

## ‘Ireland Her Own’: Radical Movements in Nineteenth-Century Ireland

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When examining the development of republicanism in nineteenth-century Ireland, we must be aware not only of the elements of continuity in the radical movements of the period, but also of their differences, resulting from specific circumstances and conditions. The first half of the nineteenth century in Ireland was dominated by two socio-economic factors. On the one hand, excessive subdivision of the land among the rural peasantry was accompanied by a tremendous population increase; on the other hand, a general decline in Irish industry in the first decades of the century ensured that the surplus population could not be absorbed into the economic life of the towns. The Act of Union was not the only cause for the decline in industries, but it was a major contributor as free trade between Britain and Ireland was established which meant that Irish manufacturers were no longer in a position to protect the home market from British competition. The huge national debt incurred by the Union also meant that much needed capital for Irish industry was taken out of the country.<sup>1</sup> It was hardly surprising that a mass popular movement should arise, under the leadership of Daniel O’Connell, with the aim of repealing the Act of Union.

O’Connell, despite his radical use of language, was not a radical. He was a landlord who had great respect for the protection of private property and denounced agrarian secret societies for their use of violence. His policy is summed up in a letter he wrote early in 1833: ‘I would not join in any violation of the law ... I desire no social revolution, no social change ... In short, salutary restoration without revolution, an Irish Parliament, British connection, one King, two legislatures’.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, a group of young men were attracted to the Repeal Association who, although staunchly loyal to O’Connell, were prepared to go a step further. To them it was repeal or else separation. They revived the spirit of Wolfe Tone in their newspaper the *Nation*, founded in October 1842. The three young intellectuals were Charles Gavan Duffy, journalist, John Blake Dillon and Thomas Osborne Davis, both barristers. Their object in

founding a newspaper was ‘to foster a public opinion in Ireland and make it racy of the soil’. They paid particular attention to cultivating ‘that pride in self-reliant nationhood which they conceived would be the best means of recreating a United Ireland’.<sup>3</sup>

The *Nation* certainly set in motion a revolution in national thinking, for it set out to awaken a national consciousness in the mass of the Irish people and to make them aware of their cultural heritage, which had been trampled underfoot by centuries of British domination. ‘By cultivating the collective consciousness of the people, preaching the essential ‘oneness’ of the Nation, and giving each member of the Nation a sense of ‘belonging’, all activities, whether in trade, commerce or the arts, would assume a new coherence as an expression, indeed a celebration of the identity of the Nation.’<sup>4</sup> One of the most popular features of the *Nation* was its original ballad poetry, dealing mainly with historical themes. The ballads were written to be sung to well-known airs. The mood was martial and inspiring, recalling the deeds of Irish clans, of the Volunteers of ’82 and of the Men of ’98. The *Nation* inspired contributions from women writers. ‘Speranza’, whose real name was Jane Elgee, later to become Lady Wilde, gave vent to her outrage in elaborate verse. ‘Eva’, or Mary Ann Kelly, was to be a regular verse contributor, and in 1848 Margaret Callan, sister-in-law of Gavan Duffy, wrote an article stirring Irishmen to rebellion.<sup>5</sup> Another purpose of the *Nation* newspaper was proclaimed by the poet Clarence Mangan to be ‘the emancipation of the trampled tenantry’.<sup>6</sup> One article states: ‘We shall strive not merely to explain the workings of landlord misrule in Ireland, but to show how similar wrongs have been remedied in other countries’.<sup>7</sup>

The most outstanding writer of the *Nation* was undoubtedly Thomas Davis. His teaching was summed up by him in one phrase: ‘Ireland’s aspiration is for Unbounded Nationality’.<sup>8</sup> At a time when the O’Connellites succeeded in equating nationalism with catholicism, which alienated the protestants from the Repeal movement, Davis, basing his theory on the writings of Wolfe Tone, held that a national movement had to embrace all the people—both protestant and catholic. He abhorred any form of sectarianism. Davis’s nationalism was more cultural than political in as far as he understood the ‘Nation’ not as a historically evolved political entity but as a spiritual, cultural entity, growing out of the recognition of the people themselves that they have a common cultural heritage. This is how Pearse interprets Davis’s understanding of the ‘Nation’ in his own article *The Spiritual Nation*.

