

somewhat heavy fall upon his own favourite ground. During the discussion in Parliament on the Coercion Bill, Mr. Gladstone delivered a particularly powerful indictment against landlordism, and in support of his case cited Mr. Mulhall's statistics of evictions, showing that there had been over three millions of persons evicted in Ireland during the present reign. Mr. Gladstone argued that it was little wonder that the Irish people were disaffected. Up jumps Mr. Balfour as soon as the great old Liberal chief can sit down, and in what appeared to be a very ingenious and telling point told the House that the bases of Mr. Mulhall's figures were rotten, that he had based his conclusions upon premises which were wrong, and that therefore, the returns which Mr. Gladstone had quoted so effectively, were absolutely worthless. Mr. Mulhall, the Chief Secretary said, had taken returns giving the number of persons evicted, and wrongfully assuming that these persons were families multiplied the total by five. There the question remained, for Mr. Mulhall was out of the country, and no one but himself knew if that had really been the ground of his estimate.

A communication all the way from Buenos Ayres appeared in the *Times* on Tuesday, September 6. It was signed by Mr. Mulhall and with no more emotional rhetoric than if he were calculating the number of gallons of whiskey consumed in Scotland in the year, he reduced to a pulp the flowing fallacies of Mr. Balfour. I have seen no table of persons evicted, says Mr. Mulhall, but I have before me one which I copied in the British Museum showing the number of evictions since 1848 and of persons reinstated as caretakers. The caretakers, he says, represent families, and if each caretaker represents a family of five persons, we shall find that the number of caretakers, according to Mr. Balfour's argument, is greater than that of persons evicted. In other words, that there have been really no evictions since 1849 to the present. Mr. Balfour hardly wanted to prove so much as that. Where now are the clever young orators of the I.L.P.U. who so glibly trotted out the "crushing reply" with which Mr. Balfour met the hoary old Fabricator of Hawarden. We venture to say that there is not a creature of the tribe who will have the courage or the honesty to do Mr. Mulhall the simple justice of admitting their blunder.

Also with regard to the National League the police have begun to show some activity in the pursuit of promotion. At various branch meetings they have put in an appearance in the style of Paul Pry, with a hope-I-don't-intrude attempt at apology. From the different ways in which they acted there is strong reason to suspect that no precise orders have been issued, hence that their attempted interference with the League is more a matter of private enterprise than State obligation. One bold sergeant appears at the meeting of the Knocknagochel branch, and asks modestly for the names of those present; and in retreating on a mandate from those inside, blurts out a parting warning, "I tell ye, ye are acting illegally," just as if the intimation had more weight coming from his mouth than from the oracles of Dublin Castle. Another turns up at Manorhamilton, and states, in answer to inquiries for his authority, that he is acting "on instructions." At a couple of other branches members of the force put in an appearance, but retired with apologies when told that the pleasure of their society was not desiderated. The right of these hired batonmen to come into the rooms of the League should never be admitted because it doesn't exist.

The Government are helping Lord Clanricarde to his plunder in Loughrea. The Sheriff and the Bankruptcy Court having failed to extract the spoil, Lord Clanricarde has pitched the courts overboard, and goes in for the rough-and-ready ancient method of distraint. His Emergency men are now in possession of the business houses of two of his Loughrea tenants, upon whom they descended without any warning. The novelty of the plan helped its success; but now that the people are acquainted with this latest system of legalised robbery they will be able to take proper steps to defeat it. Meanwhile is this not a glorious work for this Government that professes itself so anxious to prevent landlord extortion? Its true mission would not be revealed without those telling flashes of light from the scenes of landlord atrocities.

Mr. Boyd, of Middleton Park, Castletown-Geoghegan, is notorious all the world over for his merciless and numerous evictions. Whole parishes have suffered at his hands, and the baronies of Moycashel and Fertullagh to-day could cause the power that enabled him to depopulate their fertile plains. At present, however, eviction is not his game, so he shamelessly presumes to prevent the Nationalists of his district from boating for business or for pleasure on the Brosna river. The first he picks out for prosecution is Owen Keena, of Castletown-Geoghegan, the man who first raised the banner of the League in his parish, and whom Foster tried to crush. But the people of Westmeath will stand by their fellow-Nationalist, we have no doubt.

It is extraordinary how easily some people can perform the operation of standing in their own light. The editor of the *Londonderry Standard* is a very able man, evidently; and one of the sanest of Unionists. But he seems never fully to have developed his convictions and tenets. He has an article in his issue of Monday, September 5, from which he would like to draw the conclusion that if the land question were settled we would not require Home Rule. And yet in the very same article there occurs the following remarkable sentence:—"It can hardly be expected that people who have never set foot in Ireland, and know nothing about it except that it is an island on the west coast of Britain, can legislate intelligently for the removal of our grievances." We always regarded that proposition as one of the heresies condemned by the Unionists; and certainly it is impossible to reconcile it with the conclusion that we do not want Home Rule. We shall not be surprised if some Londonderry Presbyterians draw quite a different conclusion from their instructor's premises.

