

Petticoat Revolutionaries: Gender, Ethnic Nationalism, and the Irish Ladies' Land League in the United States

ELY M. JANIS

THOUSANDS OF IRISH AMERICAN women created and participated in a vibrant Ladies' Land League in the United States in the early 1880s. These women embraced Irish nationalism and, through their activism, asserted a public role in their communities. Most historians have neglected the involvement of Irish American women in Irish nationalism in the United States. The few that have mentioned their participation in nationalist movements have largely dismissed their contributions. Instead, historians have focused primarily on their impact as economic contributors, particularly their roles as domestic servants and teachers.¹ A close look at the historical record, however, indicates that large numbers of women were active in Irish nationalism and that their participation provided them with an opportunity to declare their desire for a public voice and inclusion within the male-dominated realm of Irish American nationalist activity and public life.

Though intended originally as a way to strengthen Irish American support for Ireland, the Ladies' Land League in the United States quickly became a vehicle for Irish American women to assert their own American-based concerns and ideological convictions. Among the members of the Ladies' Land League, two divergent visions of its purpose emerged: a more conservative belief that the movement should focus exclusively on social and political reform in Ireland, and a more radical view that reform in Ireland should be linked to social reform in the United States. These differences of opinion demonstrate women's conflicting ideological conceptions of Irish nationalism and belie claims of women's aversion to public activity and Irish nationalist politics. It is only with the inclusion of women that a full understanding can be achieved of the impact of Irish nationalism on the Irish American experience in the United States.

TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION TO IRISH AMERICAN WOMEN'S PUBLIC ACTIVITY

Historians in the last twenty years have challenged the use of the metaphor of separate spheres to describe women's public and private activity in American society. Separate spheres ideology leaves us with only a partial picture of the full range of women's experiences. Instead, Linda Kerber has argued, historians should treat the "language of separate spheres itself as a rhetorical construction that responded to changing social and economic reality."² An examination of the prescriptive literature directed towards women when compared to the actual experiences of Irish American women helps to demonstrate the challenges and opportunities facing women's public participation within the Irish American organizations of the late nineteenth century.

Strong support for confining women's activity to the home was found among many Irish American Catholic leaders. These leaders, earnest to gain equal status and respectability within native-born American society, advocated an idealized view that woman's proper role was in the home and that it was in the home where a woman could best exercise her superior moral and spiritual rule over her family. Women participating in the public arena went against the Victorian ideal of "true womanhood" advocated in American religious literature, advice manuals, and women's magazines and represented by "four cardinal virtues—piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity."³ In his popular advice manual, *Mirror of True Womanhood* (1876), the Reverend Bernard O'Reilly of New York wrote that "No woman animated by the Spirit of her Baptism . . . ever fancied that she had or could have any other sphere of duty or activity than that home which is her domain, her garden, her paradise, her world."⁴ The public world of men was tainted and corrupt, O'Reilly argued, and women had to remain outside of politics to maintain their purity. Enconced in the home, women were expected to provide a sanctuary for their husbands from the rough and tumble of the outside world while also raising the next generation and teaching them good Catholic morals. For a woman to move outside the home endangered not only a woman and her family but also challenged the orderly running of society. This ideal of true womanhood was oftentimes reinforced and encouraged by clerical and lay leadership, in newspapers, and sometimes by women themselves.

Of course, for many Irish American women, "true womanhood" was an idealized state that was both unrealistic and unwelcome. Hasia Diner argues instead that "Irish women viewed themselves as self-sufficient beings, with

economic roles to play in their families and communities.”⁵ Irish women played important roles in a variety of occupations in the late-nineteenth-century American economy. They were among the first labor activists and organizers in America’s mills and factories. After the Irish famine, large numbers of Irish immigrant women settled in New England’s burgeoning textile towns and made up a large percentage of the workforce.⁶ Irish women were also prominent in the Knights of Labor, and they participated in a variety of boycotts, strikes, and other forms of economic protest.⁷ American-born Irish women embraced occupations like teaching as careers, and these women generally experienced significantly higher occupational mobility than Irish males in the United States.⁸ Women’s wages were a crucial element in the economic health of Irish American households and helped support Irish families in the United States and Ireland. For such women, a life removed from the public world of wage labor and capitalist production was hardly a reality.

Irish American women were most prominent in domestic service. Predominantly unmarried, these servants enjoyed an autonomy unheard of in Ireland.⁹ Irish American servants also received relatively good wages, as their room and board were borne by their employers and, as Diane Hotten-Somers demonstrates, they “increasingly entered the public sphere as consumers,” purchasing the latest fashions and attending theaters and other forms of entertainment.¹⁰ Despite their relative autonomy and economic power, Irish American women—outside of participation in church activities—were excluded from male-dominated Irish Catholic reform movements.

The reasons for this exclusion can be found within the ideology and practice of nineteenth-century Catholic reform. Catholic reformers, oftentimes from the newly established Irish American middle class, in movements like temperance, were anxious to assert their respectability and fitness for American society and to disprove Protestant claims of Irish laziness and drunkenness. These concerns led to important differences between Protestant and Catholic temperance efforts. Catholic men excluded women from temperance reform to avoid charges from other Catholics of “unmanliness,” as some men saw temperance reform as an attack on the male-dominated world of social drinking and male camaraderie. In contrast, women dominated the Protestant temperance movement and tended to view alcohol abuse, in large part, as an integral problem with immigrant culture.¹¹ Protestant reformers attempted to enact temperance by pressuring legislators to pass prohibition statutes. Catholics were skeptical about the wisdom of pursuing legislative solutions, preferring to base their appeals upon moral suasion and abstinence. To overcome criticisms of being overly gloomy

and dull, Catholic temperance reformers attempted to add an element of fraternal sociability to their gatherings and organizations in order to bring men together under the banner of moral reform.¹² Women were not welcome at such gatherings, even though women and children were often the ones who bore the brunt of the terrible costs of men's alcohol abuse.

As with the temperance movement, Irish American women had been precluded from participation in Irish American nationalist and benevolent organizations. Irish and Irish American nationalists committed to the violent overthrow of British rule in Ireland saw their activity as a manly pursuit outside the realm of women's participation. One exception was the Fenian Sisterhood of the 1860s, but it was short-lived and lacked widespread appeal.¹³ The traditional social segregation of Irish American men and women reinforced this separation. The world of the saloon and fraternal sociability belonged to men and was an oasis from the influence of women.¹⁴ Within the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), an Irish American benevolent and social organization founded in 1836, the ladies' auxiliaries were given official recognition only in 1894.¹⁵ Thus, women's public participation in the Land League struggle represented a new form of political activism for Irish American women.

