

must needs follow suit. However repugnant or insufficient Mr. Chamberlain's programme may be, we cannot but tender him our hearty gratitude for having put the Irish Tory dovecot into such an extraordinary flutter.

Coercion has entered on a new phase. There are Inquisition Courts, with the worst type of Removables at their heads, perambulating the country in all directions dragging unfortunate tenants from their spring work and clapping them into gaol if they refuse to betray their friends' and neighbours' participation in some new-fangled crime created by the Coercion Act, refusing an Emergency-man drink, or attending a meeting of the League. The very worst type of Removables are especially selected for this work, promoted policemen for the most part, whose rigorous cross-examination will not be encumbered by any knowledge of law. Mr. Hamilton, who has the biggest salary of the pack depending on his giving satisfaction to his employers, and who signalled his zeal and fidelity by inflicting the savage sentence of six months' imprisonment on Mr. Dillon, presides over the thumbscrew in Donegal.

The people have for their consolation the knowledge that this is the last and weakest effort of coercion. It has only to be faced and its failure is inevitable. The Star Chamber clause had its teeth drawn by the National members in Committee. Its victims are protected from the sufferings and degradation of ordinary criminals. The punishment which witnesses incur is a mere child's play compared to ordinary imprisonment. In Carrick-on-Shannon and elsewhere the courts collapsed in the face of resolute defiance of the witnesses. The duty of those summoned is clear. It is hardly necessary to repeat it. They should show their contempt of the proceedings by refusing to attend until they are arrested. They should refuse to lend themselves to the infamous proceeding by answering a single question. They can never tell how their answers may be twisted or contorted into evidence against their innocent neighbours. If they must give the shorthand writer in attendance something to put on his notes, this formula may serve—"This Star Chamber court is constituted to help the conviction of innocent people; I refuse to be a sharer in its infamy." After that, silence absolute and complete.

The Star-Chamber clause is the latest (very likely the last) hope of Mr. Balfour to cope with the combinations which he assured Englishmen months ago were crushed out of existence. This is eminently satisfactory. It is an official confession that every other weapon in the Castle lumber-room has woefully failed, from our ancient cobwebbed friend the garnishee to the thunderbolt of the Inquisition. In words with which the *Times* so often gleefully taunted the Vatican: "*Epai si muove*" The Plan moves on as serenely as the stars in their courses. All but twelve months of the most brutal and vindictive coercion practised since '98 are over and gone, and the Government are in the absurd position of beginning at the very alphabet of their ask—trying by secret inquisition to find out something of the inner workings of the Plan of Campaign, of which hundreds of thousands of people have had the fullest cognisance for eighteen months past. The police are the only persons in the community who are ignorant of what the Star-Chamber inquiries are intended to elicit; and they will be in denser ignorance than ever when the Star-Chambereraze has run its course, for the Star-Chamber inquiries will elicit nothing more than a new proof of the paralytic helplessness of the coercionists and the indomitableness of the nation they have undertaken to tame.

The utter desperation to which the coercionists are reduced at the absolute failure of their policy of exasperation is forcibly exhibited in the latest move. This is the proclamation of the City and County of Dublin under the Star-Chamber sections of the Coercion Act. This outrageous step was announced in the *Dublin Gazette* on Tuesday, May 29. No shadow of justification whatever is attempted to be shown for this proceeding. The people of Dublin, however, are not likely to be behind the people of the provinces in frustrating this modern substitute for the rack and scavenger's daughter.

The last recess of the session is now over, and this week the Parliamentary year, so to speak, starts on the run home. It promises to be an exciting run home which may develop unknown possibilities. Mr. Gladstone's speeches at Hawarden on Saturday and Monday, May 26 and 28, fasten attention on the first bold peculiarity of the situation. That is the state of affairs arising over the licensing clauses of the English Local Government Bill. The *Times* declares it was on these clauses and not on the Irish question that the Southampton election was decided. Mr. Gladstone takes up this declaration of the *Times*, and says: "Be it so. Let the nation now observe how the Parliamentary majority are going to apply the lesson of the Southampton election." The Government are pledged lip-deep to these compensation clauses, to the principle of creating an estate in a publican's license, which at present is only a privilege existing from year to year. So are certain of the Liberal-Unionists. But the majority of the House of Commons, including almost all the Liberal-Unionists, are as dead against the principle as the electors of Southampton, and would vote against it on the division, but because of what? Because "Ireland stops the way." Because an unnatural Parliamentary alliance is sworn to do nothing which would place a Home Rule administration in power, the majority of the House of Commons are forced on English questions of the deepest gravity to vote against the dictates of their own conscience. In order to withhold from the Irish people their just rights, the vital interests of the English people are to be whistled down the wind on every critical occasion. Thus, as Mr. Gladstone points out, although an English question may be the immediate issue, Ireland, and always Ireland, is the key of the situation. This is the lesson which is being driven home into the minds of the British people, and which will result in some curious manifestations even in the House of Commons before the next two months are over.

