giving two instances of Land League cheques being stolen by the police. She said she supposed the reason why there was more respect for law when Mr. Gladstone presided at evictions than at other times was that the authorities thought it might shock his sensibilities if they butchered any young girls or old women before his eyes; but she thought, after reading his speech, that the next time he went to Ireland he would be quite willing to take the bayonet, and to assist in the good work himself. ("hear, hear"). Mr. Gladstone praised Mr. Forster very highly for something he did thirty-five years ago. She did not say that Mr. Forster did not deserve praise thirty-five years ago, but Mr. Gladstone omitted to mention something that was a very significant commentary upon that praise. When Mr. Forster did those acts thirty-five years ago, he went as a messenger of the Society of Friends, and the Society of Friends had disunited Mr. Forster, whatever that might mean, for his conduct in Ireland ("hear, hear")- and all that was now left for them to do to prove that they were still the Society of Friends, as it had become known to the world, was to disunite Mr. John Bright also. (Loud and prolonged cheering) (10).

[On the proposal of Mr. MacDowd, seconded by Mr. Thomas Monahan, a vote of thanks to Miss Parnell was carried with the greatest enthusiasm.]

Miss Parnell, in reply, said it occurred to her that the best way of thanking them would be to tell them something that they would like to hear, so that they might all go away in a good humour. Something happened in Ireland recently the like of which had never happened before, although certainly it was a matter of surprise that it did not happen before. They were aware that one of the great remedies which the English press was always proposing as a certain way of pleasing the Irish people, and reconciling them to English rule, was that the royal family should give them more of its presence. (A Voice: "We don't want 'em"). Now, the Irish people were thinking of getting up an exhibition of Irish manufactures, and the Orangemen from

Belfast proposed that her gracious Majesty the Queen be invited to become the patroness of that exhibition. The Irish people let it be known in the most unmistakable manner that if her Majesty did patronise the exhibition, Irish manufacturers had better take care to keep away from it- ("hear, hear" and cheers)- and so the great institution of "boycotting" had resulted in "boycotting" no less a person than the head of the British Government. (Cheers). The newspapers, she noticed, seemed to have been so puzzled about that, that they had not thought fit to make any remarks about it. Now, ladies and gentlemen, continued Miss Parnell, am I right in my supposition that you are pleased to hear this little item? If you are, hold up both hand. [sic].

[There was immediately a great show of both hands, and loud cheering. Groans having been given for "Buckshot Forster," thanks to the chairman, [closed] the proceedings].

Jarrow, Thursday 22nd December 1881

Anna Parnell's difficulties in travelling to Jarrow were to continue and she arrived late at 10.00.p.m. for an evening meeting which had begun at 7.00. In a short speech, she detailed these difficulties by way of an apology, and then continued her attack on the English support for the Emergency men who were in likelihood responsible for the recent shooting of a tenant.

[Report of the Jarrow speech taken from the *Jarrow Guardian* Saturday 30th December 1881]

Miss Parnell, on rising to speak, was greeted with a very hearty ovation. She said it was due to those who had been good enough to come to two meetings to hear her explain how she came to disappoint them on two occasions. The history of her endeavours to get to Jarrow would fill a small book of travels. The first time it was true she did not try to come at all- the case was hopeless. The second time she was about to start by the evening boat the day before the meeting, when a vague and mysterious rumour came into their office- that was the office of the Ladies' Land League- that the Government was about to suppress them, and put them into Grangegorman prison [sic]. They would know that the Ladies' Land League was doing a very large business in Dublin. They were probably doing nearly as much business in their office as was done in the Home Office in London- ("hear,hear")- and she supposed that, if Sir William Harcourt heard that she was going to seize the Home Office and put him and all his clerks in prison, he would have some little preparations to make.(1) That, unfortunately, was the case with them; they had preparations to make.They had their money to put away. Seeing that the Government on the following day stole one of their cheque-books, they would agree with her that that was not an unnecessary precaution; and only the other day one of their cheques was stolen by two policeman, she supposed. (Hisses and cries of "Shame!"). They would be pleased to hear, though, that the policemen and the Government would not get the money, as they were in time to stop it. (Applause).