Undoubtedly, there are contradictions in Davis’s thought. His concept of the ‘Nation’ was coloured by a conservative form of romanticism which hankered after restoration rather than revolution. He despised the factory

system, lamenting the loss of cottage industry. He wished to roll back the development of industrialisation: 'We prefer the life of the old times or of modern Norway'.<sup>9</sup> A peasant proprietorship was what he wished for Ireland, but at the same time a national aristocracy 'attached by hereditary achievements to the glory of their country'.<sup>10</sup> Davis did not openly voice any republican views—he was willing to support the demand for a federal government. But if this failed to be achieved, then he would support 'anything but what we are'.<sup>11</sup> Unlike O'Connell, Davis was not opposed to Chartism and urged a change of attitude among repealers to the English Chartists. It was Davis's sympathy with the common people which led Pearse to recognise the affinity of democratic spirit in both Tone and Davis: 'There was a deep humanism in Davis. The sorrows of the people affected Davis like a personal sorrow ... he was a democrat in this truest sense that he loved the people, and his love of the people was an essential part of the man and of his Nationalism'.<sup>12</sup>

Even before Davis's untimely death in 1845, a rift had occurred between the Young Irelanders, as the writers of the *Nation* came to be called, and O'Connell. Davis was gravely disappointed with O'Connell's retreat at Clontarf at the height of the Repeal movement's success, and deeply wounded by the accusations of the O'Connellites charging him with anti-catholic sentiments.<sup>13</sup> The final break with O'Connell came in 1846, and the Irish Confederation was formed in January 1847. 'Young Ireland' of the *Nation* had hoped to create an independent Ireland with a harmonious community including landlords fulfilling their social obligations; but the Great Famine, with its mass starvation and ensuing evictions, soon shattered this idyllic vision and some of the Young Irelanders, most notably John Mitchel, dramatically moved to the left. Concerning the land question, Mitchel was influenced by James Fintan Lalor, the son of one of the leading figures in the Tithe Wars of the 1830s. In a letter to Lalor, dated January 4, 1848, he admits that he was wrong on the issue of 'conciliating classes' and winning the landlords over to nationality.<sup>14</sup> Mitchel insisted that a social insurrection in Ireland was the only possible basis for a national revolution—the insurrectionary upheaval that would end the subjection of the labouring classes would also end the tyranny of the British government that thrived on it.

Mitchel's views on armed insurrection were too extreme for the leaders of the Confederation. The divergence led Mitchel and another radical, Devin Reilly, to sever connections with the *Nation* and to set up the weekly *United Irishman* 'specifically as an organ of revolution', which took as its motto Tone's tribute to the 'men of no property'.<sup>15</sup> In the *United Irishman*, Mitchel expressed his views as the champion of tenant right, the cause of the small farmers. The language he adopted was direct and went

to the crux of the matter. He exposed the evils of the landlord and capitalist systems in Ireland and the exploitation of the labourer as a mere commodity. To him the Great Famine was not a natural catastrophe, but an unbelievable crime perpetrated by the British government, which deliberately made use of the potato blight as the 'best, cheapest and readiest mode of getting rid of what was constantly called the "surplus population" of Ireland'.<sup>16</sup> Repeal of the Act of Union would not by itself be the cure. It required 'the total overthrow of the aristocratic system of government and the establishment of the People's inalienable sovereignty'.<sup>17</sup> Mitchel was convinced 'that while England is at peace with other powerful nations, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make so much as a serious attempt at a national insurrection, in the face of a government so vigilant and so well prepared'.<sup>18</sup> Much impetus was given to Mitchel's teachings by the combined work of English Chartists and Confederates in 1848. Confederate Clubs, formed in England by Irish exiles, joined the Chartist movement, and Chartist associations spread throughout Ireland. Appeals to English and Irish working men to join in common action and achieve 'real liberty and the rights of labour' were advocated.<sup>19</sup>