THE IRISH LADIES' LAND LEAGUE IN THE UNITED STATES

The Land League began in County Mayo, Ireland, in 1879, against the backdrop of crop failure, bad weather, and agrarian unrest. It quickly became a national movement for land reform under the leadership of Michael Davitt, a former Fenian and agrarian reformer, and Charles Stewart Parnell, an Anglo-Irish landlord and leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party. The aim of the Land League was to exploit rural unrest in Ireland to gain what became known as the "three Fs": fair rents fixed by independent appraisal, fixity of tenure for tenants as long as rent was not in arrears, and the free sale of improvements made to holdings. It was also an attempt to create a popular movement to diminish British control of Ireland. Because of its widespread popular support across Catholic Irish society, many Irish parliamentary leaders, agrarian reformers, and committed revolutionaries were willing to overlook their differences and participate under the single banner of the Land League.¹⁶

In 1880, both Davitt and Parnell undertook extensive fund-raising tours of the United States. Over the course of three months, Parnell traveled over sixteen thousand miles, spoke in sixty-two towns and cities, addressed a joint

session of Congress, and raised more than \$300,000 for famine relief and the Land League.¹⁷ Parnell also assembled a group of leading East Coast Irish Americans and founded a branch of the American Land League in New York in early 1880 before returning to Ireland. Members soon made efforts to expand the movement in the United States, and a national American Land League was organized in May 1880. Though its popularity would soon explode, by January 1881 the American Land League had only 292 branches.¹⁸ The slow growth of the League led to the decision to enroll women in the movement.

The impetus for involving women in the American Land League movement came from Charles Stewart Parnell's sister, Fanny Parnell. Her American-born mother, Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell, raised Fanny and her sister Anna alone, after the early death of her husband. She was the daughter of an American naval hero, Captain Charles Stewart, commander of the frigate USS *Constitution*.¹⁹ Under Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell's care, the sisters gained a much more independent upbringing than most women of their class. They always valued their autonomy, and neither of them married.²⁰ Although their father's estate provided for their education, little else was left of their inheritance, and the sisters were left in a financially precarious position throughout their lives. Despite this financial uncertainty, Anna and Fanny Parnell were able to make their living through writing, and they both acquired a relative amount of literary success. Fanny was a talented poet, and from an early age she was active in Irish nationalist literary endeavors. Her first published foray into poetry had been at the age of fifteen in 1864 in the *Irish People*, a Fenian newspaper edited by John O'Leary, acquiring minor fame for her poems in Ireland and America. Anna published an article, "How They Do in the House of Commons: Notes from the Ladies' Cage," an account of the 1877 British parliamentary session.

The Parnell sisters were active in the Land League from its inception. Fanny, residing at the time in Bordentown, New Jersey, with her mother and Anna, sent a letter to the *Boston Pilot* on September 6, 1879, calling on Irish Americans to help alleviate the misery in Ireland. "Could not a subscription be raised," she asked, "to help the most distressing cases in some of the Western counties? Will not the Irish here, who can afford it, give something from their conveniences here to help our countrymen in their terrible need?"²¹ The *Boston Pilot* responded to this letter by opening a collection and calling on subscribers to send money for forwarding to Ireland. In early 1880, the sisters helped organize their brother Charles Stewart Parnell's tour across the United States and were fixtures at the New York Land League branch office, working ten-hour days for the relief

committee. Anna Parnell returned to Ireland soon after, leaving Fanny (who would stay in the United States until her death) alone in New Jersey with their mother.²²

Fanny Parnell's poetry provided important inspiration in the early days of the Land League movement. Though an advocate for nonviolent agitation, her nationalist poetry, with its martial and dramatic imagery, was a call for action and enthusiasm to Irish people in the United States and Ireland in the 1880s. Several of her verses were published in the *Boston Pilot* and were widely reprinted elsewhere. Her most famous poem, "Hold the Harvest," was addressed to Irish farmers in 1880:

Oh, by the God who made us all—
The seignior and the serf—
Rise up! and swear this day to hold
Your own green Irish turf;
Rise up! and plant your feet as men
Where now you crawl as slaves,
And make the harvest fields your camps,
Or make them your graves.²³

Referred to by Michael Davitt as the *Marseillaise* of the Land League movement, this poem, as well as others, called on Irish men to continue the struggle in Ireland until victory was achieved.²⁴ She hoped that the Land League would lead to Ireland's eventual political independence.

Looking at the progress of the American Land League in the summer of 1880, however, Fanny Parnell believed that the movement was not growing rapidly enough. After consulting with Michael Davitt, Fanny decided to form a Ladies' Land League of America in the hope that competition from women would spur fund-raising efforts. On August 12, 1880, she sent a letter titled "The Coming Struggle" to the *Irish World* and several other newspapers, calling on Irish American women to organize. "Compassion and enthusiasm," she argued, "are woman's attributes and these are two things that are essentially needed in this Land League work."²⁵ Fanny Parnell called on Irish American women to lend their aid to Ireland, appealing to their patriotism.

Irish American women rallied behind Fanny Parnell's call to organize. On October 15, 1880, a meeting was held in New York City to establish the New York Branch of the Ladies' Irish National Land League. Participants elected Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell president, Ellen Ford (sister of the radical journalist and editor Patrick Ford) and Fanny Parnell vice presidents, and Jane Byrne secretary. More than a hundred women joined the organization,

which adopted the constitution and bylaws of the men's Land League of America. Irish American newspapers across the United States reported on the new league, and Fanny Parnell was "overwhelmed with applications for copies of our constitution, for letters to be read out at meetings, for advice on how to organize, etc." and for two months "wrote letters incessantly, day and night."²⁶ Shortly after the establishment of the New York branch, local women organized Ladies' Land League branches in St. Louis and San Francisco.²⁷

Branches of the Ladies' Land League quickly spread across the country, from Boston to Kansas City, Savannah to New Orleans, and as far west as California. Local Irish American women organized and shaped the agendas of these local leagues, and the national leadership had little direct control. Women chaired the meetings, though men were often in attendance, and members elected their own officers, gave speeches, and passed resolutions. Thus, participation in local branches allowed Irish American women to carve out their own spaces within their communities and define their own priorities themselves.

It is impossible to know exactly how many women joined the Ladies' Land League, as no actual membership statistics have survived, but it is possible to make an educated estimate. In January 1881, Ellen Ford reported that twenty-five Ladies' Land Leagues had been organized with a total membership of five thousand, an average of two hundred women in each branch.²⁸ A tally of Ladies' Land League branch announcements in the *Irish World* newspaper, which provided the best coverage of the Land League, from January to December 1881, yields 150 total branches.²⁹ This total includes only branches that corresponded with the *Irish World*, and thus the actual number may be quite higher. When these numbers are added to Ford's earlier report, by conservatively estimating that each branch possessed sixty members, the membership of the Ladies' Land League totals at least ten thousand.³⁰ The number may actually be substantially higher. Hartford, Connecticut, alone had three branches with two thousand total members, while Philadelphia had six hundred members and Woonsocket, Rhode Island, over three hundred.³¹ Irrespective of the precise total, the relatively large number of women involved demonstrates the importance of examining women's participation in the Ladies' Land League in expanding our understanding of Irish American women's activities in the late nineteenth century.

