‘A Portrait of the Chief as a General Paralytic: Rhetorics of Sexual Pathology in the Parnell Split’

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> I believe no more wholesome and no more chastening step will be taken… than when Ireland, erect and in its strength, casts from the body politic the ulcer which these men endeavour to graft upon it (*loud applause*). We must purge Ireland of this corrupt humour with which they have endeavoured to inoculate our blood (*applause*).
>
> \- Timothy Healy

To assert that questions of national identity and sexual conduct predominated in public discourse concerning the Parnell split is to court both banality and redundancy. Indeed, the epoch-making status of the O’Shea trial and its political and cultural fall-out has been so consistently attested in both Irish and Nineteenth-Century Studies as to risk flattening the complex and fluctuating sexual politics of Victorian Britain and Anglo-Irish relations into an account of the peccadillos of one idiosyncratic parliamentarian (a fate also enjoyed by the era’s other great Hiberno-English sex scandal, the Wilde trials).[1] In Diarmaid Ferriter’s bathetic assessment, at one level all the saga of Parnell’s downfall really reveals is that ‘love affairs between well-known people are rarely as dramatic, interesting or romantic as myth would suggest.’[2] While such iconoclasm is refreshing, to state the case so baldly is to overlook the extent to which the oft-discussed ‘Parnell myth’ came to serve (and was, to some extent, constructed from the outset) as a symbolic edifice within which a range of anxieties concerning the relationship between Irishness and sexuality could be foregrounded and negotiated. More

particularly, it occludes the ways in which Tim Healy's post-split denunciation of Parnell, and the rhetoric of sexual contagion through which it was conducted, came to set the discursive terms of mainstream Irish nationalism for decades to come. Through an analysis of Healy's post-split journalism and the broader terrain of Parnellite biography, this article will identify the medical and psychiatric discourses with which this rhetoric was engaged to trace its implications for Parnell's public persona at the level of gender and ethno-national affiliation. In doing so, it highlights the ways in which a sensitivity to the history of medicine can enrich critical understandings of a crucial moment in the political and cultural history of Ireland, and shed fresh light on the vexed collocation of Irish identity and sexual purity which the Parnell split served to reinforce.[3]

The Parnell Myth and Celibacy

Perhaps counter-intuitively in the context of such an account, an interrogation of the sexual politics of the Parnell myth must begin with a discussion of celibacy. Parnell's reserve, froideur, and stoicism are commonplaces of Irish literary and political historiography. In virtually every piece of biographical, journalistic, or literary writing devoted to Parnell, particularly those addressing his character prior to the split, the same semantic field is consistently deployed to describe his demeanour and bearing. Parnell is variously: 'impassive, rock-like'; 'calm, silent, and restrained'; 'le moins agité des agiteurs' (the least agitated of agitators); 'the lock-mouthed master of loose-lipped men'; 'encased in steel'; the embodiment of a 'master solitude', 'iron resolution', and 'impenetrable reserve'.[4] In contrast to the famous loquacity of Daniel O'Connell, or the stage Paddy's inexhaustible reserves of Blarney, Parnell was preternaturally taciturn: 'All Irish agitators talked', remarked a Fenian colleague, 'He didn't.'[5] G.H.J. Dutton, in an idiosyncratic 'delineation of Mr. Parnell from a phrenological and physiological aspect', emphasised this facet of Parnell's character, noting that his head was

'most prominent' where the faculty of 'secretiveness' resides, granting him an 'excessive power to conceal thoughts and plans'.[6] The sexual correlative of this impenetrable reserve and unprecedented continence in word and deed was celibacy. This image of almost monastic restraint was rooted in an investment in a symbolic marriage between Parnell and Ireland itself. An article in the London *Leader* in 1888 is typical in offering an almost hagiographic account of Parnell in which his chaste devotion to the nationalist cause is fetishised in an insistently nuptial register:

> The Irish people… know that under that cold face beats a heart which throbs with love for Ireland. […] He is, indeed, the 'Uncrowned King of Ireland', loved with a love and followed with a fidelity which no leader has commanded since the days of Hugh Roe O'Donnell. There is a kind of shadowy tradition that in his early manhood 'Charlie Parnell' was crossed in love. He certainly has not been crossed in love since he 'took off his coat' to fight the battle of Ireland […] she has been his queen, his mistress, the only love of his heart, his Dark Rosaleen.[7]

The Mangan-tinged characterisation of Ireland as a loyal and long-suffering mistress is a well-worn one, as is the trope of the nationalist hero forgoing a consummated romantic relationship on the terrestrial plane to pledge himself to Erin's service on a spiritual one.[8] The invocation of an anecdotal early heart-break rehearses this narrative and suggests that Parnell's service to Ireland leaves no room for another, more tangible woman in his life. The over-wording of terms of 'fidelity', loyalty, and commitment offer some sense of just how disastrous the revelations of the O'Shea trial were ultimately to prove for Parnell's public image and the mythic celibacy upon which it was staked. Parnell's perceived complicity in this rhetoric is suggested in an account of a (probably apocryphal) exchange between Parnell and W.H. Duignan, the Walsall solicitor, and a correspondent of Chamberlain, who asked the Irish leader why he did not marry. According to Duignan, Parnell replied 'I am married – to my country, and can best serve as I am'.[9] Whether or not the remark emanated from Parnell himself, the fact that it was attributed to him, and the stress it lays on the politically beneficial character of his celibacy (he can 'best serve' as a bachelor) emphasise the centrality of sexual continence to the 'Parnell myth'.

However, as the *Leader*'s image of Parnell's 'throbbing' heart suggests, the consistent emphasis laid on Parnell's steely reserve, and the celibacy with which it was cognate, should not be read as an indication that contemporary commentators believed him to lack passion (or desire). Indeed, his placid exterior is most often presented as a façade, masking and regulating intense inner turmoil. The sense of a constant struggle between powerful drives within Parnell is suggested by the fire-and-ice imagery which Standish O'Grady and others employed to characterise his temperament, in which an 'ice clear, ice cold intellect, work[ed] as if in the midst of fire'.[10] More than cod-Petrarchanism, this metaphorised interplay of cool restraint and incendiary passion spoke to a tension between the (often hysterical) sentimentality with which Ernest Renan and Matthew Arnold had made the Celt synonymous, and the (Anglo-Saxon) rationalism which Arnold sponsored as its necessary political and cultural counterbalance.[11] It is this sense of strong passions, strongly checked which Yeats foregrounds in his well-known account of the indelibly Celtic character of Parnell's 'strong will': 'The Englishman […] is reserved, because of his want of sensibility. Parnell was reserved in spite of it.'[12] Indeed, there is in Yeats's favourite image of Parnell – facing down accusations of complicity in the Phoenix Park Murders in 'his usual cold manner' while simultaneously tearing his palms to bloody shreds with his fingernails – more than a flavour of sado-masochism.[13] These dynamics were replicated in Parnell's much vaunted status as the 'Uncrowned King of Ireland' and his perceived capacity to marshal and regulate the apparently violent excesses of the Irish peasantry in their drive for land reform. James Joyce highlights this aspect of Parnell's character amid an increasingly bibulous succession of eulogies for the Chief in 'Ivy Day in the Committee Room', when Mr Crofton, the Tory canvasser, notes the respect the dead Parnell now enjoys on his side of the House 'because he was a gentleman'. Crofton's remark receives the assent of his National Party counterpart, Mr Henchy, who reflects that Parnell 'was the only man that could keep that bag of cats in order. *Down, ye dogs! Lie down, ye curs!* That's the

way he treated them.'[14] Joyce's caustic critique of what he perceived to be the hypocritical posthumous rehabilitation of Parnell by the Conservatives ('We all respect him *now that he's dead and gone*' – emphasis mine) highlights the extent to which the Chief was positioned as the aristocratic ego to the Land League's volatile id.[15] Commentators have detected the same interplay of passion and restraint in Parnell's best-known contribution to modern political practice: boycotting. Discussing the famous 1880 speech at Ennis in which the principles of boycotting were first outlined, Joseph Valente notes how Parnell first whipped the assembled crowd into a blood-thirsty frenzy ('Now what are you to do to a tenant who bids for a farm from which his neighbour has been evicted?' – 'Shoot him, shoot him') before proposing a 'better way' to exact revenge: 'You must show him… by leaving him very severely alone, by putting him into a moral Coventry… your detestation for the crime he has committed.'[16] The energy generated by this rhetorical incitement to violence is thus directed not into an act of aggression, but into a highly active form of passivity which resonates strongly with Parnell's paradoxical and exemplary status as a passionate, and, as such, archetypally 'Celtic', celibate.[17]