Before the third issue of the *United Irishman* had appeared, the monarchy in France had been overthrown and a republic declared. The 1848 revolution in France sparked off risings in all the main cities in Europe. The establishment of a popular government inflamed all radical minds, no less the Young Irelanders. Mitchel was welcomed back into the Confederation, and even moderates, taking care not to identify their position with that of Mitchel, were caught up in the general mood of defiance. Mitchel praised the new French government for enacting a law guaranteeing 'the right to work' to all and guaranteeing state protection of the rights of the workers as opposed to free trade in labour. His reaction, however, on learning of the June insurrection by workers in Paris was to voice his delight that they had been 'swept from the street with grape and canister—the only way of dealing with such unhappy creatures'. 'Socialists', he exclaimed 'are something worse than wild beasts'.<sup>20</sup> This irrational reaction seems hardly in keeping with his otherwise revolutionary language concerning the state of Ireland. Could it be that his revolutionary fervour was basically limited to Ireland and the British connection? That he himself was aware of a possible discrepancy in his thought is indicated by a passage in his *Jail Journal* where he probes into his motivations for supporting the French republic. His '*Doppelgänger*' points out that Mitchel's zeal for the success of the French republic 'is born of no love for mankind, or even of French mankind, but of pure hatred to England'.<sup>21</sup> The contradictory nature of Mitchel's thought can

further be substantiated by his later support in the USA of the Confederates in the Civil War and of the slave system in the southern states: 'I consider negro slavery the best state of existence for the negro, and the best for his master'.<sup>22</sup> Despite his revolutionary rhetoric, Mitchel, unlike Tone and Davis, was not an international democrat.

Alarmed at the developing revolutionary situation in Ireland, the government authorities began to arrest the Young Ireland leaders. In March 1848, Mitchel, Thomas Meagher and Smith O'Brien were charged with sedition. Meagher and O'Brien were acquitted. Mitchel was not so fortunate. He was tried by a packed jury under the Treason Felony Act and sentenced to fourteen years transportation. Mitchel, who had been propagating insurrection, believed that his rescue would be effected by the men of the Dublin Clubs. But Duffy, O'Brien and Meagher, fearing the consequences of an attempted rescue by the Dublin artisans, countermanded all preparations. Thus the original plan to rescue Mitchel and start a rising in Dublin was frustrated. The second plan of a rebellion throughout the country was doomed from the outset. The plan had been to lead revolt in Kilkenny town, take control of Kilkenny, and spread rebellion throughout Waterford and Tipperary where there was a strong tradition of agrarian resistance. However, the Confederate leaders were taken by surprise, as the government suspended habeas corpus. Faced with imminent arrest, they took to the field. O'Brien wandered through the countryside preaching insurrection to a starving peasantry, but refused to allow them to seize the carts of grain passing along the roads on the way to England or to seize arms from the gentry. In quixotic manner, the Confederates under O'Brien tried to rouse the people. The rebellion fizzled out in the last days of July, after an inglorious, brief skirmish with the police in a widow's garden at Ballingarry.<sup>23</sup>

After the failure of rebellion in the summer of 1848, James Fintan Lalor, together with a group of young radical intellectuals, including Thomas Clarke Luby and John O'Leary who were later to become influential in the Fenian movement, turned to secret conspiracy, establishing a network of secret clubs. Lalor's conspiracy and attempt to establish a new social-based national movement culminated in an unsuccessful rising on September 16, 1849. Lalor's health declined rapidly, and he died on December 17, 1849. He was perhaps the most consistently radical member of the Young Ireland movement. At Duffy's request, he wrote an appeal to the Irish landlords which appeared in the *Nation* in April 1847, calling on united action of landowners and the people of Ireland to change the social system which had been dissolved by the impact of the Famine. He was soon, however, to formulate his ideas more clearly. What Ireland needed was complete independence, not merely repeal, and the ownership of the

soil by the entire people, not just a small class of landlords.