The short of all [sic] was that she and about six other ladies sat up all night and put all ready for Mr.Forster. (Laughter and applause). Well, she just succeeded in catching the morning mail, which left at half-past six o'clock, and from that time till half-past eleven at night she was trying to get to that town. She felt very bitter against it sometimes, she could assure them. (Laughter). She felt as if it were hiding itself on purpose, and as if all the trains were in the employment of the Government. (Renewed laughter) . Not one train was in time anywhere, and the result was that she arrived at half-past eleven, and they had gone away from the meeting with the

conviction that she did not exist, but with the creation of a newspaper brain-something like the outrages of which they heard so much. (Laughter). The third time, though, was the charm; and although the trains were even later that day than on Tuesday, she was there, as they could see. (Applause).

She supposed that they would want to know something about Ireland, and how she stood. Ireland was standing well. And, as yet, she was not by any means the most distressful country that was ever seen; in fact, at the present moment England seemed to be a more distressful country than Ireland, and it was no wonder when they thought that England had been called on to raise some of the landlords' rents to them. Hitherto the landlords' rents had been raised in Ireland and spent for the benefit of England. It appeared that now the landlords' rents were to be raised, if it could be done- and she was afraid it could not- in England, and spent in Ireland, although she doubted whether they would be spent in a way beneficial to Ireland. (Hear,hear.) The widows and the daughters and sisters of Irish landlords were to have their incomes supplemented by English charity, and Mr. Goddard was to have the money supplied to him out of English funds to work his Emergency Association. (Applause).(2)

As she had touched on the Emergency Association, between which and the Ladies' Land League a deadly war was at present raging in Ireland, she might as well give them a brief description of what the Emergency Society really was. They were men, who for the sake of high wages, were willing to become the destroyers of their own countrymen. They were not even like the "peelers," who had the prospect of competency in their old age as the wages for their shameful work. These emergency men had nothing but their wages for the moment, and for this temporary gain, large as it might be for the time, they were content to do the most infamous and sinful things that ever were done, even in Ireland. The legitimate and ostensible work was bad enough, but they did not confine themselves to it. Perhaps they would be foolish if they did, for there was high reward in Ireland given to men who did worse than that. They would know, how, not very long ago a man named Brennan was shot while sitting in his own house.(3) He was the brother of an evicted tenant himself, she did not know which. The accounts were not clear, but he was shot dead, and they might perhaps remember that articles were written in some of the English newspapers with this murder for their text. The English papers invented, of course, a motive for the murder, and it was that the man was the brother of a man who paid his rent. Incidentally they read that this Brennan's house from which he had been evicted was in the occupancy of two emergency men, and that it was quite close to the dwelling house where he had taken refuge. She told the people of Huddersfield on Wednesday evening, that she felt a conviction that the crime had been committed by these emergency men; and that morning she read that they had been charged with the murder of Brennan, and remanded by the magistrates.

Anna Parnell returned to Dublin to continue the supervision of the emergency arrangements. An address in response to the R.I.C. circular was sent to the secretaries of all the branches in Ireland refuting R.I.C. charges of the illegality of the organization. It was proposed that all branches in Ireland would meet simultaneously on Sunday 1st January 1882 at 1.30 p.m. in defiance of the circular, and to test the resources of the police.(4) Support for the women at this time came in an address published by five of the Irish Parliamentary Party members still at liberty.(5)

Liverpool, Friday 30th December 1881

The hurried visit to Liverpool at the end of the month was used to publicise the circumstances surrounding Hannah Reynolds' arrest and imprisonment, and the likely actions by the government against the League. Hannah Reynolds had been charged and sentenced at a petty sessions on Friday 23rd December, she had been refused a trial and after defaulting on the bail conditions for good behaviour was sentenced to 28 days in Cork gaol. For his absence from the sessions Anna Parnell rewarded Herbert Gladstone with a strong Irish insult.

[Report of the Liverpool speech taken from the *Liverpool Daily Post* Saturday, 31st December 1881]

Miss Parnell, who was most enthusiastically received, said she could perhaps interest them more by giving the simple history of Miss Reynolds as it happened than in any other way. It was a very remarkable case and illustrated very strongly many phases of the Irish question. Twenty-one years ago there was a poor man working in the mines at Castletown Berehaven, who wanted a house to live in. Feeling that if he hired a piece of ground from a landlord and built a house he might be called upon in ten years time to pay double or treble what it cost him, he went to the fairies. In Ireland, where the roads were large and the traffic small, and two roads met, there was a patch of ground in the centre which was called the fairy field. On this he built a house, which in two years he sold to a man named Murphy, who was a tenant farmer under Lord Bantry. (1) Murphy, who was also a fisherman, lived in this house for eighteen years undisturbed by rent or taxes, and it became his by right of occupation as well as of purchase. Murphy's land, which he held under Lord Bantry, had become worthless to him, and, she supposed, he did not care very much to keep it; consequently he felt no alarm when he got the usual writ informing him that the sheriff would take the land unless he paid the rent. The sheriff came in due course, with Mr. Herbert Gladstone (groans and hisses), and an army, and then found a way to make Murphy care whether his land was taken or not. They did not go near Lord Bantry's property, but went to his freehold, and there the agents of the law, with force and violence, broke into the house and turned him out, breaking the law in order to induce him to go on renting land from Lord Bantry. It was for advising this man not to yield to this burglarious demand, and encourage these law-breakers, by obeying them, not to yield to this plunder and trespass that Miss Reynolds had been sent to prison for one month ("Shame").