Portraits of the Chief as a Congenital Syphilitic

In the split, Parnell's failure to uphold this heroic reserve in the arena of his sexual life, and the protracted deceit the affair was perceived to have required of him, were presented as having precipitated (or, in more charitable accounts, stemmed from) a descent into congenital insanity. At the centre of this recharacterization of the Chief was his former deputy, Timothy Healy, who founded the *National Press* in the March of 1890 in response to what he presented as 'a situation which had become not only a scandal, but a source of public danger'. The *National Press* promised to reunify Irish nationalism behind 'principle' not 'personality'.[18] A key manoeuvre in sponsoring this shift away from the fetish of Parnellism was to insinuate that the 'personality' in question was pathologically unstable. An early manifestation of this rhetoric,

and the fissures within the Irish party which it reflected, came in an article in the *New York Times* of 13 July 1890 by Harold Frederic, a friend and collaborator of Healy. Amid an increasingly visible disagreement between Parnell and Healy on the question of peasant proprietorship – Parnell preferred what he termed 'occupying ownership' and the retention of a residential landlord class – Frederic's article offered a scathing account of Parnell's speech during the second reading of Balfour's Land Bill. Frederic's article characterised Parnell's collaboration with Balfour in remodelling the Bill as a betrayal of both the Irish party and the Plan of Campaign, and predicted his resignation from the post of leader:

> There has all along been the difficulty of seeing how he could maintain this post once the O'Shea case had come to trial, and last night a number of Irish members were disposed to fear that brooding upon this trouble had brought on the mental disturbance to which he is hereditarily predisposed. It is the only way in which they are able to account for his astonishing and contemptuous act of treachery to them.[19]

Healy was rapidly identified as the inspiration for, if not the author of Frederic's article, and, though he denied responsibility for its contents, he did not disavow its sentiments. The fact did not escape Parnell's notice, who, in the midst of the split, angrily claimed that Healy had cabled to America 'to consign [him] to the lunatic asylum'.[20] This perception became so widespread that the *National Press* felt compelled to disparage what it dubbed the *United Ireland*'s 'drive him into an-asylum-or-the-grave yarns'.[21] Whatever their origin, the immediate import of Frederic's remarks was clear enough: the strain of the O'Shea case had precipitated Parnell's lapse into a politically disastrous form of inherited madness which his lieutenants could no longer afford to ignore.

However, the deeper implications of this image of a constitutionally demented Parnell were even more damning, and have yet to be fully interrogated by commentators on the split.[22] By linking a suggestion of hereditary insanity to the sexual impropriety for which the O'Shea trial was a byword, Frederic presented Parnell as a victim of and locus for degeneration through what, I wish to argue, amounted to a tacit diagnosis of congenital syphilis.[23] This link, taken

up and intensified by Healy in the *National Press*, and echoed in the numerous biographies and memoirs published in the wake of the Chief's death, played upon anxieties over hereditary corruption prevalent both in the discourses of Irish nationalism and British imperialism, and in wider European scientific and political thought. In the increasingly eugenicist logic of late-nineteenth century medicine, the birth defects, developmental delays, and learning difficulties which congenital syphilis caused were read as evidence of a degenerative decline the ramifications of which were cultural as well as physical. Alfred Fournier, an international authority on syphilis and its treatment in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, presented the illness as an eschatological threat to the fabric of European society. According to Fournier, congenital syphilis threatened the state with incapacity for work, permanent incapacity in the army, separation, divorce, 'avec toutes les calamités sociales qui en dérivent' (with all the social calamities which derive from them), sterile marriages, 'abâtardissement et dégénération de la race' (bastardisation and degeneration of the race), polymortality of the young, and eventual depopulation.[24] In offering this prognosis, Fournier drew on the work of Bénédict Augustin Morel, whose account of 'des dégénérescence physiques, intellectuelles, et morales de l'espèce humaine' (the physical, intellectual, and moral degeneration of the human species) became a commonplace of late-nineteenth century scientific and cultural commentary. Morel famously defined 'dégénérescence' as 'une déviation maladive d'un type primitif' (a morbid deviation from an original type), in a neo-Lamarckian narrative of progressive decline soon extended to account for cultural as well as biological decay.[25] British psychologist Henry Maudsley, in his influential *The Physiology and Pathology of the Mind* (1867), cites a case study from Morel's *Traité* to illustrate this trend:

> *First generation*. – Immorality. Alcoholic excess. Brutal degradation.
>
> *Second generation*. – Hereditary drunkenness. Maniacal attacks. General Paralysis.
>
> *Third generation*. – Sobriety. Hypochondria. Lypemania. Systematic mania. Homicidal tendencies.

> *Four generation*. – Feeble intelligence. Stupidity. First attack of mania at sixteen. Transition to complete idiocy, and probable extinction of the family.[26]

The degenerative slide from 'Immorality' to 'extinction' via a succession of ever-intensifying psychological and physiological pathologies charts a medico-moral narrative of progressive corruption that furnished contemporary cultural and political commentators with an uncommonly flexible vehicle for social critique.

These anxieties, and the perceived physical and cultural pathologies which precipitated them, were not confined to mainland Europe. As Maria Luddy has noted, while extended discussion of venereal disease in nineteenth-century Ireland was largely the preserve of the medical press, such infections 'were not as hidden as might be expected.'[27] Among the most vocal (and pointedly political) acknowledgements of their presence in Ireland came in the campaign to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts (1864, 1867, 1869). The Acts, which allowed for the inspection, detention, and treatment without consent of women accused of engaging in prostitution in the vicinity of British garrisons, attracted criticism from feminists and social conservatives alike for sanctioning male sexual licence at the expense of female civil liberties. Branches of the National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts (NARCDA) and the Ladies' National Association (LNA), both formed in 1869, were established in major Irish cities. Both groups organised well-attended meetings and public demonstrations throughout the 1870s, at which handbills, placards, and posters highlighting the failings of the Acts were widely circulated. However, such publicity efforts were not always an unqualified success. The *Medical Press and Circular* wryly noted that Josephine Butler's address to the 1878 annual general meeting of the NARCDA had been met with bafflement by a Dublin audience who laboured under the misapprehension that the Acts had 'something to say on foot-and-mouth disease in cows'.[28] The popular press likewise contributed to a tacit but widespread propagation of discourses of sexual pathology. Publications as ubiquitous as the

Freeman's Journal regularly carried prominent advertisements for patent medicines marketed, often in remarkably explicit terms, as remedies for venereal disease. In 1821, the *Freeman* featured a promotion for 'French Pills', hailed as an 'immediate, safe, and *radical cure*' for 'every stage of the venereal disease'.[29] Between 1839 and 1841, a full column of the *Freeman*'s front page was regularly given over to promotional material for 'Perry's Purifying Pills' and an accompanying treatise on venereal disease.[30] By the turn of the century, such advertisements were presenting venereal disease as a nervous condition intimately bound up with the physiologically and psychologically debilitating effects of socio-economic modernity. One recurring promotion urged the pathologically over-worked 'Man of Business' to combat the onset of 'Paralysis', 'Locomotor Ataxy', and 'Nervous Breakdown' with the tellingly phallic 'Dr William's Pink Pills for Pale People'.[31] This emphasis on the psychological impact of venereal disease reflected a broader trend in European and British psychiatry, which adopted an increasingly organicist and hereditarian understanding of mental illness. For Dr C.F. Marshall, house surgeon of the London Lock Hospital, congenital syphilis was the root cause of almost all 'hereditary insanity'. In lieu of a nebulous diagnostic rhetoric composed of 'vague references' to a 'hereditary predisposition to nervous disease' and a 'hereditary tendency to insanity', Marshall urged his fellow physicians to regard such phenomena as 'nothing more or less than a predisposition to nervous and mental disease due to hereditary syphilis.'[32] In such a context, Frederic's allusion to Parnell's congenital instability and inherited propensity for disloyalty to both nation and party carried with it a marked suggestion of sexual pathology and moral degradation.

The General Paralysis of An Insane Society: Parnell and GPI

As these examples suggest, congenital syphilis, and, above all, General Paralysis of the Insane (GPI) – a terminal state of spastic muscular weakness, violent personality changes, and

dementia whose roots in syphilitic infection were strongly suspected, but, as yet, unproven in contemporary medicine – offered both the ideal metaphor for and exemplification of a process of social and cultural degeneration with which Parnell could be made synonymous.[33] Decried as the 'apotheosis of selfishness', and a condition whose 'opening chapter' was 'moral decadence' and whose conclusion was 'inevitable premature extinction', General Paralysis became a byword for a corrupt and corrupting contemporary culture.[34] In the hands of Healy and his allies it afforded a valuable opportunity to naturalise a moral critique of Parnellism through a diagnostic register that productively hovered between the literal and the metaphorical, allowing them to present Parnell's continued influence in Irish politics as a demoralising contagious disease.