In the first issue of the *Irish Felon*, June 24, 1848, Lalor states his object: 'Not the constitution that Wolfe Tone died to abolish, but the constitution that Tone died to obtain—independence; full and absolute independence for this island, and for every man within this island ... Ireland her own—Ireland her own, and all therein, from the sod to the sky. The soil of Ireland for the people of Ireland, to have and to hold from God alone who gave it—to have and to hold to them and their heirs for ever, without suit or service, faith or fealty, rent or render, to any power under Heaven'. Independence alone is not sufficient unless it is followed by a radical change in the social order: 'The principle I state and mean to stand on is this, that the entire ownership of Ireland, moral and material, up to the sun and down to the centre, is vested of right in the people of Ireland ... I hold and maintain that the entire soil of a country belongs of right to the entire people of that country, and is the rightful property, not of any one class, but of the nation at large ... I acknowledge no right of property in a small class which goes to abrogate the rights of a numerous people'. Anticipating the policy of the Land League of later years, Lalor worked out a plan of 'moral insurrection' whereby the peasants should refuse to pay all rents and taxes until the needs of their families had been satisfied. Peaceful means if possible, force if necessary, was Lalor's motto. He did not develop a clear strategy concerning the co-ordination of a social and national uprising. He believed, however, that with the accomplishment of a social-agrarian revolution, the foundations of a national revolution would be surely laid. Due to physical disabilities and illness, Lalor was not in a position to lead a mass struggle. He could only give his intellectual support to it. On the whole, Young Ireland failed to grasp the significance of Lalor's radical programme.

One of the reasons for the rise of the Fenian movement in the 1860s was the failure of constitutional politics in the form of the Tenant League.<sup>24</sup> In his book *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism*, John O'Leary comments that 'the period between the collapse of the Tenant League and the rise of Fenianism was the "deadest" time in Irish politics within my memory and perhaps within the memory of any man now living'.<sup>25</sup> His conviction was 'that we could get from England nothing but what we could wring from her'.<sup>26</sup> Only non-constitutional agitation would be efficacious in an unfree country, he believed. At the same time, mass emigration as a result of the Famine meant that there was an Irish immigrant population in the USA, and especially in New York, among whom anti-British sentiment was rife. In addition, there were a number of 'forty-eight' exiles who were engaged in fund-raising activities and in planning military expeditions from the United States to Ireland, but they

were entirely unrealistic as no revolutionary organisation existed in Ireland.

James Stephens, who had escaped to France after the abortive rising of 1848, together with John O'Mahony came into contact with red republican clubs and communist secret societies, especially those led by Auguste Blanqui, during their stay in Paris.<sup>27</sup> Later, in the 1870s, Stephens was to deny having any socialist tendencies. Of Fenianism he said: 'It was wholly and unequivocally democratic although the utopian or childish theories of continental socialists did not by any means form part and parcel of my programme'.<sup>28</sup> Stephens had a deep hatred of landlordism, and his democratic principles were international, not simply confined to the question of Ireland: 'I would fight for an abstract principle of right in defence of *any* country; and were England a republic battling for human freedom on the one hand, and Ireland leagued with despots on the other, I should, unhesitatingly, take up arms against my native land'.<sup>29</sup> To him, the struggle for an Irish Republic was part of a broader international conflict in which he saw the British working class, as well as the European revolutionary movements of the period, as allies in the Irish struggle for freedom. Stephens was later to become a member of the First International.<sup>30</sup>

Although Head Centre for a number of years, Stephens was not essentially typical of the Fenian movement. Others, such as Jeremiah O'Donnovan Rossa, had a much narrower understanding of the aims of Fenianism. The taking up of arms to sustain Irish national identity through heroic self-sacrifice was an important aspect of the movement. Stephens and other leaders insisted on its non-sectarian nature, but within the consciousness of the broad Irish population Fenianism was nationalist and catholic, and it is certainly these two latter characteristics which have been associated with Fenianism down to the present day.<sup>31</sup> That other aspect of Fenianism, its radical democratic nature and connection with British radicalism, has been largely neglected by historians.<sup>32</sup>

