

THE MAAMTRASNA INQUIRY.

LIBERAL circles in England and the London Press almost without exception are furious because the Government has consented to let Lord Carnarvon inquire if certain men, now in prison for alleged crime, are innocent or guilty. A packed jury, under the manipulation of the infamous Bolton, pronounced them guilty. Under this more than doubtful verdict, three men, one of them surely innocent, were hanged, and seven others sentenced to prison for life.

Earl Spencer was petitioned to accord an investigation of the case on behalf of the latter, the former being beyond the mercy of any earthly tribunal. He refused, as a matter of course. It was Bolton, who had procured their conviction, and the Viceroy steadily supported every act of his subordinates.

Now that the bloody rule of Spencer is over, Mr. Parnell has reopened the case of the Maamtrasna victims, and the new Tory Government has consented to an official investigation. It is a substantial triumph for Mr. Parnell, but a greater victory for justice, so long trampled under foot in Ireland. The anger of the Liberals is on the face of it a confession of guilt. Otherwise, why should they object to a simple inquiry after truth? They cannot pretend that the new administration, that any English administration in Ireland, would be biased in favour of the prisoners. The presumption is all the other way. But they fear, and with reason, that an honest investigation will bring out the shameful truth that the Maamtrasna murderers, so called, have been the victims of a cold-blooded, diabolical plot, at the head of which was Earl Spencer's tool, the man of whom Mr. Parnell said, in the House of Commons, last week: "I believe that if ever a murderer deserved to be placed on trial and sentenced to death, that man was Bolton."

The question is not one of national rights or wrongs, it is simply a question of justice. Evidence has been brought out to prove the innocence of one of the men who were hanged, and equally of those who are now undergoing an unjust sentence of imprisonment. False witnesses, upon whose testimony the prisoners were convicted, have retracted their perjury in the most solemn manner, without any possible object save that of undoing a heinous wrong in so far as they can. They have shown that the Crown Solicitor Bolton deliberately fabricated evidence to convict, and secured their support under threats of the direst punishment if they refused compliance.

All this is matter of history. It was submitted to Spencer but he declined to look into it. He was satisfied with the work of Bolton and the packed juries. An executive not connected as *particeps criminis* with the iniquities of the law is asked to be more impartial, and because it is signified that an investigation will be made, the Liberal Press and politicians are unanimous in denunciation of the new "bargain" with Mr. Parnell. They seem to fear that the Tories, unlike the Liberals, will keep the terms of their bargains and actually try to discover the truth.

Pending the promised inquiry, here is a timely illustration of the working of law in Ireland, under a dispensation now, we trust, about to pass away forever. The grand jury of County Kerry, says a cablegram of the 18th inst., has awarded 10,000 dols. to S. M. Hussey, the land agent, for the damage done to his house by a dynamite explosion in November last. The amount is to be levied on the whole county, and the only question in the minds of the jury was whether or not it should be levied on the adjoining county as well.

The police, we are further informed, had early information of the intended explosion, but they have refused to tell the grand jury where they got it, or, presumably, why they failed to act upon it in time to prevent the crime. The house was under police surveillance at the time of the explosion, and there is no doubt in any honest man's mind that they were in collusion with the owner, and in the slang of the trade, "put up the job," partly with a view to stimulate the outrage market and partly to secure the damages with a complaisant grand jury has now awarded to the chief conspirator. Think of a community's being held liable pecuniarily for real or pretended damages sustained by any citizen because the police have told the grand jury that they have evidence, which they will not reveal, tracing the crime to political sources! In what other civilized country would such a mockery of justice be allowed to govern the administration of law?

We do not expect much from the inquiry into the Maamtrasna and other cases, even if it be taken up by the Government. The memory of the dead may be cleared of the stain of murder. The innocent men undergoing penal servitude may be released, but the heinous wrong will not be thus righted, nor do we cherish any hope that the villainous conspirators by whom it was carried out will be punished. Perhaps it is much, however, if one victim's reputation be cleared, and the guiltless prisoners be set free. It is much, certainly, under Irish laws and their administration, and more than Mr. Gladstone and his party have been willing to grant.—*Pilot*.

When the brain is wearied, the nerves unstrung, the muscles weak, use Hop Bitters as made by American Co. Read

Says the *Dublin Freeman*, noting Earl Carnarvon's inauguration as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland:—"If Lord Carnarvon can do as little good to speak of, we may, at all events, hope that he will do as little harm. He is not called upon to wantonly outrage public opinion, and the four or five months that will be the extent of his tenure of office may pass by without any attempt being made to harass him, unless he chooses to create embarrassments for himself."

