

# Dublin Notes.

(From the National papers.)

NEVER was a complete change of policy effected, even by a Tory Prime Minister, under circumstances more humiliating than that which Lord Salisbury has been obliged to carry out in reference to the Land Bill. The judicial rents that but a fortnight ago were so sacred in Lord Salisbury's eyes that even to meditate the least interference with them would be an act of the utmost profanity, are now, with his lordship's consent, not only to be revised but to be reduced from fifteen to twenty per cent. When his lordship's *volte-face* was made known nothing could exceed the anger that prevailed in certain Tory circles, where consistent regard for self-interest is not regulated by considerations of prudence and policy. The concession, though not at all equivalent to the requirements of the agricultural depression, is still sufficient to swallow up the small margin of rent left to many Irish landlords by their former prodigality for the support of which their rents had to be mortgaged to the extent of the last penny that could be raised on them. A reduction of twenty per cent. would mean absolute poverty for many Irish landlords, and although such a proposal, if made by the Irish party, would certainly be denounced as flagrant robbery, yet, coming from Lord Salisbury, it must be admitted by the most wretched of those landlords whom it will affect, that it is a result that must have been inevitable.

It is certainly a glorious consummation to arrive at on the very day the Coercion Act was receiving the Royal assent to have Lord Salisbury admitting *urbi et orbi* that the Plan of Campaign, against which the Coercion Act was aimed, was a just and necessary organisation; to have Mr. Goschen declare that the judicial rents, which three days before he was swearing were as sacrosanct as his own Egyptian bonds, were unjust and should be reduced, and to have the whole Tory and Liberal-Unionist party meet in solemn conclave and deliberately put it upon record that in lending the forces of the Crown to clear the properties of the Brooks, the O'Callaghans, the Lansdownes and the Clanricards they were aiding and abetting a gang of robbers to take vengeance on victims they had fleeced. Whatever be the upshot of the situation, this is one of those great conspicuous facts which carry conviction with them into minds the most powerful reasoning fails to penetrate.

The sensation in political circles over the surrender of the Government on the Land Bill is immense. They have saved themselves from defeat, but at the cost of the Irish landlords. It is the old story with that stupid and doomed class. They have not sense to take sides with their own countrymen: they continue clinging on to the tail of a British party, and that party sacrifices them remorselessly whenever the connection becomes inconvenient. It is calculated that the new revision of judicial rents to which the Government consented will take about half a million sterling out of the pockets of the Irish landlords. This means downright destruction to them. Now that judicial rents are to be revised, and leaseholders and holders of town parks admitted to the benefit of the Act of 1881, it is also over with Irish landlordism. That accursed system has got its death-blow and will speedily vanish from the face of the earth. This is a result of the glorious work of the Land League and the National League. It is the splendid triumph of their principles—the bright reward of their labours so far as regards the agrarian portion of their programme. Of course it is understood and it is inevitable that the present surrender must be speedily followed by a purchase scheme which will make the occupiers of the soil the owners of it. So much for the land question; and now for the national question. With Irish landlordism gone, the Castle system must speedily tumble down.

One of the most obvious consequences of the Tory *volte face* is that we have now an official and statutable confession of the entire wisdom and all too scrupulous moderation of the Plan of Campaign. The judicial rents, even Mr. Goschen now confesses, will have to come down "15 to 20 per cent." But the Lansdowne tenants agreed according to the Denning treaty to accept even Mr. Goschen's minimum abatement—15 per cent.—notwithstanding which they were pitched out of their homes with bayonets. Who will now for one instant maintain that any civilised Government can keep these men out of their farms?

It seems that the charge on which Mr. Smith was so anxious to condemn Dr. Tanner unheard was substantially false. We can well believe it. Anything more contemptible than Mr. Walter Long's action in the matter, on his own showing, can scarcely be conceived. He and his honourable friends (they are all honourable men) proceeded to bate Dr. Tanner on his accidental exclusion from the division lobby—a subject on which he was known to be sore—and having got somewhat the worse of the encounter, they forthwith take down his words and came whining to the House of Commons for redress. The incident has a still uglier aspect. In the light of subsequent events, it seems certain that Dr. Tanner was addressed with the express object of provoking an indignant rejoinder which might be used against him. Since Mr. Fogge placed himself temptingly within reach of the indignant right arm of Mr. Pickwick and called up his clerks to witness the assault, in real life or fiction there has been nothing more contemptible. Mr. Long said he did not bring forward the matter from personal motives. We can well believe it. It was the exigencies of party that compelled him to sink the sentiments of a gentleman. There is no keener nose for a piece of blackguardism than Mr. Kernighan, of the *Daily Express*. In Tuesday's issue he gloats over what he calls a "very smart bit of electioneering." The charge against Dr. Tanner was paraded through Buxton in the interests of the coercion candidate an hour at least before it was laid before the House of Commons. The motive for the concoction of the charge is now plain enough. We trust this instructive incident will not be overlooked when the matter next comes for discussion before the House.