Returning to Ireland in 1856, Stephens commenced a tour of the countryside to establish whether the time was propitious for the organisation of a revolutionary movement. He was convinced that any movement to gain national independence must be based on the support of the Irish working people. He did not succeed in winning the former Young Irelander Smith O'Brien over to his idea. O'Brien, who had the unification of the classes in mind, remarked: 'If not supported by the educated and influential classes, the movement could only degenerate into Communism, as there is in the instinct of the *plebs* a tendency to equalisation of wealth and to other impossibilities'. Stephens commented: 'I never counted on what is usually styled "respectable people"'.<sup>33</sup> The actual

Fenian movement was started not in Ireland, but in New York in 1855, with the Emmet Monument Association, which was organising and drilling once a week. This was the organisation from which, according to Joseph Denieffe, sprung a few years later the Fenian Brotherhood.<sup>34</sup> Shortly after Stephens's visit to the US in 1859, the American Fenian organisation got under way with the founding of the newspaper, *The Phoenix*, O'Mahony giving it the name Fenian Brotherhood.<sup>35</sup> The organisation was established in Ireland on St. Patrick's Day, 1858. Originally named the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, it came to be known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), with James Stephens as chief organiser. The spreading of propaganda was greatly helped by the establishment of the newspaper *The Irish People* in 1863. Like the *Nation* previously, ballad poetry had the merit of immediate appeal to popular feeling, although John O'Leary comments on the low level of poetic style of the majority of contributors.<sup>36</sup> Devoy was of the opinion that '*The Irish People* revived the spirit created and fostered by the old *Nation* and the Young Irelanders and carried down their teachings to a new generation'.<sup>37</sup>

From the beginning Stephens made his aim clear. In his diary he wrote: 'My firm resolution is to establish a democratic republic in Ireland, that is a republic for the weal of the toiler'.<sup>38</sup> The IRB, as it was conceived in 1858, was a secret, oath-bound society—a conspiracy the aim of which, generally speaking, was to establish an Irish republic by extra-parliamentary means. Despite Stephens's own opinions on the social question, the struggle was viewed basically as a political one, to free Ireland from foreign control. Although Stephens found the Ribbon societies one of the best recruiting grounds for the IRB, he did not consider the land question a unifying factor. 'I found the labourers and mechanics would never join the tenantry shoulder to shoulder in the enterprise.'<sup>39</sup> The leaders of the Fenian movement, both in the States and Ireland, were lower middle-class intellectuals, but the bulk of the movement was recruited from the rural and urban working classes. In contrast to the Young Irelanders, the Fenian movement was very much a lower orders movement. In the USA, the early American Fenians were nearly all manual workers.<sup>40</sup> In Ireland, Fenians were most readily recruited from among shop assistants and skilled artisans in the towns and from the Ribbon societies in the countryside.<sup>41</sup> Women's role in the Fenian movement was largely supportive. A Fenian Sisterhood existed in the USA, and in Ireland the Ladies Committee did exceptional work in the field of fund raising, especially when arrests began in 1865. Individual women were involved in arms-smuggling.<sup>42</sup>

The Fenian movement did not have a social revolutionary programme, but its very existence as a working-class revolutionary organisation



