

## OUR IRISH LETTER.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Dublin, January 13, 1887.

THE evictions in Kerry take place under circumstances of intense cruelty. First of all, the rigours of the season, then the utter poverty of the people, and, above all, the practice which is being carried out in Glenbeigh, of burning down the cabins when the tenants are driven out of them. Judge Curran, General Buller, and others interfered for a time between these tenants and the exterminators, but since restraining the landlords is no longer the Government policy, the victims are left to their fate. The bailiffs and emergency men come provided with paraffin oil, and matches, and tearing off some sods or *scrans* from the roof, set fire to the house from the inside. Simultaneously others attack the gables with crowbars, displacing foundation stones until the roof-tree collapses a flaming mass of ruins. A like fate falls upon the cow sheds or other out buildings attached to these doomed homes. A ragged, maddened, crowd, alternating between despair and defiance give vent to their feelings in wails and imprecations, sometimes in stone-throwing, which diverts the work of destruction for a little while, but does not prevent it. Most of these holdings are valued at about five pounds, and rented at ten; a hundred decrees for possession are still in the hands of the Glen sheriff for execution. On the other hand hardly a day passes without bringing some cheering sign of how the struggle goes with the Plan of Campaign and the united might of the landlords and the Government. The efforts to suppress the Plan were really magical! The hour the Castle declared war against it, the people took it to their hearts in a way that amazed its very founders. The same way with all the suppressed meetings—the M.P.'s, priests, and people accomplish their purposes with infinitely more effect while the fighting forces of Britain are scouring the hills and glens upon wild goose chases in the snow. Lord Dillon's surrender to his truly noble namesake, John Dillon, is the event of the week. This estate is large, supplying his lordship with an income of over twenty-five thousand pounds annually, and these rents, be it remembered, were always paid even in the "black forty-seven," and the "sad seventy-nine." A learned professor with no political leanings, who once made a map of the soil, told me were he a land-commissioner, he would reduce the rents by seventy-five per cent. It was not from the soil, but from toil in England and elsewhere the tenants wrung Lord Dillon's rents. He refused to grant them the modest reduction of twenty-five per cent., until, under John Dillon's guidance, the Plan was put in practise, with the result of bringing the landlords to reason. He consents to an irreducible minimum of twenty per cent. all round, re-instatement of all evicted tenants, and the payment of the whole of the costs.

The so-called "traversers" are returned for trial after having had the pleasure of cross-examining the Chief Secretary, Sir Redvers Buller, and a few other governors of Ireland in the Green street Police Court. The series of blunders by which the Executive left it in the power of the "traversers" to summon them excited much amusement in Dublin, but the evidence was provocative of nothing but contempt. The air of Dublin Castle has proved too strong for General Buller, the generous impulses he displayed in Kerry are already poisoned.

Chief amongst the meetings of the week was the Protestant Home Rulers—one of the largest and most influential yet held by that brave and patriotic association. The Protestant Home Rulers are not so very long in existence, but certainly, so far as intellect and purity of principles go, they make one proud of being their compatriots. It is a cheering thing to remember that out of the very hot-bed of Toryism, Trinity College, the best of these men have sprung—young men, too, who have taken Davis for their model both in public and private life. Many of them, however, have noble and inspiring family traditions of their own to look back upon, for example, the grandsons of Mr. William Smith O'Brien, who were in the fore front of the Association. At the meeting on Wednesday, Mr. T. A. Dickson, ex-Member for Tyrone, made an eloquent speech in announcing his conversion to Home Rule, while Professor Galbraith, Arthur Webb, and others followed, who were equally impressive in demanding our National rights. The Protestant Home Rulers are about starting a new National weekly paper, to be called *North and South*. The title, which is taken from Sir C. G. Duffy's book, "The League of North and South," is indicative of its aims. It is to be mainly propagandist, to use every worthy effort to unite Orange and green in the one sacred cause of our unhappy country. The editor, Mr. C. H. Oldham, though quite young, is already a notable figure in intellectual efforts here; he was one of those who turned the *Dublin University Review*—he is a gold medalist of Trinity College—from its respectable old Conservatism, into a National magazine. When the College dons awoke to the fact, there was consternation in their midst, they withdrew the seal of the College from its cover, and reclaimed their subscriptions when they saw an article by Michael Davitt in the place of honour. By way of antidote, evidently, the I.L.P.U. have determined on issuing a paper also, I have not yet heard the name of the sheet, but the editor is to be Mr. Philip Bagnell of Clonmel notoriety.

An amusing feature of the Round Room of the Mansion, wherein the banquet for Messrs. Labouchere and Conynbears was held the other night, is the echo. This, in its way, is as marvellous as that of Killarney. There was a large mirror opposite where the editor of *Truth* sat, so that not only every word of his witty and sympathetic speech was doubled, but his gestures likewise. The ladies, who almost filled the gallery, were in a better position to perceive this than any of the seven hundred guests.

*Propos* of ladies, I may mention the approaching marriage of the eldest daughter of the late A. M. Sullivan, to Maurice Healy, M.P., and also the preparations which are on foot to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Michael Davitt on their return to Ireland. A public banquet and an address are already spoken of.