Putting it at its worst, the instructive parable of the mote and the beam might be safely recommended to the consideration of the

Tories who are, or who effect to be, so wrath at the strong language attributed to Dr. Tanner. Does it lie in their mouths to complain of strong language? The charge made by them against the Nationalists, with the connivance of the Speaker, across the floor of the House of Commons, exceeds ten thousand times in ribald offensiveness the passionate outburst in the lobby of which Dr. Tanner is accused. Can any amount of vague expletives amount to a deliberate charge of murder or connivance with murder? There is no use burking the matter; there is no fair play for Irish members in the House of Commons. Their enemies may steal horses, but they dare not peep over the fences. It is common rumour that only the other day Sir Robert Fowler was, in the lobby of the House of Commons, guilty of language to another member beside which the words attributed to Dr. Tanner might pass for compliments, and when the matter was brought to the notice of the Speaker he pooh-poohed it as undeserving of attention. But why confine ourselves to the lobby of the House of Commons? We have over and over again directed attention to an incident of unprecedented rowdiness in the House itself, of which Colonel King-Harman was the hero, a week or so before he was received into the bosom of the Government. In a condition of ferocious intoxication he approached the Irish benches and challenged a member of the Irish party to box. The incident occurred within the eye-shot and hearing of a dozen members of the House and out of it. It was commented on in the newspapers, and the Tories forthwith proved their horror at the rowdiness by the promotion of the rowdy. *Punch's* observation on the promotion will be fresh in the public recollection:—"We suppose Colonel King-Harman will not condescend to box with anyone under a Cabinet Minister now."

Great jubilation is pretended by the Tory Press over the fact that Horney and Brixton elections have resulted in the return of Tory candidates; while thanks for a smaller mercy is given in regard to Basingstoke. There is not much real ground for rejoicing. The Liberals never expected to carry either of these seats; and what they did hope to do was to reduce the Tory majority, and in this they succeeded beyond their most sanguine calculations. In Basingstoke, at the last contest, which was in 1885, Mr. Sclater-Booth, the Tory candidate, beat his opponent, Mr. Eve, by 1,679 votes, while last Tuesday Mr. Jeffreys, the Conservative, only got in by a majority of 732. Not much ground for comfort in these figures. At Horney, which is a division of London peculiarly favourable to the Tory chances, as the constituency is mainly composed of city clerks and warehousemen, the Tory candidate, Mr. Stephens, beat his opponent, Mr. Bottomley, by nearly two thousand votes. This victory caused the Tories to shriek with delight; but it is a fact, for which they don't endeavour to account, that the total vote cast for their man there is short by 150 of that given for their man at the election in 1885. The total vote on both sides is about 1,000 short of that cast upon that occasion—a fact for which no explanation is forthcoming. In Brixton Lord Carmarthen only succeeded in beating his Liberal antagonist, Mr. Hill, by 783 votes, which is a falling-off of 783 from the majority of last year; so that even in constituencies which have come to be regarded as impregnable strongholds of Toryism the cause of Home Rule is making vast progress.

The Corporation of Cork has by a practically unanimous vote agreed to confer the freedom of the city upon the Hon. P. A. Collins, and the Corporation of Dublin contemplate conferring on that distinguished American the freedom of the Irish metropolis. Mr. Collins, who is a member of the American Congress, has been and is one of the most prominent and most steadfast friends which the Irish cause has had in the States. As President of the American Land League, he rendered inestimable services to the movement both in the States and here, and to his personal exertions was due much of the success which followed Mr. Parnell's memorable visit across the Atlantic.

Whilst the Tories and their discredited allies are endeavouring by the most infamous expedients to delay the approach of the wrath to come, and becoming more disheartened every day, the true Liberal party in England are nerving them for the fray, and growing daily more confident of the triumph of the just cause which they have espoused. A notable indication of the spirit in which the latter intend to carry on the fight which is to end in a real settlement of the Irish question was afforded by the inaugural meeting of the Home Counties Division of the National Liberal Federation held in London on Monday, July 18. The attendance of delegates from the South of England, where the Tories fared better than in any other part of the country at the general election, was enormous, and the utmost desire to further the objects of the association in that quarter was manifested. Sir W. Harcourt, M.P., who was the principal speaker, carried the war into the enemy's territory with a vengeance, and evoked the heartiest enthusiasm by his declarations as to the unflinching and unflagging manner in which the Liberalism of England would carry on the contest against all opposing forces. Amongst other things he declared that he "never remembered a time when a beaten party in a minority were in such admirable spirits, and when a victorious party with their composite majority were so dismayed, so dumbfounded, and so discomfited, as the gentlemen they opposed." Referring to the Irish representatives, he said it would be impossible to withhold from them a tribute of admiration for the work they had done in recent electoral contests. "They had been calumniated, but they had gone to Lincolnshire, to Paddington, and to Coventry. They had shown the people of England who they were and what they were, and they had been welcomed in the cottage of the peasant and the home of the artisan." The speaker further declared, amidst loud cheering, that nothing had more discredited the Government than the base and baseless attempt to vilify the Irish members.

Mr. Gladstone was the guest of the Scottish members of Parliament at the National Liberal Club on Saturday night, July 16. The occasion was availed of by the Liberal chief to acknowledge the debt he owes to Scotland. It could only, however, be a bare acknowledgment, because Scotland—like the other parts of the Empire—must, by reason of the paralysis of Parliament, remain content for a while longer with no beneficial share in the deliberations of the Legislature. "I know of nothing," said Mr. Gladstone, "in the present action and