presented a challenge to the authority of the protestant ascendancy, the British government, and the catholic middle class.<sup>41</sup> The catholic church, under Cardinal Cullen, condemned Fenianism in no uncertain terms, seeing in it the same revolutionary spirit as in continental revolutionaries.<sup>44</sup> The Fenians presented a much stronger threat to the British government than the Young Irelanders had. This can be seen in government reaction to Fenian activity. The treatment of Fenian prisoners was, on the whole, much harsher than that of the Young Irelanders. Here, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa is a prime example. Sentenced to hard labour, he described the methods of torture to which he had been subjected in a letter smuggled out of prison. 'I was harnessed to a cart with a rope tied round my neck. This knot was fastened to a long shaft and two English prisoners received orders to prevent the cart from bouncing. But they refrained from doing this, the shaft rose up into the air and the knot came undone. If it had tightened I would be dead.'<sup>45</sup> Another example is the case of the Manchester Martyrs in 1867. Defended by the former Chartist leader Ernest Jones, all five were finally sentenced to death. One was subsequently pardoned and another sentenced to life imprisonment, but three were ultimately executed, despite lack of evidence. The trial aroused a storm of protest in England and Ireland. The General Council of the International Working Men's Association met in November 1867 to discuss the Irish question and the trial of the Manchester Fenians. There it was stated: 'Fenianism is the vindication by an oppressed people of its right to social and political existence. The Fenian declarations leave no room for doubt in this respect. They affirm the republican form of government, liberty of conscience, no State religion, the produce of labour to the labourer, and the possession of the soil to the people'.<sup>46</sup> A petition presented to the Home Secretary requesting the commutation of the sentence passed on the Fenian prisoners was ignored by the British government.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels supported the struggle for Irish self-determination.<sup>47</sup> Although condemning individual acts of terrorism perpetrated by Fenians in England, such as the Clerkenwell explosion in 1867, Marx, Engels and their families supported fully the amnesty movement for the release of Fenian prisoners. On the event of the execution of the Manchester Martyrs, Engels mentions in a letter to Marx: 'I need not tell you that black and green predominate in my home too'.<sup>48</sup> Here he refers to the sympathy his wife, Lizzy Burns, a working woman of Irish descent, felt for the Fenian movement. The Fenians' connections with the First International (IWMA) is indeed a remarkable chapter in the history of Fenianism. Like the Young Irelanders who looked for support among English Chartists for the Irish cause, Fenians sought an alliance

with the British radical movement. Stephens also had a meeting with the French revolutionary Gustave Cluseret, later to command the army of the Paris Commune in 1871, offering him command of the Fenian forces in Ireland.<sup>49</sup> In preparation for a rising in early 1867, Thomas Kelly and Cluseret approached the English radical Charles Bradlaugh to secure his opinion on the 'Proclamation of the Irish Republic'.<sup>50</sup> This document underlines the radical democratic character of the republic they had in mind: 'We aim at founding a republic based on universal suffrage, which shall secure to all the intrinsic value of their labour. The soil of Ireland at present in the possession of an oligarchy belongs to us, the Irish people, and to us it must be restored. We declare also in favour of absolute liberty of conscience, and the complete separation of Church and state'.<sup>51</sup> The final section is an appeal to the English working class to fight alongside them and to take up arms 'in the coming struggle for human freedom'.<sup>52</sup>

The actual rising when it finally took place on 5 March 1867, was a failure. Stephens had been deposed as Head Centre following his procrastination concerning the date for a rising, which was influenced, no doubt, by the split in the American movement. Cluseret refused to lead a force that was inadequately armed. Godfrey Massey, an Irish-American officer, was appointed to command the Fenian forces, but instead of keeping to a guerrilla strategy, which had been planned as the first stage, he decided to go ahead with a full-scale rising, a recipe for disaster.<sup>53</sup> As a military conspiracy, Fenianism was unsuccessful, but the organisation remained in existence, though much decimated, and members of the military council planned the Easter rising of 1916. As a revolutionary idea which had as its base the establishment of a democratic republic, it was to live on and give inspiration to the developing national liberation struggle in Ireland. It was later to inspire the former Fenian Michael Davitt with a policy of 'New Departure', combining nationalism, in the form of Home Rule agitation, with the demand of land for the people in the Land League, and it was to lead to an alliance between republicanism and socialism in Easter Week. We can trace a connection between the Fenian Proclamation for a democratic republic of 1867 and the Proclamation read out by Pádraig Pearse on the steps of the GPO on Easter Monday, 1916.

To a certain extent the Young Ireland and Fenian movements of the nineteenth century were a retrograde step as far as the Enlightenment philosophy of the United Irishmen is concerned. In certain Young Irelanders and Fenians there was the narrowing down of republicanism to a parochial concept of nationalism. On the other hand, however, republican ideals were further elaborated. With the Young Irelanders came the idea of nationhood and cultural identity as essential aspects of republicanism, and the ideas of Lalor and Mitchel that the social question and the

national question in Ireland are inextricably entwined were to influence the political thought of both Michael Davitt and James Connolly. The democratic appeal of Fenianism to the lower classes, and in this respect Fenianism was a greater mass popular movement than Young Ireland ever was, inspired James Connolly to write in *Labour in Irish History*: 'It is no wonder that the real nationalists of Ireland, the Separatists, have always been men of broad human sympathies and intense democracy, for it has ever been in the heart of the working class at home they found the most loyal support, and in the working class abroad their most resolute defenders'.<sup>54</sup> Connolly was to insist that his concept of a socialist republic concurred with the democratic ideals of past republicans. 'A socialist republic is the application to agriculture and industry; to the farm, the field, the workshop, of the democratic principle of the republican ideal.'<sup>55</sup>