A few months after Parnell's death, the effects of General Paralysis and congenital syphilis were given infamous visibility on the British stage by the 1891 London premiere of Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* (1881), presented in a private performance by the subscription-only Independent Theatre Society at the Royalty Theatre.[35] At the climax of the play, the young artist Oswald Alving reveals to his mother that his 'mind [has been] broken down' by an attack of neurosyphilis. Oswald, who has been informed by a Parisian doctor that 'the fathers' sins are visited upon the children' and that his 'worm-eaten' condition has its origins in paternal dissipation, asks his mother to help him take his own life should a final episode of cerebral softening leave him incapable of doing so himself.[36] For George Bernard Shaw, the play offered 'an uncompromising and outspoken attack on marriage as a useless sacrifice of human beings to an ideal'.[37] In Shaw's reading, Oswald's inherited syphilis constitutes an ineluctable manifestation of the reality of the Alvings' loveless marriage, irresistibly rupturing the hypocritical façade of bourgeois respectability and morbid idealism his mother had striven to maintain to the detriment of her happiness and her son's health.[38] Clement Scott at the *Daily Telegraph* was less sympathetic to Ibsen's repudiation of contemporary social mores,

infamously dubbing the play an 'open drain: a loathsome sore unbandaged; a dirty act done publicly'.[39] In his less splenetic second review, Scott disparaged the play as tediously didactic: 'an essay on heredity and contagious disease, and probable incest, cut into lengths'.[40] While Frederic and Healy's deployment of the suggested taint of congenital syphilis was undertaken in the service of a radically different social agenda to that of Ibsen's, the capacity for the illness to signify an inheritable form of social corruption remained the same.

Healy was to exploit this capacity to the full in his attacks on Parnell's political strategy and his refusal to concede the leadership of the Irish Party in the wake of the split, through articles and speeches in which echoes of contemporary medical conceptions of neurosyphilis and its psychological effects abound. Discussing the 'Rise and Fall' of Parnell in a March 1891 article for the *New Review*, Healy presents the primary defect of his former leader as a propensity for megalomania which eluded the notice of his allies, but which chimed with the hereditary disposition towards madness so regularly evoked by his biographers: 'The chief mischief no one exactly divined – the deterioration which unchecked power seems to produce in the mind of its possessor.'[41] While at one level this remark seems to be staked upon a clichéd assertion of the corrupting effects of absolute power, the pseudo-medical ring of 'deterioration' and the image of mental pathology it evokes, combined with the deliberately tautologous pun of 'chief mischief' (linking Parnell's leadership to his perceived misconduct), conspire to present Parnell's egomaniacal supremacy as a distinctly psychopathological phenomenon. This image of megalomaniacal insanity and diseased ambition had its parallels in contemporary medical thought, particularly in psychiatric accounts of GPI. In a study of the relationship between mental illness and the nervous system, Henry Maudsley identifies the dominant psychological characteristic of the General Paralytic to be a predisposition towards 'extraordinary delusions of grandeur', wildly incommensurate with the status or abilities of the individual in question.[42] In his exhaustive 1880 study of the illness, William Julius Mickle

emphasises the 'expansive egoism' of the sufferer in the early stages of the illness, and the 'inflated view' the patient will entertain of their own 'position, power, and aptitudes'.[43] Healy was repeatedly to characterise Parnell in precisely these terms during the latter's post-split leadership campaign, claiming that he had 'gone politically raving mad', denouncing his 'insane pretensions', and asserting in the wake of his death that he must not be judged 'by the deeds of the days of mad ambition, when for his sin, God took away his understanding'.[44] Parnell's susceptibility to such an attack was heightened by the emphasis both enemies and allies laid upon his nervous disposition and sensitive constitution. Justin McCarthy is typical in accounting for Parnell's highly-strung demeanour in terms which blurred the physical and the psychological: 'The Parnell I knew was a singularly sensitive and nervous man. He was all compact of nerves – like an Arab horse.'[45] This tendency may even be detected in Healy's infamous (and most likely apocryphal) declaration that he would hound Parnell into a lunatic asylum or the grave, a narrative trajectory suggestive of the accepted nineteenth-century aetiology of General Paralysis (and syphilis more broadly), in which immorality and 'sexual excess' precipitated a physical and mental decline into insanity, death, or both.[46] In the hands of the Healyite press, Parnell's fall thus became a medical case study in moral decay conducted in a decidedly venereal key.

As Frank Callanan notes, in rewriting the 'Parnell myth' to the detriment of its central figure, Healy presented Parnell's embodiment of and synonymy with the Irish people as a liability which risked exposing the nation to the same damaging fleshly excesses in which its parliamentary avatar was engaged.[47] Both during the split and in its aftermath Healy emphasised the dangers of the apparent identity of Parnell and Ireland, asserting that, due in part to the myth-making efforts of himself and other members of the Irish Party, 'Mr Parnell and Ireland became convertible terms'.[48] According to Healy, Parnell was 'flecked and

maculated […] from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, without a point at which he is not attackable', a fact which Healy felt certain the Conservatives would exploit:[49]

> [Do] you suppose for one moment that unless we had a clean man to fight them that they would not dissect every piece of spotted flesh on his body (*cheers*) – that they would not be ready to flay him alive in order to hold on to their positions and keep their seats in parliament?[50]

Healy carried this pseudo-medicalised rhetoric of purity and corruption even into his eulogy for Parnell for the *Evening Press*. Belying the reconciliatory tone of the article's title ('Peace to His Memory'), Healy argued that the Chief's 'former character must not be judged by the wild frenzy of the last few months' but by his actions 'before the guilty passion forbidden by the laws of God and man ate into his heart'. Healy concluded his lacerating autopsy with an image of progressive, pathological corruption in which moral and physical decay are presented in tandem: 'Evil influences slowly ate out manhood and patriotism, truth and courage, from the heart of a man whom Ireland once regarded as her greatest.'[51] The corollary of this degenerate state both in anti-Parnellite invective and in the annals of contemporary psychology was a state of 'moral insanity': 'a morbid perversion of the natural feelings, affections, temper, habits, moral dispositions, and natural impulses' in which all sense of restraint and socially acceptable conduct was lost.[52] For Healy, this was the only possible explanation for Parnell's continued refusal to bow to public opinion and relinquish his claims on leadership: 'The man has really no moral sense, and, having no moral sense, cannot comprehends the mental attitude of a religious people towards this crime.'[53]

As Healy's insistent emphasis on 'dissection', 'flaying', and progressive necrosis suggest, his rhetoric in the split and its aftermath strategically fused contemporary medical discourses, a warped image of the body politic, and a heavy dose of Catholic iconography to sponsor the removal of Parnell from Irish political life, *tout court*. At the political level, in Healy's post-split oratory and journalism Parnell was presented as a corrupt Leviathan,

desperately straining to subsume the Irish people in his syphilitic sovereignty against their will and to the detriment of the cause of Home Rule. At the confessional level, Healy suggested that, if Parnell had come to consider himself as consubstantial with the Irish nation, the risk of contagion had become unacceptable, and only a rhetorical mortification of the Parnellite flesh could redeem both nation and party. In both cases, Healy's register was insistently medical. This pathological metaphorical frame could likewise be deployed to account for the continued loyalty of the Parnellite wing of the party following the split, allowing Healy to elide physical corruption, moral improbity, and political calumny to present Parnellism as a degenerative contagion: '[M]inds are attacked by disease like the body: the germs are there, the development is at first scarcely to be remarked – after a certain point it is difficult if not impossible to prevent destructive growth.'[54] While the 'disease' remains unnamed, the sexually pathological resonances of this image of a mind beset by destructive bacterial growth would have not been far to seek for a contemporary audience. In Healy's lurid script, it is the leader's sins which are visited upon the party (and the nation), leaving its Parnellite wing prostrated, worm-eaten, and waiting to be put out of its misery.

Flabby, Shabby, and Dangerous to Know: Gender and Ethnicity in Parnellite Biography

Healy's account of Parnell's fall, in which the atavistic influence of the Chief's ancestors manifested itself in a morally-degrading and sexually pathological double-life, inflected even the biographical writings of those who sought to offer more even-handed (or self-exculpatory) accounts of the split. T.P. O'Connor's *Charles Stewart Parnell: A Memory* (1891), a hurriedly composed cash-in largely recycled from O'Connor's 1886 *The Parnell Movement*, replicates, albeit in milder form, Healy's linking of sexual impropriety with physical and mental pathology.[55] In one revealing episode, O'Connor discusses how, in the wake of the 1882 Phoenix Park murders, the upper echelons of the Irish Party were given their first indication of