Irish American women's most important contribution to the Land League was the financial contributions they raised and sent to Ireland. Irish American financial support was crucial to keeping the costly Land League agitation in Ireland going. The fund-raising prowess of the women in the Ladies'

Land League was impressive. Catholic women had extensive prior fundraising experience from their participation in parish church fairs, in which women were the chief organizers, workers, and collectors of money.³² This expertise helps explain female Land Leaguers' financial acumen. It is not possible to quantify the funds sent by women to Ireland, as branches sent money through several sources, including the *Irish World* and the official Land League treasurer, Father Lawrence Walsh. Oftentimes, the funds were sent directly to Ireland. A tally of the donations made to the Land League Fund of the *Irish World* by local branches of the league from January 31, 1881, to December 31, 1881, totaled \$15,393.³³ The overall total, however, must have been substantially higher, as the New York Central Branch of the Ladies' Land League alone, of which Fanny Parnell was secretary, transmitted \$1,405 directly to Ireland.³⁴ Initiation fees could be as low as 25¢, as they were in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.³⁵ These low membership fees allowed Irish American women across the economic spectrum to participate, bringing in not just upper- and middle-class women but also members of the working class. This strategy echoed the example of Daniel O'Connell's "Catholic Rent" in the 1820s in Ireland, whereby a penny a month was collected from Catholics of all classes, which raised substantial sums because of the large number of people involved.

The important efforts made by Irish American women in support of the Land League did not go unnoticed in Ireland. Inspired by the success of the Ladies' Land League in America, Michael Davitt founded a Ladies' Land League in Ireland on January 31, 1881. Davitt argued that since the male leaders of the movement were increasingly being arrested and Land League meetings suppressed under emergency coercion bills, Irish women should be recruited to carry on the cause. Davitt believed that women would support the movement and provide leadership. Also, if the British government used coercion and arrested Irish women, it would place the British government in the uncomfortable position of attacking Irish womanhood and further garner support for Ireland's cause abroad.³⁶ Anna Parnell accepted the presidency, and the Ladies' Land League in Ireland proved to be a vigorous organization. Indeed, after the arrest of almost all the male leaders by mid-1881, the Ladies' Land League in Ireland became the driving force in the land agitation.³⁷

THE AMERICAN LADIES' LAND LEAGUE AND WOMEN'S PUBLIC ROLE

Irish American women joined the Ladies' Land League for a variety of reasons. Many welcomed the opportunity to demonstrate their intelligence

and competence. Women “were possessed of as much intelligence as men,” Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell declared to a Ladies’ Land League audience in Jersey City, New Jersey, and they “had formerly proved themselves to be as strong, both mentally and physically, as the sterner sex.”³⁸ Unfortunately, however, the greater occupational mobility Irish American women experienced in the late nineteenth century had not translated into leadership roles in American Irish society. Participation in the Ladies’ Land League allowed women to feel a sense of pride and exhibit their fitness for public leadership in their local communities.

Women who joined the movement also argued that they were not challenging gender boundaries, but merely practicing their traditional, womanly domestic roles. Concern for the home, they argued, extended to the homeland, Ireland. Fanny Parnell believed that “this Land League business is essentially a woman’s business, because it is essentially a work of philanthropy and humanity.”³⁹ Her mother echoed her concerns, stating that “the characteristic of a virtuous woman is to raise her voice for those who are condemned to destruction.”⁴⁰ The belief in the necessity of providing for despondent and suffering Irish kinfolk placed the responsibility for action on Irish American women and justified their inclusion in male-dominated nationalist politics. Rallying public opinion against British aggression was another important responsibility facing Irish American women. As Ellen Ford asserted, “I believe in women’s rights—that is woman’s right to protest against injustice. It is charitable to feed the hungry but uncharitable not to protest against laws that make paupers.”⁴¹ Thus, despite the fact that many Irish American women’s lives were not confined to the home, women in the Ladies’ Land League were willing to use the rhetoric of domesticity to assert their fitness for public participation in Irish nationalism.

Membership in the League was also a way for Irish American women to assert their respectability in American society. This can be seen in their decision to title their organization “Ladies’ League” instead of “women’s” or “females” league. In an interview, Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell claimed that while many of the Ladies’ Land League’s members were “servant girls,” the “word ‘lady’ has been enlarged to include almost all women in this country. As long as the ‘German ladies’ hold their festivals and the ‘colored ladies’ go on a picnic, the Irish ladies propose to manifest also their own dignity and *amour propre*.”⁴² Using the term “ladies” was a conscious decision by Irish American women to assert their gentility, which was often challenged in American public culture by such stereotypes as Bridget (the young, lazy, and gullible newly arrived immigrant domestic) and Biddy (the older, oafish, and rebellious servant). Irish American women insisted that they were as

worthy of respect as their Anglo-American counterparts. Members were also anxious to emphasize to men and clergymen that despite their participation in the hitherto male-dominated nationalist movement, they retained their respectability and femininity.⁴³

The adoption of “ladies” was also an expression of middle-class Irish American women’s attempts to create and impose their own definition of the nature of Irish American womanhood on their poorer countrywomen. Kerby Miller has argued that “middle-class [Irish American] immigrants could not gain status in American society until they had both mobilized the Irish American masses, to demonstrate their political leverage, and imposed bourgeois norms on them, to reassure the host society’s governing classes that the group was sufficiently ‘civilized.’”⁴⁴ While Miller focuses primarily on Irish American men, such a conceptual framework could help explain part of the motivation for elite women to join the Land League movement. If such a motivation was prevalent, then elites faced a difficult task in imposing their bourgeois norms upon the movement. Severe ideological disagreement existed within the Ladies’ Land League—which will be discussed shortly—over the purpose and goals of the movement and led to acrimony and strife among its members.

The Ladies’ Land League provided a forum not just for discussing Ireland’s ills but also for sociability. “The meetings of the Ladies’ Land League of the Seventh Ward [New York City],” declared the *Irish-American*, “partake more of the character of social reunions than of the stereotyped, stiff-necked business meeting.”⁴⁵ Many branches gave picnics and hosted weekend excursions, combining their concern for Ireland with recreational outings. Colleen McDannell has found that American Catholic reformers in the late nineteenth century, uneasy with the rowdiness and, oftentimes, alcohol-driven sociability of Irish American men, argued that “honor, character, orderliness, future-orientation and piety ripened in the company of women” and pressured Irish American men to “integrate their already too tight male bonds with domestic sentiments.”⁴⁶ Irish American men and women were brought together in social settings under the rubric of the Land League. Alongside their political aims to establish Irish freedom, the male and female Land Leagues provided an outlet for Irish American male and female sociability.

