

hours' siege they broke in the doors and got into the lower part of the house, which they found filled with bushes and stones. They could not get into the upper storey, and after some time got ladders and counted the roof. They made three openings in the roof, from which they were repelled with mops soaked in boiling tar and showers of stones. One of the bailiffs narrowly escaped a fall from the roof. Matters reached such a pitch that the District-Inspector, who had a force of twenty police under his command, ordered his men to load and fire. They did not, however, adopt that extreme course. After a siege lasting over seven hours, the party had to leave without taking possession, the police not being able to effect any arrests. The secretary of the local branch of the National League was present, accompanied by a band and about 300 people, whose enthusiasm when they found the siege had to be abandoned was immense.

Whatever other motives the Government might have had there was one all-sufficient reason for the suppression of the National League. It was the logical consequence of the destruction of the Land Bill. That measure the Government formally destroyed when they accepted the Lords' amendment. As far as the great bulk of the tenants of Ireland are concerned, especially those who are most in need of relief, it may be looked upon as dead and buried, or rather as having never been born. The only substantially good thing in the Bill except the leaseholders' clause (as that originally stood—for that, too, has been vitiated by an amendment of Sergeant Madden's) was the equitable discretion it gave to the Commissioners in revising judicial rents. The Lords' amendment has struck that equitable discretion away at a blow and bound the Commissioners down to revise rents with regard only to the alteration of prices, and without any regard at all to the extent of a man's crop.

Perhaps, after Northwich itself, the most striking evidence of the complete extinction of "Toryism" in the constituencies is a little letter which Mr. John Albert Bright has had the surprising frankness to make public. Mr. Bright issued a circular to the voters in his father's constituency of Rochdale saying that he was desirous of getting together Liberal-Unionists. "The response to my appeal to the Liberal-Unionists," Mr. Bright confesses, "has not come up to my expectations, many whom I know to be such not having sent me their names. This may arise from their dislike to take a public part in what is—locally at any rate—an unpopular cause. Be this as it may, their failure to reply makes it impossible for me to arrive at any estimate of their strength, and discourages me from taking any further steps in the matter." Comment would be unkind on this melancholy but candid confession from the constituency of John Bright himself.

An awful lesson on the majesty of the law was taught the citizens of Dublin on the very first application of the brand-new eternal Coercion Act. It was in Dublin that the new weapon was first tried, but in their hurry to use it the powers that be forgot all sense of the ludicrous. They seized upon a wretched case of alleged assault upon drunken bailiffs sent to capture a keg of butter as the first illustration of the state of savagery which the coercionists say exists in Ireland, but ere the prosecution came on they got so much ashamed of the case that they put in no appearance at the police court to follow it up.

The struggle between The O'Grady and his tenants has now entered upon a very acute phase. The ill-advised landlord has issued a circular again endeavouring to get the farmers to come into his net on an all round abatement of 20 per cent., but with the important proviso that they pay in each case a year's rent and costs. His circular contains a number of incorrect statements which it is the intention of the tenants to meet with a public correction. There is an *ad misericordiam* tone about the document which, under the circumstances, appears a little ludicrous. For four hundred years, says the man with the definite article, his people have lived among the tenantry, and never turned any of them out. The natural inference from this is that for four hundred years, or the greater part thereof, the serfs of The O'Grady have starved and slaved themselves to pay them rents which the soil did not earn. The O'Grady now says that he has said his last word on the subject, but we doubt it. Before he gets at the tenants' money, there will, unquestionably, be a few words more to say. Necessity is a cruel taskmaster, and it is very likely, notwithstanding the indomitable resolution of this representative of generations of rack-renters, to make him open his mouth again before the tenants' cry, "Hold, enough."

Recent events, we are told by an authoritative correspondent, have satisfied Mr. Chamberlain that an alliance with the Tories is hopeless, and that in the course of the recess the member for West Birmingham will treat us to "a new development of policy" which will include "a considerable scheme of Home Rule with the right of veto reserved for the Imperial Parliament." One almost feels inclined to exclaim, "Poor Jo!" when one beholds these desperate wriggings of a once so sleek rat in search of a way to get aboard the sound ship once more. The Tory ship beginning to founder, Jo wants to get aboard the Liberal baïque again; and to recommend him to her crew he is preparing a new scheme of Home Rule which is to completely supplant that of their own old skipper. If the Liberal crew don't stand along the bulwarks with belaying-pins, ready to cry "Paws off!" when this last of the rats climbs up the side, it will be a day's work they will repent. But, from all we know of the Liberal crew, that is their attitude to Joseph at present.

A military correspondent throws out some hints worthy of attention. The permanent military garrison in Ireland, he points out, is, in round numbers, 25,000 men, and it is admitted on all sides that in time of war it would have to be increased to 30,000 men, with a quasi-military police force of 11,000 men, making in round numbers 40,000 men. The moral of this is, that owing to the Union-for-ever policy there is an army of from 30,000 to 40,000 men, the *elite* of the service, locked up in Ireland, and of no more use, except as rent collectors' than if they were prisoners in a foreign camp. The whole of the British possessions abroad might be threatened; England might be invaded, but she dare not draw a single battalion from Ireland. In Parliament the loss of a seat counts as two in a division. And so does this force locked up in Ireland, excluding the police, count as a loss to us on the field of battle of from 50,000 to 60,000 men. Such is the

sort of strength the Union gives England. And such is the secret why she cannot place 80,000 men on the field of battle. The Duke of Wellington had not at any time more than about 20,000 British troops in the Peninsula and 30,000 at Waterloo. England has a larger army (including the military police) at this moment in Ireland than that with which the Duke conquered the great Napoleon. Lord Gough had only about 15,000 men in the campaign at the Sutlej, of which about 10,000 were Sepoys, and 20,000, in the Punjab, including Sepoys, and of those some were detached to lay siege to and capture Mooltan. Wilson took Delhi with about 6,000 men, mostly natives. Ross had only 3,500 or 4,500 men in his brilliant campaign in Central India. And Lord Clyde took Lucknow with about 20,000 men. It will be observed that England conquered India, Afghanistan, Burmah, China, Persia and Abyssinia, with a considerably less force than she maintains in Ireland to collect rents.