The tragic death of Lord Iddeleigh is on everybody's tongue. Not a detail of ghastly and awful interest was wanting; his betrayal

by the party he served; his son's indignant letter on the subject two days before; his last journey to the Tory Chief, who, it is whispered aloud, literally broke his heart; his death under Lord Salisbury's ill-omened roof. Sudden deaths are fearful things. And along with the news of Lord Iddeleigh's decease, one must recall involuntarily that of the nun in Belfast a few years ago, who died of the same disease as the late peer. He was Sir Stafford Northcote then, and in the service of the party which insulted and betrayed him since, came to Belfast on the same mission as Lord Randolph Churchill—to stir up the Orangemen. They became sufficiently stirred to besiege a convent, in which one of the Sisters dropped dead with fright.

The Lord Lieutenant Castlereagh has replied to the memorial of his tenantry, asking for a reduction, that he will not lower the rents, but will seal at a reasonable price. What is his idea of that remains to be seen.

The Londonderry tenants of the London Company of Skinners have offered seven years rent as purchase money of their farms. These tenants are mainly Presbyterians.

R. K.

H. A. C. B. S.

(Sydney Penny Nation, February 12)

ON Friday, 4th inst., the annual meeting of the delegates from the different branches in the town and country, forming the N.S.W. district, was held in the Bible Hall, William street. The district president (Mr. H. Connolly) was in the chair. The other district officers were district vice-president, J. O'Neil; district treasurer, F. O'Rourke; district secretary, H. E. Kelly; and past district president, P. Stapleton. After the formal business of opening was performed the auditors, Messrs. M'Keown and Pope, submitted a very satisfactory report, after which the district secretary presented the following report:—Report by the District Executive. To the Delegates of the Sydney District Board, Gentlemen,—According to a well established custom we desire to place before you a report of the condition of, and advancement made by the different branches forming our district, of the increase of our own finances, of our marked success in the establishment of new branches, and of other general and fundamental matters. You will perceive that we have, during the year 1886, added to our district four new branches, St. Patrick's, Kogarah; St. Joseph's, Newtown; St. Patrick's, Wellington; and St. Virgilus, Hay. The Kogarah and Newtown branches are in money and members progressing most satisfactorily. St. Patrick's, Wellington, is contending against a very formidable difficulty and receiving unjust treatment from a quarter whence it might be least expected. The branch was originally established under the immediate jurisdiction of the E. D., but from unknown causes broke up leaving £15 and the Regalia, but unpaid for. The present members, on re-opening this branch, thought themselves justly entitled to both, which, however cannot evidently be accomplished though they offered to redeem the old branch from its indebtedness to the E. D. St. Virgilus, Hay, has just been opened by the priest and some influential members of the town. Our promptness and generosity towards establishing this branch has been most satisfactory to the members in that remote town, where we look forward to with the hope that soon a very flourishing branch will exist. In addition to these we have, after considerable mental anxiety and endless correspondence, succeeded in having affiliated to our district, under most favourable conditions the Sacred Heart Branch, Goulburn, No. 164, which we believe will prove a valuable and beneficial acquisition to us, because the branch itself, though comparatively young, is in a sound financial condition, its members intelligently and socially respectable, and in the centre of a large and flourishing town and district, in which we contemplate at an early date opening other branches. Of the city and suburban branches we are in a position to say that the advancement made is indeed astounding with the exception of St. Peter's Branch, Surry Hills, which has fallen considerably to the rear of others in funds, though large in its number of members. We fully recognise the state of this branch, and we have under consideration the necessity of taking such action, as early as possible, as will place it on a firmer foundation. Recently some of our country branches have entered into speculations of the most doubtful character, such as public sports, balls, concerts, etc., with very disastrous results to themselves indeed. The Friendly Society's Commission spoke very strongly against this practice, and against such we are determined for the future to strongly set our countenance. By these sports one branch lost £24, while another lost £34, in each case out of the branch funds. St. Joseph's Branch, Forbes, has found it necessary, with our consent, to raise the weekly contributions to 1s 3d. This we believe from experience to be a step in the right direction, because 1s per week is insufficient to meet all the demands upon the country branches, which very often borrow from the Sick Fund when there are no other available means of paying the incidental expenses, but which in our opinion would be easily met by 1s 3d. We accordingly recommend this thoughtful and commendable act of St. Joseph's branch to the early consideration of the sister branches. We now, gentlemen, wish to direct your attention to the condition of our finances, which, indeed, are most excellent. You see by the tabulated statement which accompanies our balance sheet that the credit of the Sick Fund of the branches is over £2150, while the incidental credit is £880, spread over 22 branches, with 1580 members. The capital of the district branch is, including Statute and Building Funds, £1403 16s 6d cash, to which may be added assets over liabilities in good's account, £225, making a grand total of £4660, showing an increase of £500, and 300 members on the previous year, and in each case nearly double that of 1884. These figures require no eloquent language to convince you of the stability of, and the unparalleled progress made by the D.B. and branches during the past year, a condition, no doubt, most pleasing to you and to every other intelligent member of this grand and rapidly-flourishing Society, but more than gratifying to us, who are charged with the responsibility of careful supervision and economical management of so promising a society, the chief characteristic of which is the harmony and social brotherly feeling