The Ladies’ Land League urged women to act not in a subordinate role but to assert themselves morally and intellectually. Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell and Ellen Ford took several barnstorming tours across the eastern United States and in their public addresses called on Irish American women to join the Land League cause. At a meeting in Brooklyn, New York, Parnell

praised the knowledge of Irish American women, stating, “They understand the land question; they don’t want anyone to preach to them about the value of land” and exhorted women to “go to lectures on religion, education, and industrial matters.”⁴⁷ By educating themselves, women could make their own decisions on the political and economic issues of the times in Ireland and America. Irish American women’s activity in the Land League cause would spur not only the Irish in America but also their kinsfolk in Ireland. “The women are firing the first shot,” Ford declared, “and are going to keep this thing going until it goes round the world.”⁴⁸

Despite the earlier exclusion of women from nationalist activities, the vast majority of male Land Leaguers in America welcomed and praised women’s participation in the Land League movement. John Boyle O’Reilly, editor of the *Boston Pilot*, remarked of the Ladies’ Land League, that it “is one of the most interesting and may grow to be one of the most potent phases of this great movement.”⁴⁹ Support for the Ladies’ Land League was not confined solely to the Irish Catholic laity. Many local clergy vigorously supported the Ladies’ Land League and welcomed women as fellow workers in the cause of Irish freedom. At a reception in Boston for Fanny Parnell, commentators noted that no less than a dozen Catholic priests were present.⁵⁰ The pastor of the parish of the Central Falls, Rhode Island, league offered all parish collections to the branch.⁵¹

Some members of the American Catholic hierarchy, however, did not share such a favorable opinion of women’s participation in the movement. On March 17, 1881, Bishop Grace of St. Paul, Minnesota, in his St. Patrick’s Day address, denounced the formation of Ladies’ Land Leagues. He declared, “There is something about the calling out of mothers and daughters from their homes at night to form leagues and hold meetings that does not seem right. The movement I know did not originate with the women themselves. It is in opposition to all their womanly instincts.” This claim, that the women were the dupes of conniving males, was actually a gross distortion, but this was of little consequence to Grace. He finished his exhortation to his flock by pleading for Irish American womanhood to be left alone and to “constrain her not to adopt the rough, unfamiliar ways of men, by holding public meetings for discussion.”⁵²

Grace’s remarks spurred a vigorous defense of the Ladies’ Land League. William Markoe, a prominent Land Leaguer in St. Paul, disagreed with Grace’s assessment and wondered, “whether it is outside of the sphere of a woman’s modesty or woman’s love to tender to the poor, crushed, joyless, heartbroken mothers and children of Ireland.”⁵³ Other commentators questioned the hypocrisy of engaging women to solicit funds for church

purposes and yet denouncing their benevolent concern for their distressed kinfolk in Ireland. As Ellen Ford asked, "No one thinks it wrong for women to beg for church fairs, sell tickets for lotteries, picnics, lectures, etc.; and why should they not form clubs or societies to-day for the relief of the wives, mothers, and sisters in Ireland?"⁵⁴ The response to Grace's pastoral speaks in stark terms to the hazy line between the public and private aspects of many Irish American women's lives. In the end, Grace's warnings were largely ignored.

Why did Irish American men so willing accept women's participation in the Land League movement? One reason may have been that members of the Ladies' Land League made no mention of taking up of arms against the hated enemy, England. Physical warfare and military action were reserved exclusively for males. With such clear gender norms in place, the fear of women adopting manly and aggressive behavior was tempered by the knowledge that if the movement turned violent, women would be relegated once again to the sidelines. Another possible explanation was that some men may have been convinced that women's participation in the Ladies' Land League served as a practical lesson in patriotism and commitment to the homeland that women could pass on to the next generation of Irish patriots.⁵⁵

The most likely reason for male acceptance of women's involvement in the movement, however, may be the simplest: many men did not see women's activism in the Ladies' Land League as a great threat to existing gender and social relationships. In fact, the scattered protests raised against women's participation could be evidence not of women embarking on a completely new path but of a growing concern in the waning decades of the nineteenth century that women were already increasingly active outside of the home. Many Irish American women, in their employment as domestic servants, in industry, or other forms of employment, were engaged in work that was beyond the direct oversight and control of their male family members. As Timothy Meagher asserts, once unmarried women were permitted "the freedom to work outside the household it proved difficult to rein them in and restrict them to the natural place for all women: the home."⁵⁶ Seen in this way, opposition to the Ladies' Land League could have been an attempt to reassert rather than maintain traditional boundaries. But for the many men who saw the Land League as a movement based on moral suasion, such a move would not have been appealing. After all, what could be more natural than to engage women, with their natural moral and spiritual influence, in pursuit of the noble work of Ireland? Through their active and passionate

support of the Land League, women demonstrated to men their value as partners in serving the holy cause of supporting the homeland.

IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE AMERICAN LADIES' LAND LEAGUE

Ladies' Land League organizers had obscured for a time the ideological differences that existed among their members by crafting a broad appeal for Irish American women to participate in the movement. Once women became engaged publicly in support of the movement, however, differences of opinion about the purpose and goals of the organization slowly emerged. A conservative faction within the Ladies' Land League limited its mission to obtaining relief in Ireland, while an economically radical element advocated strongly for the necessity of economic reform, not only in Ireland but in the United States as well. While this difference of opinion ultimately hurt the league's effectiveness, the fact that women were willing openly to air their differences demonstrates their comfortableness with their new public roles. That is, rather than just defending their participation and closing ranks in response to opposition, as might be expected if women were defensive of their position, they instead insisted upon their prerogative in helping to shape the movement's direction.

No clear ideological distinctions can be made based simply on the economic backgrounds of members. Radical and conservative members of the Ladies' Land League were found across all classes. Based on their own everyday experiences and priorities, individual women developed different perspectives on the meanings and goals of the Land League.

For conservative members of the Ladies' Land League, the primary purpose of the movement was to provide much needed financial and moral support to the Land League agitation in Ireland. The Buffalo, New York, branch called on the league's women "to give of your moral influence, of your worldly substance. Is it charity we ask? Not so; suffering humanity claims aid as its right; Justice claims adherence as its right."⁵⁷ Members would help spur the movement in Ireland through their generous donations and activism in the United States. At a meeting in New York, Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell stated, "A change has come over the spirit of the Irish; they have felt as yet but the first ripple of the immense return tidal-wave of their emigration to this land."⁵⁸ Conservatives argued that if Irish American women kept the funds coming, it would only be a matter of time before Ireland emerged triumphant.