Parnell's involvement with Katherine O'Shea. O'Connor describes the earliest of the Chief's many 'periodical and mysterious absences' and the frantic efforts to locate him that ensued during the passage of the 1882 Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act.[56] Eventually it was discovered that Parnell was in Paris, where, it was assumed, he was meeting with Patrick Egan, Treasurer of the Land League. Members of the Party were duly dispatched to France, but Parnell was not to be found at his hotel. However, O'Connor explains, several letters addressed to him were discovered and duly opened. One of these 'was from a lady' and, 'though scarcely glanced at, […] it told enough'. The justification O'Connor offers for this invasion of Parnell's infamously inviolable privacy is telling: 'some of his relatives had ended tragically, and there were always, in those moments of crisis, the dreadful feeling that anything might happen to Parnell'.[57] The intended referent of O'Connor's remarks is most likely Parnell's granduncle, Sir Henry Brooke Parnell, an O'Connelite who hanged himself following a sudden decline in his health in 1842.[58] Another candidate is Parnell's nephew, Henry, who died in Paris in 1882 during a typhoid outbreak. In a letter to Katherine O'Shea, Parnell noted that Henry 'used to devote himself entirely to music, composing etc., and it is thought that his brain was injured or weakened by dwelling too much upon this one subject, and so was unable to stand disease.'[59] O'Connor's anxieties over the hereditary influences to which Parnell was subject were also reflected in his account of the uncanny resemblance between the Chief and his mother Delia, whom he credited with turning Parnell's mind against the British: 'He was extraordinarily like her, physically as well as mentally, and they had in common a certain eccentricity that was the thin barrier between insanity and reason.'[60] As in Frederic's article and Healy's oratory, in O'Connor's account of the Chief's disappearance, Parnell's ancestry – once a means to vouchsafe his nationalist credentials, curry favour with Anglo-Irish Protestants, and assert his innate fitness to lead – is transformed into a threatening source of congenital instability and an almost fatalistic omen of doom. Indeed, when read in the context of the Parisian setting and the

incriminating O'Shea epistle, the ambiguity introduced by O'Connor's demurely euphemistic tone serves only to intensify the potential suggestion of sexual impropriety in the 'tragic' ends of Parnell's forebears.

This shift in the presentation of Parnell and his ancestry had specific and powerful ramifications for his public persona in the linked domains of gender and ethno-national affiliation. Both manifest themselves in O'Connor's biography in his account of Parnell's increasingly dishevelled appearance, in which the moral and political strains of the O'Shea affair are registered somatically and sartorially:

> His face became sallow, his cheeks grew puffy, [his] whole frame lost its splendid proportion and became stout and flabby […] His beard that used to be neatly trimmed, grew ragged; he frequently allowed his hair [..] to remain uncut till it fell down to his shoulders; his dress also became pre-eminently shabby, and he used to wear clothes unsuitable to his years; he constantly appeared in a knitted woollen waistcoat of hideous colour and make.[61]

While the implications of this softening and profusion of the Parnellite flesh, and the loss of reason and 'proportion' they are intended to register, are clear enough, the specific medical and cultural resonances of such a process again serve to intensify the political freight (and sexual implications) of these 'symptoms' of the Chief's decline.

The late nineteenth century has long been acknowledged as witnessing a 'crisis of masculinity' intimately bound up with the experience of modernity.[62] In both positive and negative contemporary accounts, modernity and its various cultural and temporal counterpoints were constructed in gendered terms. On the one hand, the rapid pace of industrial, technical, and scientific 'progress' appeared to reflect the ascendancy of masculine rationality over an implicitly feminised and familial 'tradition'. On the other, the rise of consumer culture seemed to align socio-economic modernity with the artifice, superficiality, and frivolity of decadent femininity.[63] Equally well-documented is the relationship this 'crisis' bore to broader British and European anxieties over the perceived threat of physical and cultural degeneration with

which modern social conditions seemed intimately bound up. Sexologists such as Richard von Krafft-Ebbing were convinced of the pathologically feminine character of modernity and its destructive impact on society. In his monumental *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), Krafft-Ebing argued that the 'episodes of moral decay' which characterise a culture in its death-throes 'always coincide with effeminacy, lewdness, and luxuriance', which he attributed to the '[e]xaggerated tension of the nervous system' engendered by modernity.[64] British military recruitment statistics likewise offered an apparently damning indictment of the nation's manhood. The number of men who fell below the Army's minimum height requirement rose from 105 in every 1000 in 1845, to 565 per-1000 in 1900, while between 1893 and 1902, an average of 34.6% of military volunteers were deemed medically unfit.[65] Both culturally and physically, European masculinity appeared to be decidedly on the wane.

The implications of such a 'crisis' for Ireland were particularly pointed. Imperialist constructions of the 'Celt' as sentimental, impractical, and irrational, aligned Irishness with an almost hysterical femininity, which could only be redeemed through 'vital union' with the level-headed, masculine 'Anglo-Saxon'.[66] Those who sought to oppose British rule in Ireland, and the gendered rhetoric through it was naturalised, were thus placed in a double-bind. The drive to de-Anglicise Ireland through a return to Irish language folk culture and Gaelic games risked being read, in the gendered logic of British imperialism, as a feminising retreat into 'tradition' rooted in an archetypally Celtic aversion to the 'despotism of fact'.[67] However, to embrace socio-economic modernity meant to cede ground to the enfeebling forces of urbanisation and petit-bourgeois materialism, and the femininity with which they were cognate. Writing in the *New Irish Review* in 1898, D.P. Moran highlighted the threat modernity posed to the undeveloped Irish peasant, whose lack of any 'specialised characteristic' (save the 'almost universal inclination to cringe and crawl') rendered them particularly susceptible to the feminising influence of English bourgeois culture.[68] W.B. Yeats likewise perceived in the

increasing abstraction and specialisation of modern economic and intellectual life an emasculating force which had rendered Ireland 'sterile'.[69]

Read in this light, the image O'Connor offers of a Parnell rendered 'stout', 'flabby', and ostentatious by his sexual misconduct attests to a process of feminisation that is at once physically disempowering and politically delegitimising. In contrast to the hypermasculine physique and almost comically erect bearing of the figure depicted in cartoons such as 'The Labourer Is Worthy of His Hire' (Figure 1), 'A Game Two Can Play At' (Figure 2), and 'To the Rescue' (Figure 3), in which a tumescent Chief bears aloft an assortment of phallic weaponry, O'Connor's Parnell is swollen, softened, and distended beyond the limits of physical and moral restraint. In the masculinist logic of British government, to see Parnell reduced to such a state of flaccid impotence was to see him disqualified from the status of self-determining political agent. More specifically, in the gendered scheme of Arnoldian Celticism, and the broader ethno-racial typologies in which it participated, it was to number Parnell among the 'mere Irish' and to identify him with the irrational and feminine Celt. The emasculating and Hibernicising impact of this softening and bloating of Parnell's formerly well-proportioned frame is underscored through references to the bestialising profusion of his 'ragged' hair, which serve to present the Chief as the victim of atavistic decline into a state of degenerate animality. The ethno-national implications of this image are heightened by its evocation of the pseudo-anthropological depictions of the Irish as a simianised rabble which had been a mainstay of British political satire since the mid-nineteenth century.[70] In sketching his portrait of a distorted and ape-like Parnell gone-to-seed, O'Connor thus weaves together tropes drawn from contemporary psychiatry, evolutionary theory, and Hibernophobic political caricature to present Parnell as a bloated exemplar of precisely the stereotypically under-evolved and feminised Irishry whose antithesis he had once been held to represent.[71]

While less accusatory than Healy's characterisation of Parnell, in which insinuations of syphilitic insanity consistently hover just on the edge of articulation, O'Connor's description of a flabby and distended Parnell nevertheless seems intended to invite readings in which the medical and moral are blurred. As in Healy's journalism and speeches, General Paralysis of the Insane provides a pertinent point of clinical reference. Alongside its pronounced psychological impact, General Paralysis was responsible for a spectacular array of physical effects. The internal and external manifestations of these symptoms were assiduously documented and scrutinised by clinicians throughout the nineteenth century via a range of increasingly sophisticated technologies of measurement and surveillance.[72] Sufferers presented with asymmetrical pupils, facial tics, quivering lips, tremulous voices, poor diction, trembling extremities, locomotor ataxia (loss of muscular co-ordination), violent seizures, and the progressive paralysis from which the condition derived its name.[73] Autopsies and post-mortem dissection revealed that these external signs of physical collapse were replicated at the level of the patient's cerebral tissue, nervous system, and musculature. The atrophy, cerebral softening, and accretion of 'fatty' deposits which General Paralysis was seen to inflict on its (almost invariably male) sufferers, were read by contemporary medical and psychiatric commentators as a fundamental assault on the independent, active, and productive masculine body.[74] Muscles were found to have undergone 'fatty infiltration' and to have been left in a condition comparable to 'currant jam'; hearts became 'macerable and pale, externally overloaded with fat'; livers grew 'flabby'; the brain was reduced to a 'softened rottened [*sic*]' state.[75] For contemporary medical science, such 'fatty change' was indicative of an accumulation of 'degenerate mass' in which the patient's immoral excesses seemed to be reified.[76] In late-nineteenth-century Britain, this led General Paralysis to be seen as a fundamental threat to, and offense against, the values and operation of a militarised empire and an industrial economy founded upon the labour of 'hard', virile, and well-regulated male flesh.[77] O'Connor's Parnell,

in his increasing physical profusion and disproportion, seems to have undergone just such a transformation, which his garish attire and 'mutton dressed as lamb' aesthetic link to the feminising and sexually-compromising influence of Katherine O'Shea. Read alongside O'Connor's references to the hereditary instability of Parnell and his family, and the air of Parisian decadence with which he infuses the beginnings of the O'Shea affair, O'Connor's memoirs present an image of Parnell in many ways just as suggestive as Healy's. While this is not to suggest that such insinuations were necessarily a conscious feature of O'Connor's writing, it is to acknowledge the ways in which, by staking his public persona on an image of sexual continence and celibate reserve pointedly at odds with popular conceptions of the 'Celt', Parnell left himself singularly vulnerable to the rhetoric of sexual pathology which his former colleagues mobilised to explain and accelerate his fall from grace.