Terror sometimes steals the outward garb of courage. When a vessel is sinking the cowards, they say, leap overboard. They dare not wait their fate patiently. The condemned criminal often commits suicide in his cell. So the Northwich election sealed the doom of the Tory Government. The proclamation of the League precipitates their inevitable fate. It was a trick of sheer desperation. They withstood the mad clamour of the Orange faction while there was a shadow of a hope left. When hope abandoned them they took the fatal plunge. If Mr. Parnell himself were master of the Tory policy he could not have shaped it more directly for their own destruction. They were in a horrible dilemma when at last they got their Coercion Act. Then for the first time they seemed to realise that there was no crime—that their own bogus statistics were all that they had got to suppress. They would be justly taunted, they felt, with cowardice if they failed to use their Coercion Act; they would be justly reproached with tyranny if they used it without cause. It was, as we have said, a terrible dilemma, and they certainly made the most of it. They managed to deserve the reproach of both cowardice and tyranny. They hesitated long enough to prove they were afraid; they acted at last to prove they were utterly unscrupulous.

The ring of the merry crowbar, with the accompanying music of the screaming of out-turned women and children and the oaths of the scalded Emergency rabble, still wake the echoes in the South and West. As rack-renters cannot have the jingle of as many guineas as they require, they seem determined to have music of some kind as compensation. This week, ending August 27, the noble chieftain, O'Grady, commences crowbar operations against his happy tenantry; and he will have the benefit of an unusual publicity as several of our English visitors were expected, along with some Irish leaders, on the ground. At Ardagh County Limerick, a pious synodman and philanthropist named Delmege has been showing what the true principles of Christianity are by turning men out of houses built with their own labour and money because they cannot pay what he chooses to demand. It is stated that the ancestors of the present tenants on Mr. Delmege's lands at Ardagh paid but a gross sum of £10 yearly for them, while the present rental has by degrees been mounted up to forty times that figure. The excuse in many cases for this monstrous extortion is that money had to be borrowed for drainage and improvement purposes from the Board of Works. There was little or no resistance offered at the initial proceedings on Wednesday, when about half-a-dozen homesteads were cleared. This attitude was adopted on the advice of Father Walsh, whose motive was to get the tenants allowed back as caretakers or effect a settlement.

The Government challenge to Mr. William O'Brien on the Mitchelstown evictions, comes as opportunely as Sir Charles Lewis's challenge in the House of Commons to Mr. Dillon on the calumnies of the *Times*. Once again the Lord hath delivered them into our hands. The one fear is that the Executive will run away from their challenge, as they ran away in the House of Commons, in Frenchpark, and in Loughrea, when they come to realise the peril of the situation. The Plan of Campaign has never had a fair trial yet, and the Attorney-General's—we beg pardon, Mr. Justice Holmes'—opinion of its legality still holds the field. It is true that King Edward the Third threw down his rusty gauntlet to Mr. Dillon on the legality of the Plan, but the antiquated champion was so shaken in the first course of the Queen's Bench that he shirked all further encounter. In other words, Mr. Justice O'Brien denounced Mr. Dillon, and threatened him with all manners of pains and penalties under the ancient statute if he continued his advocacy of the Plan. Undisturbed by these threats, Mr. Dillon placidly pursued the even tenor of his way, and proved, despite the fierce fe-faw-fum of his partisan lordship, that law had no hold on his mission. The Executive dared not continue the prosecution they had commenced.

The *Daily Express* keeps goading on the Government to goad on the country by a vigorous and widespread use of the coercion whip. Now that they have got the cat-o'-nine-tails in their hands it doesn't see why it should not be at once applied to the backs of all who don't agree with the views of the Parliament street man. To enforce the Act vigorously it is the opinion of the thoughtful editor, that the constabulary force should be strengthened, but how this is to be done doesn't seem very plain. The only way out of the puzzle, it appears to him, is to borrow a leaf out of the late lamented W. E. Forster's book. That statesman in a similar dilemma invoked the aid of the Marines. Mr. Patton would like the Marines here again to help to carry out the Coercion Act. We cannot see how this would help the *Daily Express* a bit. When these gentry were in Dublin before, they required a police force all to themselves to watch them, and furnished a good deal of work for the divisional magistrates in adjudicating upon the assault and petty larcenies which formed the staple amusement of many of the interesting corps.

Mr. Carew, M.P., discharged an obnoxious public duty by calling the attention of Parliament to the extraordinary fashion in which Mr. Trill, K.M., is alleged to administer the ordinary law. The charge against him is that he does not scruple to exceed his jurisdiction; to set up a court when he pleases; to have an accused person summarily arrested and brought forthwith before him; and when the prisoner claims the right to call witnesses for his defence, the Major is said to