The fact that Carter and Co., of George street, are the only Drapers in Dunedin doing a strictly Cash Trade who import their own Goods direct from Home Markets, is the one cause of their being able to sell cheaper than any other firm. Carter and Co. have just opened, ex S.S. Coptic and Kaikoura, 16 cases Men's and Boys' Clothing, and in consequence of the desperate scarcity of Ready Money, they have decided to offer the whole lot, for a few weeks, at landed Cost. Therefore call, inspect, and judge for yourself. Carter and Co., 60 and 62, George street, Dunedin

News of the Week.

FRIDAY.

IN the House of Representatives yesterday, Major Atkinson said before moving his resolutions, he should like to ask the Government whether they would take the debate on the whole of the resolutions or would they desire to have a debate on each of the resolutions? The Hon. R. Stout said it was a most extraordinary request for the leader of the Opposition to ask the Government how he would move a no-confidence motion. Major Atkinson said he desired to save time by asking. If the Government did not wish to save the time of the country it was no fault of the Opposition. He then went on to describe the position of parties in the House and position of the Government in regard to their followers. He said the Government sat on the benches at the dictation of the Opposition, and were content to take back all their measures in obedience to the will of the House. The Opposition, on the contrary, had done their best to assist the Government in carrying out useful measures. They were too weak to carry a no-confidence motion against the Government, but were strong enough to compel the Ministry to take back all their objectionable measures. The Opposition therefore, feeling it was not desirable that only one set of men should remain in office, had considered whether it was not their duty to support any honest Government as against the present Ministry, and they were willing to support either Mr. Ormond on Mr. Montgomery, or any member outside their own party that they thought would carry on the government of the country satisfactorily. They failed in this respect, however, and he thought that fact was very degrading, to the Government especially. Such being the position of the Opposition proper, they had to consider what their duty to the country was. He thought he was fulfilling the duty of the Opposition by proposing the resolutions he had given notice of, and he considered they had a perfect right to direct the attention of the country to the extravagant proposals of the Government. If the Government desired to treat the resolution as one of want of confidence, let them do so. Whatever the issue was the Opposition would not shrink from the consequences. Mr. Macandrew said he desired to move an amendment that it was inexpedient that a discussion should take place on the Estimates in the form of a resolution, and that it is inadvisable to raise the question of a new loan till the necessity for such had been shown after the estimates had been discussed. He thought there were but few members in the House who did not agree with some of the resolutions, and probably with the whole of them. He thought it would be found practically that they would not exceed a million a year. He did not agree with the portion of the resolution as to the East and West Coast railway, as he considered the Government should some time ago have undertaken that work. As to the new loan, he was not aware the Government felt very strong on that point. He thought the member for Egmont was the last man in the House who should object to the proposals in regard to the North Island railway. As to the reduction in expenditure, he reckoned it was absolutely impossible to reduce the Estimates this year by £30,000. He thought the resolution was not one for the House to consider at all. The question was whether the member for Egmont and his colleagues were to return to office. If he (Mr. Macandrew) thought that any change of Government would relieve the wretched condition of the country, he should vote most heartily for it. The amendment was put, and carried on a division by 51 to 39.

The orders calling back three regiments of British troops from Egypt to England have been cancelled by the War Office. The troops, however, had already embarked, and now remain on board the transports waiting further instructions.

Colonel Stanley, in a despatch to the Colonial Governors on the Federal Council Act, states that while unwilling to press New South Wales and New Zealand to join the Council, he trusts that they will be satisfied that there is no practical impediment to the federation, provided the Colonies all unite. He also expresses an opinion regarding the Pacific policy, in which he holds that it will be difficult to advance British interests there on account of the conflicting claims of other powers.

The Russian proposals relative to the Zulfikar Pass have been submitted to the Ameer.

SATURDAY.

In the House of Representatives this morning the debate on the no-confidence motion terminated in favour of the Government by a majority of four.

The *Daily Times'* correspondent writes as follows: There are many indications that a very large rush will set in to Mount Criffel. During the past week men have arrived here from Victoria, and even from Silverton, in New South Wales, with the news that the mining populations of the two Colonies are greatly excited by the reports circulating there about the new field. This is only to be accounted for, first by the old saying "that far-off fields look green," and secondly by the depressed state of alluvial mining in those Colonies, and the general and well-known excitability of the miner. There is nothing else whatever to account for the excitement. The reports which have filtered through the Colonial Press, can certainly not be said to have given rise to the excitement; besides, it should be a well-known fact, even in Victoria and New South Wales, that the New Zealand fields are not in so flourishing a condition, that they could not spare miners enough to man a gold-field of pretty fair proportions. However, under the circumstances, it becomes the duty of "your own" to repeat the cautions of his former letters, viz., that none should give up a certainty for Mount Criffel, and that none should go there unless provided with sufficient funds to carry on prospecting for a month or two. The difficulties of the field are first, its exposed and elevated position; the absence of water, even for prospecting purposes; the total want of firewood, or fuel of any kind, except speargrass. To these drawbacks must be