It is something of a relief to find a landlord whose conception of his duty to his tenants is not limited to the regular receipt of his rents. The present Earl of Meath is not a very advanced Liberal, nor is he anything at all of an Irish Nationalist; but he has some

ideas as to social wants and necessities, which he does not confine to the reviews. Recently we noticed a work of his—"Social Arrows"—a feature of which was the insistence with which his lordship dwelt on the deterioration wrought in humanity by congregation in the city slums. He pointed out the need of open spaces and public gymnasiums. Since the appearance of the book he has come into his inheritance; and we are glad to see that his sympathy with the poor of the city does not altogether theoretical. He has opened and furnished two playgrounds for children within his property at Coolish. That is a good work, for which the people of the district will be properly grateful. An extension and deepening of his lordship's philanthropic spirit, and a revision according to his notions of the idea of landlord duty, would do something to brighten up the future of his class.

There has been no attempt so far to apply the Coercion Act to the purpose for which its authors pretended to require it. No person has been charged with crime under its provisions. The only use that has yet been made of it has been to punish poor tenants and their friends for striving to retain their little homes, and to summon politicians for addressing public meetings. It was, of course, well-known that it was with this object the Tories sought coercive powers, but as an evidence of the reliance to be placed on Tory protestations, it is well to bear in mind how signally conflicting are their professions and their practices.

The Yorkshire Tory attempt to boycott Lord Randolph at Whitley is dictated less by resentment for what he has done than by terror for what he may do. Half a dozen Tory peers, we learn, have refused to preside at his meeting, and a dozen Tory members have refused to attend. There is an awful rumour abroad that Lord Randolph has reverted to his former faith on the subject of Home Rule. It will be remembered he described the election at Spalding as an "electrical event." There has been a great deal of political electricity going on since, and it has exercised a remarkable effect on his little lordship's constitution. He has now discovered that he was always opposed to coercion. He points triumphantly to his first speech on the opening of Parliament, in which he denounced the *Times* for its advocacy of the old method of rasping with the reins and ploughing with the spurs the spirited Irish steed which had already thrown so many riders into the ditch. With that convenient memory which is his greatest gift, he forgets that he made a diametrically opposite speech a couple of months afterwards. There is a story going the round of the London clubs of a dialogue between himself and a very distinguished Radical-Unionist while the wonderful series of Home Rule victories were in full swing. "There can be no doubt now, Chamberlain," said the little party of one—"no one"—"that the country is going straight for Home Rule." "The country," retorted the other, angrily, "is going to the devil." "That may be," said the versatile Tory-Democrat-Unionist-Home-Ruler, zealously twisting his moustache; "that may be, but I always make it a rule to go with the country." The conversation was overheard by a Liberal-Unionist, whose sense of humour overcame his loyalty to his party, and compelled him to give the story to the public.

A significant incident took place recently at Middlewich. That district, which is within Mr. Brunner's renowned constituency, happens to be blest with the possession of a person whose ideas on things political harmonise better with the Gospel message of peace and charity than do those of many of his fellow-labourers. Rev. Francis Winton, M.A., has earned the regard of those exiled Irishmen who live round Middlewich by his fearless championship of the cause of the old land. In the recent election he rendered valuable help to the Gladstonian candidate; and the Irishmen of Middlewich testified their gratitude by presenting him recently with an address, in which they expressed their appreciation of his action. The address had been inscribed and illuminated in Dublin, and the deputation that presented it was accompanied by Father Grogan, the Catholic curate of the district. Altogether the incident was unique and most gratifying. It will not be lost on those who are on the watch for signs that herald the coming peace.

Mr. F. W. Maude, the late secretary of the Liberal Unionist faction, made a complete statement at the Liberal and Radical demonstration in the Alexandra Palace, London, of the causes of his secession. He has come over to the Gladstonian party, convinced by a close observance of public events that the "policy of the combination which calls itself the Unionist party is dangerously retrograde in its nature, and inconsistent with the pledges given at the general election," and he concurs with Sir George Trevelyan regarding Mr. Gladstone's concessions. He contended that no reason now exists why Radical Unionists should not renew their allegiance to the Liberal party. The concluding portion of Mr. Maude's statement is likely to be heard of again. "The time is come for plain speaking and nailing our colours to the mast. I should not be here to-day if I did not believe that the leaders of the National League were prepared to accept as a final settlement the generous measure of Home Rule that the Liberal party is willing to help them to attain. Under these circumstances, why should they not be made jointly responsible with the leaders of the Liberal party for the formulation of the details of the new Home Rule scheme? Nothing would do more to clear the issue to be fought out next Session and to rally to our standard every citizen with a spark of democratic feeling than the conviction that the Irish policy we were fighting for would never be repudiated as the work of Saxon statesmen, and was as freely accepted as a final settlement by the representatives of the Irish people as by the Liberal party. Let the next Home Rule scheme be presented as an ultimatum to Parliament and the country on the joint responsibility of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell."

There is one novel point in Mr. Maude's confessions, if we may call them so without offence which will be gratefully noted in Ireland and which contains a good deal of encouragement for the Irish people. In the enumeration of reasons that have weighed with him he stated "that the change wrought in the attitude of Irish Nationalists towards the people of Great Britain by the generous proposals of Mr. Gladstone was such as to encourage Liberals to entrust them with the responsibility of administering the affairs of Ireland through more