The whole of the evidence given in the prosecution was entirely false. Lord Bantry was welcome to take his land, but had Murphy paid rent for the house on the roadside, he would most likely have lost his title to the property. Here was a man turned out of his own house, and if he were to go back to it he would most likely be sent to gaol. That was the way in which the law was upheld in Ireland, and how respect for property was taught. Miss Reynolds thought, as Mr. Herbert Gladstone was present, his evidence might be of use to her, but he appeared to get an inkling of her intentions, and disappeared in the most marvellous way. Miss Reynolds's solicitor wrote him telling him he was required, and putting him on his honour as it were to come. What, she said, did this sneaking spalpeen do? (loud cheers) (2). He wrote back refusing, and saying that if there was any evidence he could give that that would benefit Miss Reynolds he should like to be informed of it. Miss Reynolds was prosecuted by Dublin Castle, and here Mr. Herbert Gladstone, who was connected with it, asked to be put in possession of Miss Reynolds's case for the

defence. He did not turn up at the trial, and [s]he supposed his father thought it would be unsafe to allow him to be put on his oath about matters that he saw under his Government ("hear, hear"). This refusal to give evidence when called upon by a lady, marked the character of Mr. Herbert Gladstone as a politician, for she was sure neither his father nor Lord Beaconsfield would have made such a stupid mistake.

They were told that the Ladies' Land League was in danger of being suppressed. She did not know whether the result of suppression would be the same as the result of suppressing the *United Ireland* (cheers), which was to bring out two copies of the paper instead of one.(3) If the Government found it so difficult to get along with one Ladies' Land League in Ireland, it had better beware how it suppressed it, lest it succeeded in multiplying them.(cheers). The charges against them were very extraordinary. They were reasonably suspected of being in correspondence with men. (laughter). The Government popped upon their errand boy when he had an unusually large parcel, and they found what they thought was a prize- 5,000 envelopes stamped and directed, but unfortunately empty. (laughter). But the Government fell back on the charge that these were not directed to women at all but to men. (laughter). She had heard and read of some young ladies' schools having a very stringent watch kept upon the pupils for fear they should commit the offence of writing letters to the opposite sex, and it was very good of Mr. Forster to act the part of schoolmistress to the Ladies' Land League. (cheers and laughter). Another charge against the League was that she had asked certain persons in Ireland to give some information about some landlords' characters and antecedents. That, no doubt, was a very impertinent question, and she dared say that the landlords would rather that no questions should be asked about them; still it was not yet an offence against the law to ask questions. If all women who asked questions were to be put in prison, she was afraid the prison estimates would be very large. (loud laughter and cheers).

On her return from Liverpool Anna Parnell presided over the first of the L.L.L. meetings to be held in defiance of the R.I.C. circular. In a statement she described how the meeting waited for the arrival of the police for an hour before continuing with their business.(4) The "War against the Women" was begun in earnest in the country districts and a number of prominent organisers were arrested during the next few months.(5)

Manchester, Monday 23rd January 1882

At a meeting at Manchester on the 23rd January Anna Parnell gave what appears to be her last major speech for the L.L.L.; she believed that her own arrest was imminent and she commented on the system of imprisonment without trial invented for the ladies. The Land League huts first erected for the evicted tenants in December 1881 are described. Once more she attacked the Emergency Men equating their lawless activities with those blamed on Captain Moonlight. Finally, she called on the Irish in England to never again vote for the English Liberals.