Sergeant William Judas O'Connor, of Callan, has touched the lowest depths of cowardly treachery. He deserves a niche in public detestation beside the informer Talbot, who desecrated the Most Holy Sacrament in the interests of the Castle. Talbot could at least plead that he was a Protestant. Sergeant O'Connor has no such excuse. He believes in the religion he desecrates; he kneels at the feet of the

priest he has set himself to betray. Even the House of God was not sacred from this contemptible spy: At the altar he worshipped the Castle rather than his Creator. He brought his note-book with him to Mass instead of his prayer-book, and he strove to torture from the sermon of the officiating priest some words that might be used against him in a Coercion Court. When Father Cahill was put in the dock Sergeant Judas O'Connor, note-book in hand, stepped jauntily into the witness-box. A brief cross-examination from Mr. Redmond laid bare his perjuries to the court. It was proved conclusively that the conspiracy was in the police-barrack, and that the sergeant had, with his fellow-witnesses, concocted and compassed a lying travesty of the sermon. Even the Removables could not stand this. The priest was discharged. Surely this should not stand in the way of the promotion Royal Irish Judas has so fairly earned? He did his best. He never expected to be found out, and he has at any rate conclusively proved that sacrilege and perjury are but trifles to him in the faithful discharge of his duty to the Castle.

They have discovered a new coercion crime in Castlereagh. A shopkeeper named Gormley was sent to gaol for a month without appeal by Removables Purcell and Dillon for charging an emergency-man what their worshippers were pleased to consider an exorbitant price. This is incredible, our English readers exclaim. Certainly; but it is true. For the future emergency-men will be well advised to make their bargains through the Coercion Courts. This is what is called free contract. Will the courts be kind enough to give a month's imprisonment to the landlord who charges "an exorbitant price" for the land? Prisons would not be large enough to hold the rack-renters if the principle was generally adopted.

We publish in another column a letter of Father T. E. Bridgett, contradicting certain expressions attributed to him in a sermon in London, and commented on in "Week's Work" in our last issue. The words were communicated to us from a source on which we believed we could implicitly rely. But we gladly and unhesitatingly accept Father Bridgett's contradiction. It is to us a source of unfeigned satisfaction to learn that no such words were uttered by a Catholic priest. The comment which we felt it our duty to make of course disappears with the words on which it was based. To Father Bridgett we desire to express our deep and unfeigned regret for the pain that any misconception of ours may have occasioned him. But it is for his sake only and his bishop's that we can bring ourselves to regret that the comments have appeared, so numerous and so cheering which they have evoked from our Catholic friends in England. Our space compels us to select one only amongst a multitude for publication. It is an absolute pleasure to be reproved in this manly and sympathetic strain:—"Burton House, Richmond, Surrey, May 20, 1888. Dear Mr. O'Brien.—I have not the honour to be an Irishman, but my nearest and dearest are of your people, and I can truly say that in all things affecting your country your sorrow is my sorrow, and your joy is my joy. I have, then, the right to speak frankly at this crisis. You are wrong to write so disrespectfully in *United Ireland* of the 19th of the Bishop of Southwark. [The comment, we may mention, was not from Mr. O'Brien's pen.] Whatever his own private opinions may be, his Lordship keeps them to himself; and, as a matter of fact, I am convinced that some of his most favourite priests are Irishmen and Home Rulers. His Vicar-General is one. He was formerly missionary rector at Arundel, but I think it is not correct to say that he ever was chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk. The Bishop is loved and respected throughout his diocese by English and Irish alike, and your very disrespectful allusions to him will certainly give pain to many who, like myself, ardently support your noble cause, and share your views *entirely* in regard to this Rescript from the Holy Office. I am sure that you will forgive me for so speaking, and that you will gladly make the *amende* which a pious Catholic should always make when he has been guilty of an injustice. And among all the virtues which make your noble race so conspicuous among Catholic nations, your love of justice and your generosity are the very first.—I am, my dear Mr. O'Brien, yours most faithfully, L. L. GUBARA."

We may surely claim indulgence if we write with some warmth of some amongst our Catholic co-religionists in England who have been the most cruel and unscrupulous opponents of our movement and traitors of our people, unmindful of the deep debt of gratitude which they owe to Irish agitation. But we most earnestly assure our correspondents that it was never our intention for one moment to confound all English Catholics in our strictures. We should be, indeed, ungrateful if we for an instant forgot that the *elite* of the Catholic intellect, if not rank, in England is strenuous on our side; above all, if we forgot the priceless services that the illustrious Cardinal Manning has rendered to our cause. While we are on the subject we are anxious to offer a word of sincere and grateful acknowledgment of the keen-sighted sympathy and virile force of the *Catholic Press*, whose large and rapidly-growing influence in England forms a wholesome antidote to the Court-guide Catholicity of the *Tablet*, which would fain degrade the ancient faith to a bigoted aristocratic superstition, and make the Vatican an appendix of the Primrose League.

A frightful outrage took place at the fair of Templemore last week; and the chief actors in it were a young landlord and a bailiff. The one is named Lloyd, the other Sweeney. Both had been at the fair, and both were, it is stated, under the influence of drink when returning therefrom. The master was unwilling to go home, the servant was using some pressure to get him along, when naturally, the town being crowded, a small crowd gathered round the disputants. A labourer named Thomson, who knew the parties, stepped over to advise the tipsy landlord to go along, and for thanks he was met with a bullet from Sweeney's revolver, fired, it is declared, at the landlord's bidding. A young man named Kennedy, a cooper, rushed forward to prevent more murderous work, as the bailiff was brandishing his weapon wildly. He struck Lloyd with his fist, and Sweeney, who stood within a foot and a half of Kennedy, presented his weapon point-blank, and shot him through the heart. This brutal tragedy, enacted wantonly and in the open day, aroused the indignation of the people