After the Split

As Frank Callanan emphasises, and O'Connor's biography demonstrates, Healy's rhetoric was not intended to remain confined to the world of politics, but 'calculated to pass directly into popular usage, as well as to provide primers for parish orators, lay and clerical'. Indeed, in Callanan's view, Healy's character assassination of Parnell was so influential that it ultimately came to 'set the themes of modern Irish nationalism'.[78] Taking Callanan's claim seriously, it becomes possible to trace the influence of this rhetoric of sexual health in the policy and pronouncements of one of twentieth-century Ireland's most prominent political and cultural movements: Sinn Féin.

While undoubtedly far removed from the aims and agenda of either Healy or what was to become the Irish National Federation, Arthur Griffith and his followers echoed their constitutional nationalist counterparts in using medical and psychiatric discourses to naturalise a model of nationalism in which Catholicism, Irishness, and sexual purity were presented as

synonymous. This rhetorical strategy first found expression in the anti-enlistment campaigns organised by Griffiths and Maud Gonne through the Irish Transvaal Committee in 1899, and was taken up by Sinn Féin and Inghinidhe na hÉireann (Daughters of Erin) in the aftermath of the Boer War.[79] In a 1904 letter to the *Freeman*, Gonne recounts the difficulties facing children who wished to attend Inghinidhe na hÉireann language classes 'because of the condition of the streets' brought about by 'the disgraceful conduct of the British military'.[80] Gonne supported her claim by recounting a journey she had made to the General Post Office late one evening, during which she 'was intentionally jostled against by soldiers and screamed at by poor unfortunate girls, whom the soldiers seem to incite to insult any respectable woman who ventures, on what they consider… their side of the street'. Gonne's implied fear that it was fast becoming impossible to visit the G.P.O. without contracting G.P.I. is highlighted by James Joyce in *Ulysses* (1922) in a scene in which Leopold Bloom peruses a recruitment poster for the Royal Dublin Fusiliers:

> Maud Gonne's letter about taking them off O'Connell street at night: disgrace to our Irish capital. Griffith's paper is on the same tack now: an army rotten with venereal disease: overseas or halfseasover empire. Half baked they look: hypnotised like.[81]

The letter's petition for the nocturnal removal of British troops from O'Connell Street was reiterated in a range of pamphlets and handbills authored by Gonne and distributed by members of Inghinidhe na hÉireann.[82] The group's publications directly targeted 'Irish Girls', emphasising their patriotic duty to forego the company of enlisted Irishmen, whose complicity in the country's occupation rendered them 'traitors'.[83] These pamphlets used degenerationist rhetoric to collocate the soldiers' ideological infidelity with a physiologically manifested descent into venereal corruption and physical debility. In the view of Gonne and her supporters, membership of the 'most degraded and immoral army in Europe' renders the soldiers 'unfit to be the companion of any girl', aligning them with the 'lowest and most depraved characters' drawn from 'the slums of English cities'. Like Healy, Gonne presents sexual contagion and

moral degradation as the interimplicated symptoms of a debilitating decline from a former state of physical and cultural 'purity'. For Gonne, the causes of this deterioration could be directly traced to the occupying British troops, whose presence threatens the 'honour' and well-being of 'Irish Girls' in a manner comparable to the internment of 'helpless Boer women and children in those horrible concentration camps'.

As Joyce notes, Griffith's publications of this period were firmly 'on the same tack'. The week before Gonne's letter appeared in the *Freeman*, the *United Irishman* devoted several columns of coverage to a meeting of the South Dublin Union Board intended to address the pathological impact of the 'most licentious soldiery in Europe' on Dublin's population.[84] As the decade progressed, Griffith's campaign intensified, with *Sinn Féin* featuring twelve articles on the subject of venereal disease in the British Army between May 1906 and February 1907.[85] Much as congenital insanity had for Healy the decade before, venereal disease provided Griffith with a medically verifiable index of an 'alien' immorality, against which the Irish could be constructed as physically and culturally pure. The earliest of these articles, published on 6 May 1906, reports the remarks of Dr Ridgeway, Dean of Carlisle, to a meeting of the Christian Social Union during which the speaker had announced to his audience that: 'Seventy per cent of [British] soldiers, not during war, but in England, during peace, were on the sick list in the course of the year, large numbers through the sin of impurity.'[86] Ridgeway concluded that if this venereal 'evil were not destroyed by the people it would destroy the people.' The author of the article noted that while the English population is legally empowered to 'destroy' this problem by Act of Parliament, the Irish must 'accept the sin of impurity quartered in their midst in that dutiful submission which becomes a people who have no Constitution other than that derived from the clean, pure hearts God and their mothers gave them.' The play on 'Constitution' in both its legal and medical senses juxtaposes the political disempowerment of the Irish with their apparently innate bodily well-being, the origins of which the article's author

locates in a union between feminine purity and dutiful piety. Just as Healy deployed denunciations of the 'Parnell bacillus' and a Parnellite politics of 'inoculation' to present the fallen leader's influence as a foreign imposition, maliciously transfused into the Irish body politic, Griffith employed venereal disease as an explanatory metaphor through which to replicate Sinn Féin's call for linguistic, cultural, and economic autarchy at the microcosmic level of the individual Irish body.[87]

Conclusion

Both before and after the split, the Parnell myth offered commentators of all stripes a political and cultural matrix within which questions of Irish national identity and sexual conduct could be configured and negotiated. In his mythic celibacy and preternatural reserve, Parnell could be presented as the antithesis of the hysterical femininity with which Irishness was cognate in the British colonial imaginary. In his physical and political decline, he could be figured as the victim and vector of an alien sexual contagion in opposition to which a pure model of Irish identity could be retroactively articulated. In both cases, Parnell's sexual conduct, physical condition, and mental health could be presented as synonymous with the cultural and political well-being of the Irish nation and the validity of its claims to independence. More than simply emotive metaphors for Parnell's perceived immorality, in the hands of the Healyite press insinuations of congenital syphilis and General Paralysis of the Insane became rhetorical tools with which they could redraw the boundaries of Irish political and cultural identity in their own interest, a strategy which was to be taken up and extended by Sinn Féin in the decades following the split. As these examples suggest, by situating Healy's post-split rhetoric in the medical and psychiatric context from which it derived, it becomes possible to arrive at a fuller understanding not only of Healy's critique of Parnellism, but its role in shaping the sexual politics and discursive tropes of twentieth-century Irish nationalism.