[Report of the Manchester speech taken from *United Ireland* Saturday, 4 February 1882]

Miss Parnell, who on rising to support the resolution was again greeted with loud and continued cheering, said this would probably be her last speech- (cries of "No")- for the silent system was being extensively applied now in Ireland to what was

supposed to be the loquacious sex. (laughter). They probably did not know how rapidly the arrests of women, mostly young girls, were going on in Ireland, because the English papers had ceased to mention them. They were afraid of their getting into the continental papers. ("hear, hear," and cries of "Shame"). But although these arrests were thus kept secure from the world they were going on, and would increase and multiply. They were arrests on suspicion, but they were not arrests under the famous Coercion Act. A new system of imprisonment without trial had been invented exclusively for their benefit. (laughter). There was an Act of Edward III which she had never read, but Chief Justice May said this Act was preventive justice. (1) She supposed that was because it prevented any justice being done. (laughter).

Proceeding, Miss Parnell gave instances of how the law was applied towards them, and of the treatment which, as she alleged, they received while in prison. For one of the suspects, a young girl named Miss O'Carroll, Miss Parnell expressed her fears that the confinement and treatment would drive her mad. What were they to say, she added, of those two old sinners, Gladstone and Bright- (laughter and groans)- who were now in their old age, when they were very near the end of the road paved with good intentions. Could these men, who were conspicuous amongst men for professions of piety and religion- (hisses)- find nothing better to do to prepare for the next world that they professed to believe in than to torture this innocent girl into insanity or death. (cheers). With regard to Mr. Clifford Lloyd, she in strong terms condemned his conduct, and remarked that she was afraid he would continue his career until it was put a stop to by the same weapon which had terminated many a career of usefulness like his. She did not want them to mistake her, she did not mean a revolver, but a whisky bottle. (loud laughter.)

As to the land question, she maintained the whole of the Irish land question was one of the simplest in creation. She had often been asked what the matter was with the Irish farmer, and why there was famine all the time. She answered it was because the landlord wanted too much rent. ("hear, hear"). And why, her English questioner always asked her, were the Irish such fools as to pay the rent?- (laughter)- and she replied that the land everywhere belonged to the landlords, and unless the tenants paid the rent they would not have a roof to cover them. The house they had built themselves with their own money and labour would be barred against them, and they and their children would die of cold, hunger, and exposure in a ditch. ("shame"). This was why the Irish landlord had the tenants at his mercy. The land might produce nothing, still a house could be built upon any kind of ground, and the question an English trade unionist would, she thought naturally ask, would be why did the Irish not subscribe and build a house, and support a family when it is evicted, and then the landlord would be powerless, because the whole of Ireland could not be evicted. ("hear, hear"). 3

This it was which was being done, and this it was which was upsetting the whole of the Irish land question. (cheers). So long as they were to the fore a tenant need not pay the rent for fear of dying in a ditch with his family- (cheers)- and this was why they were put out of the way. ("shame"). They could afford a wooden shed to a family and a precarious allowance from the benevolence of their Irish kinfolk in other countries to live on, and it had been discovered that the Irish tenant farmer would rather have this wooden shed and this precarious allowance than all the benefits, peace, security, and prosperity which had been offered to him by Mr. Gladstone's Land Act. (cheers). What could this security and prosperity mean when a man would prefer a wooden shed on the roadside to the whole of them. It was not-surprising that Mr. Gladstone wanted to do away with the wooden shed. If he did he would prepare the way for another dying by thousands called an Irish famine, and then she

supposed the English people would send over a few thousands of pounds and say, "Look how generous we are to the Irish people." (groans).

They had heard, she supposed, how Irish juries were at last found willing to do their duty, that was to say to convict. (applause). Did they know how these convictions were obtained? For a jury of 12 men to be empanelled 88 men were ordered to stand aside. Was this justice? ("No"). These 12 men, picked out of 100, gave their verdicts according to the desire of the Crown, and then innocent men were sentenced to penal servitude for ten or five years. She thought it was well known that the Government had offered rewards to the people who would procure the conviction of men who have committed these outrages, whether they be guilty or not. Captain Moonlight (cheers) had now been found to be what he was suspected from the beginning to be, an emergency man employed and paid by the Government of John Bright and Mr. Gladstone. (hisses). They were not afraid, and she hoped they would go on in England as they had done, and back them up at home. ("hear, hear").

She hoped there would be no more voting for Whigs by the Irish in England. Mr. Slagg (groans) and Mr. Jacob Bright (applause),⁽³⁾ had been spoken of, and they seemed to have made up their minds about Mr. Slagg ("hear, hear" and a voice: "We'll boycott him"), and they seemed to like Mr. Jacob Bright, but before they voted for any English Liberal they must ask him whether he would support a vote of want of confidence in the Government of Gladstone and Bright, for they might depend upon it the man who was willing to express confidence in Gladstone and Bright was not the man for them to have anything to do with. (cheers).