Fanny Parnell was the most influential member of the Ladies' Land League's conservative faction. While Parnell hoped that the Land League would lead to Ireland's eventual political independence, her vision of Ireland's future did not include social revolution. She favored peasant proprietorship (the gradual purchasing of landlords' holdings by tenants), denounced schemes favoring land redistribution or nationalization, and resisted attempts to connect Ireland's struggle against Great Britain with economic reform in the United States.⁵⁹ Parnell eschewed class conflict, believing that "between every producing class in a nation there is solidarity of interests."⁶⁰ This led her to distrust the *Irish World* and its belief that Ireland was the first step in a worldwide struggle against the forces of monopoly and economic tyranny. For Parnell and other conservatives, the Land League in the United States was an auxiliary movement meant to support and follow the direction of Land League leaders in Ireland.

While many conservative Irish American women focused their efforts on obtaining relief for the suffering in Ireland and promoting Irish freedom, many radical Irish American women linked land reform in Ireland to the need for social reform in the United States. These women aimed to improve not only the economic condition of their relatives abroad but also their own economic and social condition in America. Like radical men, they agreed with Patrick Ford's statement, "The cause of the poor tenant in Donegal is the cause of the factory slave in Fall River."⁶¹ This is not to suggest that radical women used concern for Ireland merely as a pretext to justify female public participation. Instead, organizing to help the Land League attracted many radical Irish American women.

Ellen Ford, an editor for her brother Patrick's newspaper, the *Irish World*, was a strong advocate of bringing together land reform in Ireland with social reform in the United States. Though she was not working-class herself, Ford articulated a brand of economic and social radicalism that appealed to many working-class and radical women and brought these women into Irish nationalist politics for the first time. Ford believed that change in Ireland was merely the beginning, as the battle against landlordism was the cause of the victimized classes the world over. She declared that "the day is not too far distant when the Land League war must be fought in the land of the so-called free."⁶² Speaking to large audiences across the country, Ford argued for the radical potential of the land movement in Ireland. "A government that can make a pauper of a man and then abuse him for being a pauper," she exclaimed, "deserves to be destroyed."⁶³

Ford's journalistic background served her well. The *Irish World*, under her and her brother's stewardship, became the most effective advocate for

simultaneous economic and social reform in Ireland and the United States. Ellen and Patrick Ford maintained that absentee landlords were exploiting peasants in Ireland and preventing them from reaping the rewards of their toil. They also argued that in the United States, workers were prevented from achieving economic autonomy because monopolists and speculators were hoarding western lands. The Fords, rather than seeing these as two distinct trends, believed them to be two sides of the same coin. In response, they advocated radical solutions to the land problem, such as land nationalization and redistribution. With a weekly circulation of close to 60,000 copies, the *Irish World* was a powerful medium in promoting a radical vision of the Land League movement.

Evidence of support for these radical ideals is found in letters to the *Irish World* from Ladies' Land Leagues across the country. In Boston, the secretary of the local ladies' league informed Ford that "they have taken to the study of Henry George's *The Irish Land Question*."⁶⁴ The Paterson, New Jersey, branch voted unanimously, over the objection of male Land Leaguers, to send all their money through the *Irish World*.⁶⁵ The St. Louis, Missouri, chapter passed a motion to send money for the *Irish World* to be distributed in Ireland, as the members believed "it would also be well to send knowledge along with bread."⁶⁶ And in Fall River, Massachusetts, the Sarah Curran Branch declared its belief in the principles advocated by the *Irish World*.⁶⁷

As demonstrated above in the example of Ellen Ford, the economic radicalism supported by many Ladies' Land League members cannot be traced solely to class background. The Worcester, Massachusetts, branch of the Ladies' Land League was arguably the most radical and successful branch in the United States. Led by Maria Dougherty, an unmarried milliner who ran her own shop, the Worcester branch was hailed by the *Irish World* as the "banner branch of the Land League" and had over four hundred members. In his work on the Irish in Worcester, Timothy Meagher has found that "teachers and professional women played critical roles in the branch."⁶⁸ Meagher's conclusion is supported by examining an Executive Committee list for the Worcester branch that enumerates its membership as three unmarried schoolteachers, two middle-class housewives, one unmarried store clerk, and one unmarried domestic servant.⁶⁹ But if their radicalism did not come from their own experience, what explains the Worcester women's radicalism? According to Dougherty, "the articles about the movement in Patrick Ford's *Irish World*," of "which they read diligently," shaped their views of the Land League. Perhaps alongside their reading of the *Irish World*, membership in the league, Meagher asserts, provided a "sense of

gender solidarity” and allowed women “to prove their competence as well as challenge the male leaders of their community.”⁷⁰

Irish American women’s response to the “No Rent Manifesto” and Michael Davitt’s decision to advocate for the nationalization of land in Ireland demonstrates further evidence of a strong element of radicalism inside the Ladies’ Land League. In October 1881, the imprisoned Irish male leaders of the Land League issued the “No Rent Manifesto,” which called on tenants to withhold the payment of any rent until the leaders were released. The radical faction of the Land League was further strengthened when Michael Davitt, upon his release from prison in May 1882, came out in favor of the nationalization of land. In Ireland, Anna Parnell decided that “the programme of a permanent resistance until the aim of the League should be attained was the only logical one.”⁷¹ This became a problem, however, as Charles Stewart Parnell intended the “No Rent Manifesto” simply as a ploy to place pressure on the British government rather than a goal to be actively pursued. Women ignored this distinction and continued to attempt to put the rhetoric into reality. Davitt caustically recorded Parnell’s fear that “the league movement would be used, not for the purposes he approved of, but for a real revolutionary end and aim.”⁷²

While many conservative supporters regarded the “No Rent Manifesto” and Davitt’s nationalization scheme as a dangerous slide towards “communism,” many radical men and women in the United States saw these developments as the natural progression of the land agitation. The Minneapolis, Minnesota, male and female leagues jointly declared that, “We believe with Michael Davitt that rent for land, under any circumstances, in prosperous times or bad times, is nothing more or less than an unjust and immoral tax upon the industry of a people . . . without regard to their being Irish, English, Scotch, or any others under the broad canopy of heaven.”⁷³ The Martha Washington Ladies’ Land League of Philadelphia demanded that all of its donations go towards the “No Rent Manifesto,” while the Worcester, Massachusetts, branch “enthusiastically approved of the Nationalization of the Land scheme.”⁷⁴ Such views had a damaging impact on the tenuous class unity that existed within the Ladies’ Land League.