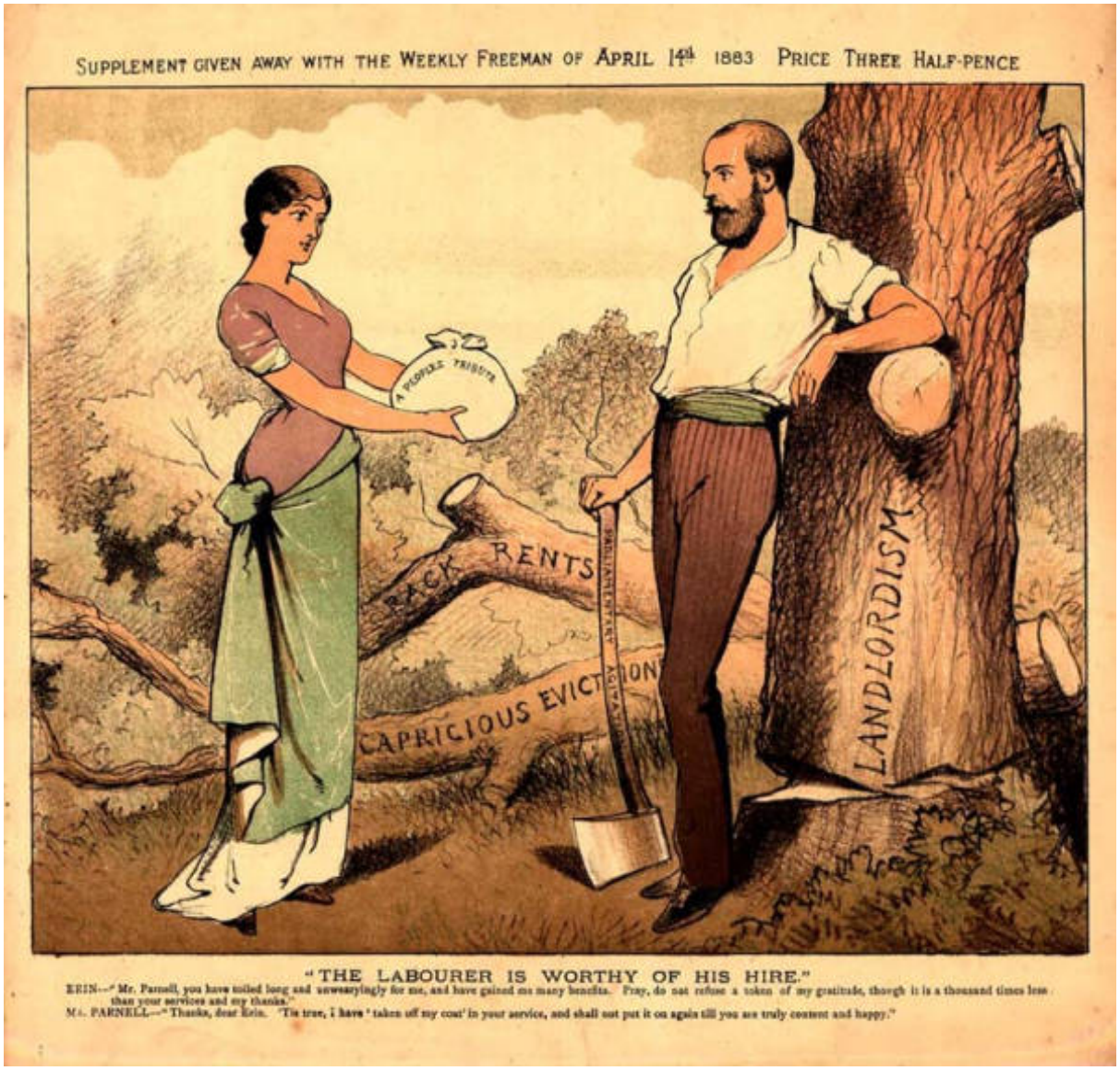

Figure 1: 'The Labourer is Worthy of His Hire.'[88]

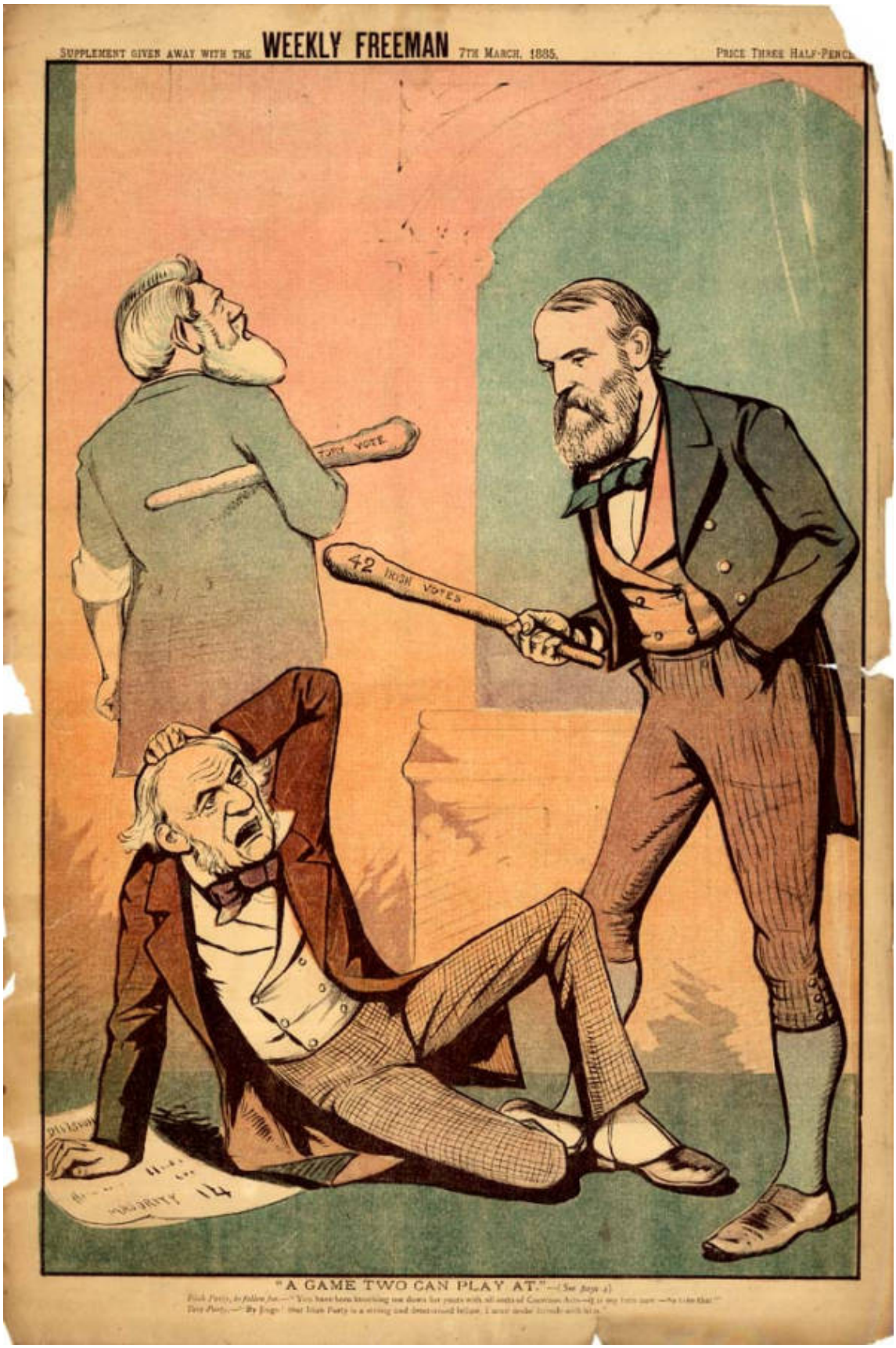

Figure 2: 'A Game Two Can Play At.'[89]

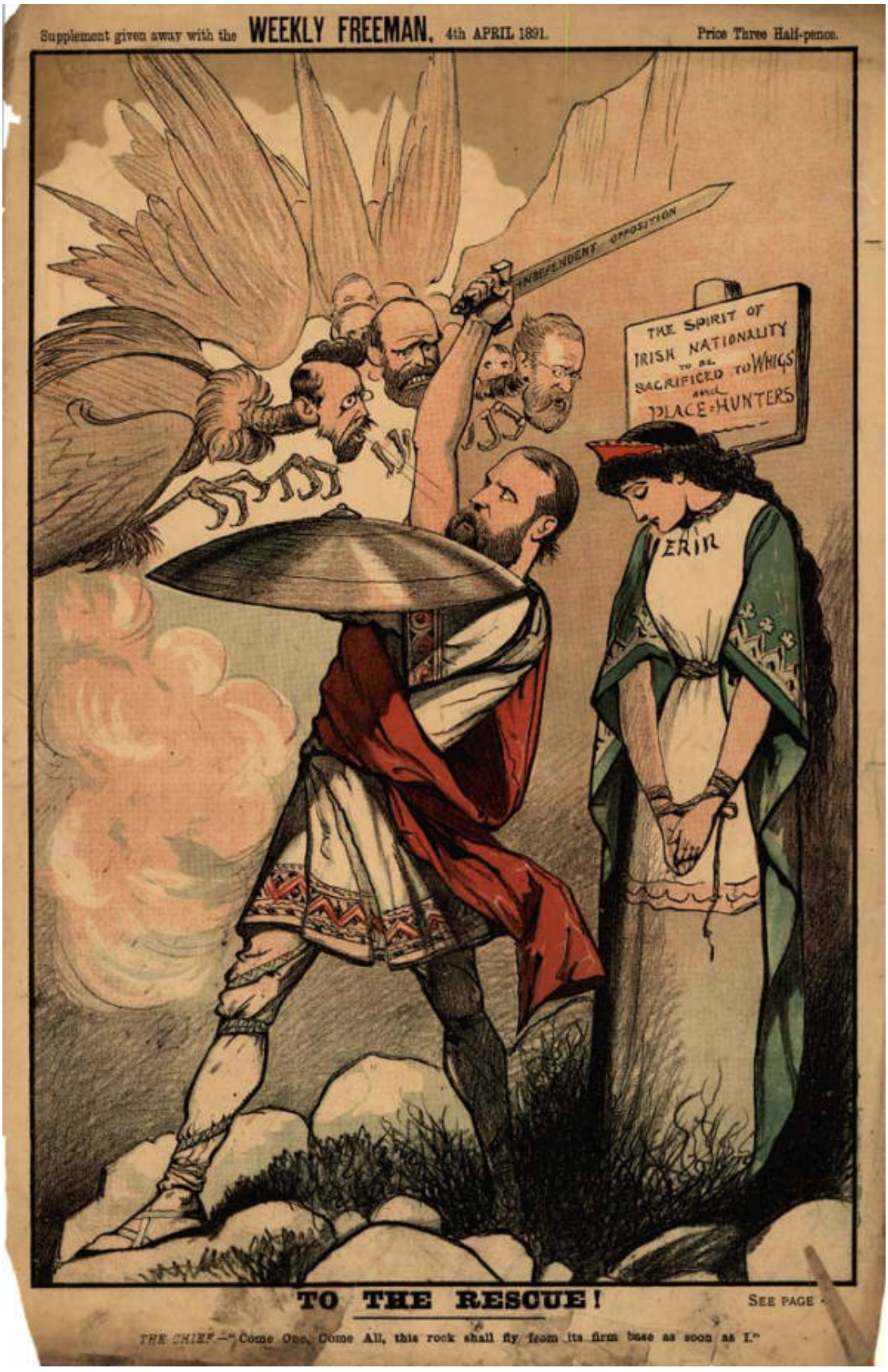

Figure 3: 'To the Rescue!'[90]

Notes

[1] H.G. Cocks highlights the distorting effect that can be exerted by treating such high-profile scandals and the press coverage they generated as hypostases of late-Victorian sexual culture. H. G. Cocks, 'Naughty Narrative Nineties: Sex, Scandal, and Representation in the Fin de Siècle', *The Journal of British Studies* 41, no. 4 (October 2002): 527–30.