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> J.C. Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland 1603-1923* (London: Faber & Faber 1969), p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> G. Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland Before the Famine* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan 1972), p. 162.

<sup>3</sup> T.A. Jackson, *Ireland Her Own* (London: Lawrence & Wishart 1971), p. 230.

<sup>4</sup> G. Ó Tuathaigh, pp. 186-187.

<sup>5</sup> T. Keneally, *The Great Shame* (London: Vintage 1999), p. 154.

<sup>6</sup> C.G. Duffy, *A Short Life of Thomas Davis* (London: Fisher Unwin 1895), p. 71.

<sup>7</sup> Op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>8</sup> T.A. Jackson, p. 231.

<sup>9</sup> S. Cronin, *Irish Nationalism. A History of its Roots and Ideology* (Dublin: Academy Press 1980), p. 73.

<sup>10</sup> Op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>12</sup> T.A. Jackson, p. 231.

In his book *A Soul Came into Ireland, Thomas Davis 1814-1845* (Dublin: Geography Publications 1995), John Molony shows that Davis's concept of *nationality* was not simply that of a romantic dreamer, but in Ireland's situation it was a political force to be reckoned with. To Davis the nation was an amalgam of all its parts (catholic and protestant). His own special mission he saw as helping to create that nation, 'by diffusing in song and story and article the deepest meaning of nationality', (p. 157. See also pp. 142 and 224). Molony points out that Davis never used the word *nationalism*, but *nationality* which was 'not merely a sentiment but a conviction shaped by his own experience as an Irishman exposed to the conditions of his country and her people since the Union'. (Op. cit. p. 99). According to Anthony Smith in *National Identity* (London: Penguin 1991), *nationalism* as a political ideology with a cultural doctrine emerged in the eighteenth century. The idea that each nation had its individual 'genius', its own ways of thinking, acting and communicating, which had to be conserved or even rediscovered was voiced by Montesquieu and Rousseau in France, and by Herder in Germany. The concept of *unity*, particularly in its meaning of social cohesion, 'the brotherhood of all nationals in the nation' (p. 76) was one of the central ideas of eighteenth-century republicanism. The concept of *autonomy* as categorical imperative stems from the German philosopher Kant who applied it to the self-determination of the individual. In the nineteenth century, German writers such as Fichte and Schlegel used the term to refer to

groups, giving rise to a philosophy of national self-determination. (See p. 75).

*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford 1993, states that the term *nationalism* as advocacy of or support for national independence was used from the mid-nineteenth century and quotes M.B. Brown: 'The nation state and ... nationalism are inextricably associated with the rise of the capitalist state'.

<sup>13</sup> C.G. Duffy, op. cit., p. 190.

<sup>14</sup> L. Fogerty, *James Fintan Lalor* (Dublin: Talbot Press 1921), p. 120.

<sup>15</sup> T.A. Jackson, op. cit., p. 252.

<sup>16</sup> J. Mitchel, *History of Ireland* (London: Washbourne n.d.), p. 244.

<sup>17</sup> *United Irishman*, April 22, 1848.

<sup>18</sup> J. Mitchel, op. cit., p. 254.

<sup>19</sup> *United Irishman*, April 1, 1848.

<sup>20</sup> J. Mitchel, *Jail Journal* (Dublin: Gill n.d.), p. 78.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>22</sup> T. Keneally, op. cit., p. 308.

This can be explained, at least partially, by Mitchel's hatred of capitalism, represented by the northern states—his comment that Irish seamstresses and navvies were in greatest need of liberation—and his possible belief that the Irish peasant was worse off than the slave in a southern household.