THE DEMISE OF THE LADIES’ LAND LEAGUE

Conservatives fought back against the radicalization of the movement, and serious infighting among Ladies’ Land Leaguers broke out publicly. Fanny Parnell dismissed Davitt’s land nationalization plan. She also had Ellen Ford expelled from the Ladies’ Land League Executive for her support of radi-

cal doctrines and remarked of the *Irish World* that, “while the paper is safe enough for educated people and contains some excellent ideas, it is a paper calculated to do much mischief in the hands of an only partially educated and simple-minded peasantry.”⁷⁵ Such a perspective was not confined to the national leadership. The Ladies’ Land League of Hartford, Connecticut, seized control of Michael Davitt’s visit to the city in June 1882 and barred from the stage any supporters of land nationalization.⁷⁶ Other branches passed resolutions supporting Charles Stewart Parnell’s leadership as well as urging Michael Davitt to turn away from his nationalization scheme.

In Cleveland, Ohio, Bishop Richard Gilmour excommunicated members of the Cleveland Ladies’ Land League for their radicalism and refusal to disband. Gilmour had previously been a supporter of the Land League, but the issuance of the “No Rent Manifesto” had soured his views on the league, and in a public lecture he claimed that the movement was edging dangerously towards communism.⁷⁷ On May 15, 1882, a branch of the Ladies’ Land League was formed in Cleveland, with twenty members joining. Gilmour, already in disagreement with the local men’s Land League and seeing the men as the driving force encouraging the formation of the new ladies’ branch, cautioned them not to “turn our Catholic women into brawling politicians. . . . As you choose you must abide, but you shall not further be permitted . . . to assail the modesty of our Catholic women by turning them, for your selfish ends, into noisy politicians or newspaper pests.”⁷⁸ He called on the women’s branch to disband immediately not only in order to maintain female propriety but also to “save our common manhood the shame of seeing you shield yourselves [male Land Leaguers] behind a petticoat.”⁷⁹ For Gilmour, the Ladies’ Land League was not just a challenge to Irish American women’s gender roles but also a threat to Irish American masculinity. Despite Gilmour’s views, the women went ahead and held their regular meeting.

When his warnings were ignored, Gilmour issued a bull of excommunication against all members of the Cleveland Ladies’ Land League and anyone who might join them, stating that “the Catholic woman must live within the modesty of the home; she must be the ornament of the family circle, and her womanly delicacy and gentle nature shall not be tainted with the noisy brawl of the virago. . . . Female modesty must be maintained let the cost be what it may.”⁸⁰ Gilmour’s bull of excommunication applied only to the members of the Ladies’ Land League, despite his belief that male Land Leaguers were the real culprits; no action was taken against the male Land Leaguers. It was the movement of women outside the home that was the most dangerous threat to Bishop Gilmour.

Mary Rowland, the president of the Cleveland Ladies' Land League, responded to her excommunication by declaring that "the stigma of immodesty, indelicacy, and political brawling you cast upon us, I fling it back."⁸¹ Despite the bull of excommunication against them, forty more members joined, the members posed for a group photograph, and one thousand five hundred people attended their picnic in August, demonstrating the Cleveland women's belief in the righteousness of their public activism.⁸² Several male and female Land Leagues, including those in Denver; Toledo; Pittsburgh; Washington, D.C.; St. Louis; and Portland, Oregon, sent resolutions of support to the Cleveland Ladies' Land League.⁸³ In Cleveland, however, the local Hibernian Rifles Club and Ancient Order of Hibernians denounced the ladies, as did the majority of the Catholic press outside of Cleveland. The editor of the *Catholic Columbian* of Columbus, Ohio, in an editorial declared, "see what a glorious spectacle that notoriety-craving woman, who leads the Ladies' Land League of Cleveland, would present if she could have her own way and dance about the stage of Parnell Hall with a mitre on her head and crosier in her hand."⁸⁴ While no clear winner emerged victorious from this internecine fighting, from late 1882 onwards the sense of unity and purpose once shared in the Ladies' Land League was shattered.

While the conflict inside the Ladies' Land League in America hampered its effectiveness, it was events in Ireland that led to its demise. Nationalism allowed Irish American women to participate openly in the previously exclusively male realm of Irish nationalist politics, and women eagerly took advantage of this opportunity. Linking themselves so closely to the political and social movement for land reform in Ireland, however, placed the continued public participation of women hostage to the continued success of the Land League in Ireland. When Irish leaders shifted from a mass agitation for land reform to a conservative, parliamentary-based strategy to achieve Home Rule, the rationale for women's inclusion in the movement was removed.

By the summer of 1882, Charles Stewart Parnell had effectively wrapped up the land agitation in favor of a parliamentary campaign for Home Rule. Before doing so, he was sure to rein in elements in the Land League resistant to his control, including the Ladies' Land League. The end of the Ladies' Land League in Ireland came on August 10, 1882, when the organization disbanded rather than accept Charles Stewart Parnell's efforts to place it under the strict control of male leadership. Anna Parnell believed that the male leaders "wanted us for a buffer between them and the country—a perpetual petticoat screen behind which they could shelter, not from the government, but from the people."⁸⁵ Despite their successful stewardship of

the Land League, Irish women's participation in the Irish nationalist cause would be undermined for a generation by the ending of the Ladies' Land League in Ireland. In October 1882 at Charles Stewart Parnell's instigation, the Irish Land League reorganized itself as the Irish National League. More conservative than the Land League, the new organization left no doubt as to its views on the relationship between women and politics, describing itself as "an open organization in which the ladies will not take part."⁸⁶

In the United States, there was no such dramatic ending to the American Ladies' Land League. Rather it was the shift from a dynamic movement for land reform in Ireland to an incremental and constitutional pursuit of Home Rule that removed the impetus for women's participation in nationalist politics. A further blow was given to the movement when Fanny Parnell died suddenly on July 20, 1882.⁸⁷ Fanny Parnell's loss was impossible to overcome due to her symbolic importance. Without a strong national advocate to assert the need for women's continued participation, the Ladies' Land League in the United States limped on through 1883, but there was a marked drop-off in the number of women participating in branch activity.

The demise of the Ladies' Land League brought an end to the mass mobilization of Irish American women in support of Ireland in the early 1880s. But this ending does not diminish the impact of the Ladies' Land League on Irish American women. Although short-lived, the Ladies' Land League in the United States served as an important introduction to public participation for a generation of Irish American women. Women seized the opportunities given to them by the Land League agitation in Ireland. In their speeches, meetings, and fund-raising efforts, Irish American women demonstrated their fitness for admittance into formerly male-dominated public organizations and helped to influence and shape Irish American nationalism in the late nineteenth century.