[2] Diarmaid Ferriter, *Occasions of Sin: Sex and Society in Modern Ireland* (London: Profile Books, 2009), 36.

[3] It should be made clear at the outset that, in charting the ways in which oblique and more explicit insinuations of sexual pathology were made with reference to Parnell in the split and its aftermath, this article is in no way seeking to 'diagnose' him. Rather than concerning itself with identifying true nature and cause of Parnell's infamously poor constitution and various episodes of illness, this article will illustrate the ways in which these features of Parnell and the 'Parnell myth' were interpreted and deployed by contemporary political and cultural commentators to reshape popular perceptions of the Chief.

[4] T.C. Luby, R.F. Walsh, and J.C. Curtin, *The Story of Ireland's Struggle for Self-Government* (New York: Gay Brothers & Company, 1893), 743; *Freeman's Journal*, 18 February 1881; J.L. Garvin, 'Parnell and His Power', *Fortnightly Review* 64 (1 December 1891): 880; R. Barry O'Brien, *The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846-1891*, vol. 1 (London: Smith, Elder, 1898), 145; W.B. Yeats, *The Poems*, ed. Daniel Albright (London: Everyman, 2000), 330; Garvin, 'Parnell and His Power', 880; T.P. O'Connor, *Charles Stewart Parnell: A Memory* (London: Ward, Lock, Bowden & Co., 1891), 213.

[5] Joseph Valente contrasts Parnell's insistently tight-lipped demeanour with the loquacious public and private persona of O'Connell. O'Brien, *The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846-1891*, 1:137; Joseph Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880-1922* (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 33.

[6] G.H.J. Dutton, *A Delineation of the Character and Talents of the Late C.S. Parnell, M.P. and the Right Hon. W.H. Smith, M.P.* (Skegness: G.H.J. Dutton, 1891), 2; 3; 4; quoted in David Dwan, *The Great Community: Culture and Nationalism in Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day, 2008), 194.

[7] J. Connellan, *Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, Esq., M.P., Reprinted from the Leader* (London: N.P., 1888).

[8] Examples of this trope in Irish culture are too numerous to permit a comprehensive summary. As Connellan's comments suggest, one influential example was Mangan's famous 1847 lyric, in which the speaker pledges to rear 'Again in golden sheen' the throne of the eponymous Rosaleen, who shall enjoy sovereignty over both his heart and the nation. Equally prominent was Yeats and Augusta Gregory's *Cathleen ni Houlihan* (1902), in which the young Michael Gillane is lured away from his engagement to Delia Cahel to sacrifice himself in the failed 1798 rebellion by the 'Poor Old Woman'. James Clarence Mangan, *Poems: 1845-1847*, ed. Jacques Chuto, vol. 3, The Collected Works of James Clarence Mangan (Blackrock: Irish Academic Press, 1996), 168–69.

[9] *The Nation*, 2 January 1886.

[10] This vein of imagery was also taken up by the Parnellite *United Ireland* to describe the frenzy of his final campaign: '[It] is the man himself that conquered them, the Titan as he flamed out in the last struggle, like an unsuspected volcano breaking in red devastation through its accumulated ice.' Katherine Parnell reprises the theme in her memoirs, stating that 'few knew of the volcanic force and fire that burned beneath his icy exterior.' Standish O'Grady, *The Story of Ireland* (London: Methuen & Co., 1894), 210–11; 'Parnell and Our Policy', *United Ireland*, 12 October 1895; Katherine Parnell, *Charles Stewart Parnell, His Story and Political Life*, vol. 2 (London: London & Co, 1914), 46.

[11] In Renan's influential assessment, the Celtic 'race' possessed 'tous les défauts et toutes les qualités de l'homme solitaire: à la fois fière et timide, puissante par le sentiment et faible dans l'action; chez elle, libre et épanouie; à l'extérieur, gauche et embarrassée' (all the faults and the positive qualities of the solitary man: at the same time proud and timid, strong in feeling and weak in action; at home, free and unreserved; to the outside world, awkward and embarrassed). Quoting Henri Martin, Arnold presented the Celt as 'Sentimental – *always ready to react against the despotism of fact*' and argued that the rational, masculine Anglo-Saxon had failed his feminised neighbour in neglecting to cultivate a 'vital union' between the two races and cultures. Ernest Renan, 'De La Poésie Des Races Celtiques', *Revue Des Deux Mondes* 5 (1854): 477; Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1867), 102; xii.

[12] Isabella Augusta Persse Gregory, *Lady Gregory's Diaries: 1892 - 1902*, ed. James Pethica (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1996), 169.

[13] W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies*, ed. William H. O'Donnell and Douglas N. Archibald, vol. 3, The Collected Works of W.B. Yeats (New York: Scribner, 1999), 191; Gregory, *Lady Gregory's Diaries*, 169–70.

[14]James Joyce, *Dubliners: A Norton Critical Edition*, ed. Margot Norris, Hans Walter Gabler, and Walter Hetcche (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 113.

[15] Ibid.

[16] O'Brien, *The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846-1891*, 1:237.

[17] Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880-1922*, 42–43.

[18] 'At the Outset', *National Press*, 7 March 1891, 4.

[19] *New York Times*, 13 July 1890.
[20] Frank Callanan, *The Parnell Split: 1890 - 91* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1992), 283.
[21] *National Press*, 13 October 1891.
[22] While he productively interrogates the politicisation of Parnell's health and appearance in the wake of the O'Shea trial, Frank Callanan does not highlight the role suggestions of sexual pathology played in such a process. Callanan, *The Parnell Split*, 162; Frank Callanan, *T.M. Healy* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), chaps 10–14.
[23] Center for Disease Control, 'STD Surveillance Case Definitions', *STD Surveillance Case Definitions*, 10 December 2013, https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats/CaseDefinitions-2014.pdf.
[24] Alfred Fournier, *Prophylaxie de la syphilis* (Paris: J. Rueff, 1903), 4.
[25] Bénédict Augustin Morel, *Traité des dégénérescences physiques, intellectuelles et morales de l'espèce humaine et des causes qui produisent ces variétés maladives* (Paris: J.B. Ballière, 1857), 5; Max Nordau, *Entartung*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Carl Dunder, 1893), vii.
[26] Henry Maudsley, *The Physiology and Pathology of the Mind* (London: Macmillan, 1867), 215–16.
[27] Maria Luddy, *Prostitution and Irish Society, 1800-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 124.
[28] 'The Contagious Diseases Acts and Their Work', *The Medical Press and Circular*, 27 November 1878, 436, quoted in Luddy, *Prostitution and Irish Society, 1800-1940*, 150.
[29] *Freeman's Journal*, 18 December 1821.
[30] Luddy, *Prostitution and Irish Society, 1800-1940*, 127.
[31] *Weekly Freeman*, 18 April 1901.
[32] C.F. Marshall, *Syphilology and Venereal Disease* (New York: Wood, 1906), 216.
[33] While strongly associated with venereal disease throughout the nineteenth century, prior to the establishment of its status as a form of tertiary syphilis in 1913, GPI was taken to stem from a broader confluence of immoral and improvident behaviours, including over-work, alcoholism, and sexual excess. Elizabeth A. Martin, ed., *Concise Medical Dictionary*, 8th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 301; Jennifer Wallis, '"Atrophied", "Engorged", "Debauched": Muscle Wastage, Degenerate Mass and Moral Worth in the General Paralytic Patient', in *Insanity and the Lunatic Asylum in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Thomas Knowles and Serena Trowbridge (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2015), 100.
[34] R.S. Stewart, 'The Increase of General Paralysis in England and Wales: Its Causation and Significance', *Journal of Medical Science* 42 (October 1896): 776.
[35] For an account of this performance and its position within the broader rise of 'Ibsenism', see: Katherine E. Kelly, 'Pandemic and Performance: Ibsen and the Outbreak of Modernism', *South Central Review* 25, no. 1 (2008): 12–35.
[36] Henrik Ibsen, *The Pillars of Society and Other Plays*, ed. Havelock Ellis, trans. William Archer (London: Walter Scott, 1888), 169; 170.
[37] George Bernard Shaw, *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (London: Walter Scott, 1891), 82.
[38] Ibid., 86.
[39] Scott's remarks are quoted by Shaw in *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*. For an amusing taxonomy of the deluge of abuse heaped upon this production, see William Archer's 'Ghosts and Gibberings'. Ibid., 3; William Archer, 'Ghosts and Gibberings', *Pall Mall Gazette*, no. 8127 (8 April 1891): 3.
[40] Both Ben Levitas and Irina Ruppo Malone argue that the parallels the controversy surrounding the London premiere of *Ghosts* and the Ibsenite qualities of Parnell's fall from grace would not have been lost on Irish cultural and political commentators. Clement Scott, 'Royalty Theatre', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 March 1891; Ben Levitas, *The Theatre of Nation* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 10–11; Irina Ruppo Malone, *Ibsen and the Irish Revival* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 12–18.
[41] T.M. Healy, 'The Rise and Fall of Mr Parnell', *New Review* IV, no. 22 (March 1891): 196.
[42] Healy's image of Parnell as psychotically self-centred also resonates with Max Nordau's diagnosis of Oscar Wilde's pathologically self-regarding aestheticism as an exemplary manifestation of the 'Ich-Sucht' (Ego-Mania) of contemporary decadence. Maudsley, *The Physiology and Pathology of the Mind*, 177; Max Nordau, *Entartung*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Carl Dunder, 1893), 137–38.
[43] William Julius Mickle, *General Paralysis of the Insane* (London: H.K. Lewis, 1880), 10.
[44] *The Nation*, 29 June 1891; *The Nation*, 24 July 1891; *The Nation*, 8 October 1891.
[45] *Black and White*, 17 October 1891.
[46] Stewart, 'The Increase of General Paralysis in England and Wales: Its Causation and Significance', 773; Callanan, *T.M. Healy*, 290.
[47] Callanan, *T.M. Healy*, 294.
[48] Healy, 'The Rise and Fall of Mr Parnell', 196.
[49] *National Press*, 08 April 1891, Central Branch NF.
[50] *National Press*, 01 October 1891, Belfast.
[51] *Evening Press*, 07 October 1891, quoted in *National Press*, 08 October 1891.