<sup>23</sup> G. Ó Tuathaigh, op. cit., p. 201.

<sup>24</sup> The Tenant Right League of North and South was formed in the 1850s, the chief objects of which were fixity of tenure, lower rents and legal protection for Ulster tenant right. It was a non-sectarian organisation which stressed parliamentary action. The opportunism of the middle-class catholic leaders, its condemnation by the catholic hierarchy and ascendancy landlords alike, led to its final disintegration.

<sup>25</sup> J. O'Leary, *Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism*, vol. 1 (Shannon: Irish University Press 1968), p. 57.

<sup>26</sup> Op. cit., pp. 56-57.

<sup>27</sup> T.A. Jackson, op. cit., p. 276.

<sup>28</sup> P. Rose, *The Manchester Martyrs: The Story of a Fenian Tragedy* (London: Lawrence & Wishart 1970), p. 80.

<sup>29</sup> D. Ryan, *The Fenian Chief. A Biography of James Stephens* (Dublin and Sydney: Gill & Son 1967), p. 84.

<sup>30</sup> P. Metscher, *Republicanism and Socialism in Ireland* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang 1986), p. 118.

<sup>31</sup> J. Newsinger, *Fenianism in Mid-Victorian Britain* (London: Pluto Press 1994), pp. 37ff.

<sup>32</sup> Newsinger has tried to redress the balance by situating the Fenian movement not only in the context of Irish politics and society, but also in that of nineteenth-century British history and the history of the British Empire, (op. cit., p. 3). For information concerning the connection between Fenianism and the First International, see P. Metscher, op. cit., pp. 153-165.

<sup>33</sup> D. Ryan, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>34</sup> J. Denieffe, *A Personal Narrative of the Fenian Brotherhood* (Irish University Press 1969), p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> T.D. Williams (ed.), *Secret Societies in Ireland* (Gill & Macmillan 1973), p. 82.

<sup>36</sup> O'Leary, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>37</sup> J. Devoy, *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* (Shannon: IUP 1969), p. 46.

<sup>38</sup> D. Ryan, op. cit., p. 133.

<sup>39</sup> Op. cit., p. 65.

- <sup>40</sup> E. Strauss, *Irish Nationalism and British Democracy* (London: Methuen 1951), p. 145.
- <sup>41</sup> One of the most remarkable feats of the organisation was the recruitment of Fenians in the armed forces, (J. Devoy, op. cit., p. 130).
- <sup>42</sup> R.J. Comerford, *The Fenians in Context* (Dublin: Wolfhound 1998), p. 10.  
In his book, Comerford diminishes Fenianism as a revolutionary movement, placing it on the level of 'colliery brass bands and the beginnings of association football'. Fenianism (spelt significantly throughout with a small 'f') is reduced to a leisure pursuit and its importance as a broad, radical political movement is minimised. This revisionist work reveals a conservative hostility towards anything radical and detracts from an otherwise important contribution to an empirical knowledge of the movement.
- <sup>43</sup> J. Newsinger, op. cit., p. 32.
- <sup>44</sup> Op. cit., p. 38.
- <sup>45</sup> *Marx and Engels on Ireland* (London: Lawrence & Wishart 1971), p. 383.
- <sup>46</sup> Op. cit., p. 369.
- <sup>47</sup> Marx considered that it was 'in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland'. Op. cit., p. 162.
- <sup>48</sup> Op. cit., pp. 145-146.
- <sup>49</sup> J. Newsinger, op. cit., p. 51.
- <sup>50</sup> Op. cit., p. 54.
- <sup>51</sup> R. Kee, *The Bold Fenian Men*, vol. 2 of *The Green Flag* (London: Quartett Books 1976), p. 38.
- <sup>52</sup> Loc. cit.
- <sup>53</sup> J. Newsinger, op. cit., p. 56.
- <sup>54</sup> J. Connolly, *Labour in Irish History* (Dublin: New Books 1973), p. 127.
- <sup>55</sup> J. Connolly, *The Workers' Republic* (Dublin: Three Candles 1951), pp. 50-51.

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