NOTES

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1. Hasia Diner writes of Irish American women's nationalist participation: "Beyond a few scattered cases in which Irish women banded together to form a short-lived Ladies' Land League or a Fenian Sisterhood to collect money to help the brotherhood, few Irish American women participated in the effort to rid the Emerald Isle of the hated British oppressors." Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America* (Baltimore, 1983), 128. See also Victor Walsh,

"Irish American, Nationalism, and Land Reform," in *The Irish in America: Emigration, Assimilation, and Impact*, ed. P. J. Drudy (Cambridge, UK, 1985), 259–60. For Irish American women's contributions as domestic servants and teachers see Diner, *Erin's Daughters*; Diane M. Hotten-Summers, "Relinquishing and Reclaiming Independence: Irish Domestic Servants, American Middle-Class Mistresses, and Assimilation, 1850–1890," in *New Directions in Irish-American History*, ed. Kevin Kenny (Madison, WI, 2003), 227–42; Janet Nolan, *Servants of the Poor: Teachers and Mobility in Ireland and Irish America* (Notre Dame, IN, 2004). The two best general works on the Land League in the United States, Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism* (Philadelphia, 1966), and Eric Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism in the Gilded Age: The Land League and Irish-America," in *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War*, ed. Eric Foner (Oxford, 1980), deal very little with the Ladies' Land League. Some works that deal briefly (but very well) with it in the United States are Timothy Meagher, *Inventing Irish America: Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880–1928* (Notre Dame, IN, 2001), 178–95; David Brundage, *The Making of Western Labor Radicalism* (Urbana, IL, 1994), 43–45; Deirdre Moloney, "Land League Activism in Transnational Perspective," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 61–74. A chapter on the Ladies' Land League in the United States and Canada also can be found in Jane Côté, *Fanny and Anna Parnell: Ireland's Patriot Sisters* (London, 1991), 130–47.

2. Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *Journal of American History* 75, no. 1 (June 1988): 21.

3. Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1966): 152. For a critique of separate sphere ideology and historians' use of the concept, see Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place," 9–39.

4. Quoted in Karen Kennelly, "Ideals of American Catholic Womanhood," in *American Catholic Women: A Historical Exploration*, ed. Karen Kennelly (New York, 1989), 4. For further discussion of Catholic True Womanhood and separate spheres ideology, see James Kenneally, "Eve, Mary, and the Historians: American Catholicism and Women," *Horizons* 3, no. 2 (1976): 189–95; Colleen McDannell, "Catholic Domesticity 1860–1960," in *American Catholic Women: A Historical Explanation*, ed. Karen Kennelly (New York, 1989), 49–54; Kathleen Sprows Cummings, "'Not the New Woman?' Irish American Women and the Creation of a Usable Past, 1890–1900," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 19, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 37–52.

5. Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*, xiv.

6. Ardis Cameron, *Radicals of the Worst Sort: Laboring Women in Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1860–1912* (Urbana, IL, 1995), 29. See also Carole Turbin, *Working Women of Collar City: Gender, Class, and Community in Troy, New York, 1864–86* (Urbana, IL, 1992), 34–42.

7. Susan Levine, "Labor's True Woman: Domesticity and Equal Rights in the Knights of Labor," *Journal of American History* 70, no. 2 (September 1983): 325. The Irish-born Elizabeth Rodgers of Chicago was the first female master workman in the Knights of Labor. For more on Rodgers, see Levine, "Labor's True Woman," 331–32; James K. Kenneally, *The History of American Catholic Women* (New York, 1990), 116.

8. Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*, 71, 93–96.

9. On Irish American domestic servants see Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*; Hotten-Somers, "Relinquishing and Reclaiming Independence," 227–42; Kevin Kenny, *American Irish: A History* (Harlow, UK, 2000), 153–54.

10. Hotten-Somers, "Relinquishing and Reclaiming Independence," 247.

11. Deirdre Moloney, "Combating 'Whiskey's Work': The Catholic Temperance Movement in Late Nineteenth Century America," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 16, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 5–9.

12. For a further discussion of the differences between Protestant and Catholic reform efforts, see Deirdre Moloney, *American Catholic Lay Groups and Transatlantic Social Reform in the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2002), 13–68.

13. Unfortunately very little is known of the Fenian Sisterhood. For general references see Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*, 128. For more detailed information on the Fenian Sisterhood in New York City, see Mary C. Kelly, *The Shamrock and the Lily: The New York Irish and the Creation of a Transatlantic Identity 1845–1921* (New York, 2005), 57–59.

14. Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America*, 103.

15. For the CATU, see Sister Joan Bland, *Hibernian Crusade: The Story of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America* (Washington, DC, 1951), 98, 100, 144; Joseph Gibbs, *History of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America* (Philadelphia, 1907), 59. On the AOH, see Michael Funchion, ed., *Irish American Voluntary Organizations* (Westport, CT, 1983), 57.

16. For a contemporary account of the Land League in Ireland, see Michael Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland, or the Story of the Land League Revolution* (Shannon, Ireland, 1970). For general histories of the Land League in Ireland, see Samuel Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War* (Princeton, NJ, 1979); Donald Jordan, *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland: County Mayo from the Plantation to the Land War* (Cambridge, 1994); James S. Donnelly Jr., *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question* (London, 1975), 251–307. For a local study, see J. W. H. Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879–82* (Portlaoise, Ireland, 1994).

17. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 103.

18. Funchion, ed., *Irish American Voluntary Organizations*, 191.

19. By his retirement, Charles Stewart had achieved the rank of rear admiral and in 1815 acquired a 225-acre estate in Bordentown, New Jersey, which he dubbed "Ironsides."

20. Jane Côté, *Fanny and Anna Parnell*, 131–37.

21. *Boston Pilot*, September 6, 1879, 6.

22. Jane Côté and Dana Hearne, "Anna Parnell," in *Women Power and Consciousness in 19th Century Ireland*, ed. Mary Cullen and Maria Luddy (Dublin, 1995), 167–68.

23. Justin McCarthy, ed., *Irish Literature*, vol. 7 (Philadelphia, 1904), 2871.

24. Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, 292.

25. *Irish World*, August 21, 1880, 5.

26. *Redpath's Illustrated Weekly*, August 5, 1882, 5. For American and Irish American newspapers reporting on the founding of the Ladies' Land League, see *Irish World*, October 30, 1880, 8; *Boston Pilot*, October 23, 1880, 5; *Buffalo Catholic Union*, December 16, 1880, 8; *Detroit Western Home Journal*, November 27, 1880, 1.

27. On the establishment of Ladies' Land Leagues in San Francisco and St. Louis, see *San Francisco Daily Morning Call*, December 16, 1880, 2; William Hyde and Howard Conrad, eds., *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis*, vol. 2 (New York, 1899), 1210; *St. Louis Missouri Republican*, December 20, 1880, 3.