[52] James Cowles Prichard, *A Treatise on Insanity and Other Disorders Affecting the Mind* (London: Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, 1835), 6.
[53] *National Press*, 27 June 1891.
[54] Alfred Webb to John Dillon, 07 February 1897, Dillon Paper, TCD MS 6760.
[55] William Michael Murphy, *The Parnell Myth and Irish Politics, 1891-1956* (New York: Peter Lang, 1986), 22–23.
[56] O'Connor, *Charles Stewart Parnell: A Memory*, 132.
[57] Ibid., 133.
[58] Paul Bew, *Enigma: A New Life of Charles Stewart Parnell* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2012), 6.
[59] Quoted in F.S.L. Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell*, New ed. (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2005), 194–95.
[60] T.P. O'Connor, *Memoirs of an Old Parliamentarian*, vol. 1 (London: E. Benn Ltd., 1929), 100.
[61] O'Connor, *Charles Stewart Parnell: A Memory*, 139.
[62] Influential accounts of this crisis in domestic and colonial settings include Roger Horrocks and Jo Campling, *Masculinity in Crisis: Myths, Fantasies, and Realities* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); John Tosh, 'What Should Historians Do with Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain', *History Workshop* 38 (1994): 179–202; Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[63] For accounts of the gendering of modernity see Rita Felski, 'The Gender of Modernity', in *Political Gender: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Sally Ledger (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994), 144–55; Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and Histories of Art* (London: Routledge, 2006), chap. 3.
[64] Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, trans. Franklin Klaf (New York: Stein and Day, 1965), 3; 3-4.
[65] Sheldon J. Watts, *Epidemics and History: Disease, Power, and Imperialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 148.
[66] Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, xii.
[67] Ibid., 102.
[68] David Patrick Moran, *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland*, ed. Patrick Maume (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2006), 4.
[69] W.B. Yeats, *Memoirs*, ed. Denis Donoghue (London: Papermac, 1988), 178.
[70] Lewis Perry Curtis, *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*, Rev. ed (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997); Michael Willem De Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004).
[71] Numerous commentators have highlighted the ways in which Parnell's public persona responded to and subverted ethnically inflected models of gender identity, including: Gregory, *Lady Gregory's Diaries*, 169; John Kelly, 'Parnell in Irish Literature', in *Parnell in Perspective*, ed. David George Boyce and Alan O'Day (London: Routledge, 1991), 257; Dwan, *The Great Community*, 189–90; Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880-1922*, 27–28, 31.
[72] Jennifer Wallis, '"Atrophied", "Engorged", "Debauched": Muscle Wastage, Degenerate Mass and Moral Worth in the General Paralytic Patient', 101; 102-06.
[73] Mickle, *General Paralysis of the Insane*, 7-9-17-36.
[74] In nineteenth-century medicine, GPI was held to be a 'male disease', particularly prevalent among members of the armed forces and those living in urban centres. Jennifer Wallis, '"Atrophied", "Engorged", "Debauched": Muscle Wastage, Degenerate Mass and Moral Worth in the General Paralytic Patient', 107–10; F.W. Mott, 'Observations on the Etiology and Pathology of General Paralysis', *Archives of Neurology from the Pathological Laboratory of the London Co. Asylum* 1 (1899): 168; Stewart, 'The Increase of General Paralysis in England and Wales: Its Causation and Significance', 762; L. Duncan Buckley, *Syphilis in the Innocent (Syphilis Insontium)* (New York: Bailey & Fairchild, 1894).
[75] 'Post-Mortem Reports, Vol. 14', Post-Mortem Reports (Stanley Royd Hospital, Wakefield (formerly the West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum), 1898 1895), 81, WYAS GB 201 C000085/3/12/14; 'Post-Mortem Reports, Vol. 10', Post-Mortem Reports (Stanley Royd Hospital, Wakefield (formerly the West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum), 1891 1888), 193–94, WYAS C000085/3/12/10; William Bevan Lewis, 'Methods of Preparing, Demonstrating, and Examining Cerebral Structure in Health and Disease', *Brain* 3, no. 4 (1881): 508.
[76] E. Goodall and W.L. Ruxton, 'On Certain Microscopical Changes in the Nerves of the Limbs in Cases of General Paralysis of the Insane', *Brain* 15, no. 2 (1892): 241–49.
[77] Jennifer Wallis, '"Atrophied", "Engorged", "Debauched": Muscle Wastage, Degenerate Mass and Moral Worth in the General Paralytic Patient', 103–4; Watts, *Epidemics and History*, 148; Philippa Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2003), chap. 2 and 10.
[78] Callanan, *T.M. Healy*, 258; 257; 259.
[79] Donal P. McCracken, *Forgotten Protest: Ireland and the Anglo-Boer War*, Updated and Revised (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2003), chap. 5.

[80] Maud Gonne-MacBride, 'To the Editor of the Freeman's Journal', *Freeman's Journal*, 6 June 1904, 6.
[81] James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Hans Gabler (New York: Vintage, 1986), 59.
[82] Mary Trotter, *Ireland's National Theaters: Political Performance and the Origins of the Irish Dramatic Movement* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001), 88–89.
[83] Inghinidhe na hÉireann, *Irish Girls!* (Dublin: Inghinidhe na hÉireann, 1914).
[84] *United Irishman*, 28 May 1904.
[85] *Sinn Féin*, 6 May 1906; 'The British Army', *Sinn Féin*, 7 July 1906; 'The British Army', *Sinn Féin*, 8 September 1906; Oliver St John Gogarty, 'Ugly England (I)', *Sinn Féin*, 15 September 1906; 'The Immorality of the British Army', *Sinn Féin*, 10 November 1906; Arthur Griffith, 'Ireland and the British Army', *Sinn Féin*, 17 November 1906; Oliver St John Gogarty, 'Ugly England (II)', *Sinn Féin*, 24 November 1906; Oliver St John Gogarty, 'Ugly England (III)', *Sinn Féin*, 1 December 1906; *Sinn Féin*, 22 December 1906; *Sinn Féin*, 19 January 1907; *Sinn Féin*, 9 February 1907; *Sinn Féin*, 22 February 1907.
[86] 'The British Army', *Sinn Féin*, 6 May 1906.
[87] *National Press*, 12 March 1891, 22 June 1891; *Insuppressible*, 27 December 1891; *National Press*, 27 December 1891.
[88] *Weekly Freeman*, 14 April 1883.
[89] *Weekly Freeman*, 7 March 1885.
[90] *Weekly Freeman*, 4 April 1891.

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