28. *Irish World*, January 15, 1881, 5.

29. Compiled from the *Irish World*, January to December 1881.

30. This estimate is reached by giving each of the 175 branches identified an average membership of 60, which yields the total 10,500.

31. For Philadelphia branches, see *Irish World*, May 28, 1881, 8; for Hartford, *Irish World*, March 5, 1881, 5; for Woonsocket, *Irish World*, January 8, 1881, 4.

32. Colleen McDannell, "Going to the Ladies' Fair: Irish Catholics in New York City, 1870–1900," in *The New York Irish*, ed. Ronald Bayor and Timothy Meagher (Baltimore, 1996), 237–38.

33. *Irish World*, January 31, 1881 to December 31, 1881, Donations to Land League Fund.

34. *New York Irish-American*, February 19, 1881, 8.

35. *Irish World*, March 19, 1881, 8.

36. Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism*, 299.

37. For information on the Ladies' Land League in Ireland, see Margaret Ward, *Unmanageable Revolutionaries: Women and Irish Nationalism* (London, 1995), 4–39; Côté, *Fanny and Anna Parnell*, 156–219; Janet Tebrake, "Irish Peasant Women in Revolt: The Land League Years," *Irish Historical Studies* 33, no. 109 (May 1992); Cynthia Walker, "Banshees, Dogooders, or Undervalued Radicals? Anna Parnell and the Ladies' Land League" (master's thesis, Villanova University, 1993); Anna Parnell, *The Tale of a Great Sham*, ed. Dana Hearne (Dublin, 1986).

38. *Irish World*, May 21, 1881, 8.

39. *Ibid.*, September 25, 1880, 8.

40. *Ibid.*, December 25, 1880, 5.

41. *Ibid.*, December 11, 1880, 5.

42. Quote from *Cleveland Universe*, July 7, 1881, 1.

43. See Maureen Murphy, "Bridget and Biddy: Images of the Irish Servant Girl in *Puck* Cartoons, 1880–1890," in *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora*, ed. Charles Fanning (Carbondale, IL, 2000), 152–75, for a wide-ranging discussion of these stereotypes. In Ireland, Katharine Tynan, of the Irish Ladies' Land League, asked in a meeting once, "Why not Women's Land League?" and was told she was being "too democratic." Katharine Tynan, *Twenty-five Years Reminiscences* (London, 1913), 75.

44. Kerby Miller, "Class, Culture, and Immigrant Group Identity in the United States: The Case of Irish-American Ethnicity," in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, ed. Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (Oxford, 1990), 111.

45. *Irish American*, December 25, 1880, 4.

46. Colleen McDannell, "'True men as we need them': Catholicism and the Irish-American Male," *American Studies* 27, no. 2 (1986): 29.

47. *Irish World*, March 5, 1881, 7.

48. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 10, 1881, 2.

49. *Boston Pilot*, January 29, 1881, 4.

50. *Irish World*, April 16, 1881, 8.

51. *Ibid.*, May 28, 1881, 8.

52. *St. Paul North-Western Chronicle*, March 26, 1881, 1.

53. *St. Paul Globe*, March 19, 1881, Scrapbook no. 29, vol. 21, John Ireland Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota.

54. *Irish World*, September 25, 1880, 8.

55. For the origins of the American belief in the exalted role of mothers in shaping the citizenry of the republic, see Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1980).

56. Timothy Meagher, "'Sweet Mothers and Young Women Out in the World': The Roles

of Irish American Women in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Worcester, Massachusetts,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 5, nos. 3–4 (1986): 343.

57. *Catholic Union*, December 30, 1880, 4.

58. *Irish World*, February 5, 1881, 2.

59. Fanny Parnell, “Nationalization of the Land vs. Peasant Proprietary,” *Donahoe’s Magazine* 8, no. 3 (September 1882): 195–202.

60. *Ibid.*, 202.

61. *Irish World*, January 8, 1881, 4.

62. Craig Phelan, *Grandmaster Workman: Terence Powderly and the Knights of Labor* (Westport, CT, 2000), 155.

63. *Irish World*, March 5, 1881, 7.

64. *Ibid.*, June 4, 1881, 8.

65. *Ibid.*, May 28, 1881, 8.

66. *Missouri Republican*, June 20, 1881, 5.

67. *Irish World*, July 9, 1881, 2.

68. Meagher, *Inventing Irish America*, 184.

69. A list of the Worcester Ladies’ Land League Executive Committee is found in the *Irish World*, December 4, 1880, 5. United States Census (1880), Schedule 1 (Population), <http://ancestry.com>. The women’s names are Maggie Geary, Mary E. Fitzgerald, Theresa Timon, Margaret Hickey, Margaret O’Grady, Lizzie O’Keefe, and Katie Simmons.

70. Quoted in Meagher, *Inventing Irish America*, 186.

71. Parnell, *The Tale of a Great Sham*, 35.

72. Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, 349.

73. *Irish World*, August 6, 1881, 8.

74. *Ibid.*, February 11, 1882, 8; July 29, 1882, 2.

75. MS8237/4, Letter from Fanny Parnell to T. D. Sullivan, February 4, 1881, T. D. Sullivan Papers, National Library of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland.

76. *Irish Nation*, July 1, 1881, 2.

77. For Bishop Gilmour’s collection for Parnell, see *Cleveland Catholic Universe*, November 6, 1879, 4. For his speech denouncing the “No Rent Manifesto,” see *Catholic Universe*, February 9, 1882, 8.

78. *Catholic Universe*, May 25, 1882, 4.

79. *Ibid.*, 4.

80. *Ibid.*, June 1, 1882, 4.

81. *Cleveland Leader*, June 6, 1882, 4.

82. *Ibid.*, 4.

83. For Denver, see Brundage, *The Making of Western Labor Radicalism*, 44–45; *Cleveland Leader*, June 6, 1882, 3; June 6, 1882, 3; June 19, 1882, 1; July 24, 1882, 5; *Irish World*, July 29, 1882, 8.

84. *Western Watchman* (St. Louis), July 8, 1882, 8.

85. Parnell, *The Tale of a Great Sham*, 155.

86. Ward, *Unmanageable Revolutionaries*, 36.

87. Prominent Irish American nationalists wanted to send her body to Ireland to be buried, but Charles Stewart Parnell refused. Fanny Parnell was buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. For an interesting discussion of the controversy over Fanny Parnell’s body, see Paula Bernat Bennett, *Poets in the Public Sphere: The Emancipatory Project of American Women’s Poetry, 1800–1900* (Princeton, NJ, 2003), 91–97.