

that it was the Castle which was "suppressed," and not the League in Duballow. The great theme of all the speakers was the brutal treatment of the heroic curate, Father Kennedy. We must go back to the days of King John to find any parallel for the cruelty of taking a man just risen, like Father Kennedy, from a fever-bed and casting him into prison. A circumstance has come to light since this brave young priest was hustled off to gaol which shows the kind of stuff of which such men are made. A movement was started a short time ago to present him with a substantial testimonial, but, as in the case of Canon Keller, as soon as he heard of it he intimated his wish that, beyond paying the bare expenses incidental to his illness, the thing should cease. And these are the sort of men that Mr. Balfour would fain degrade as "criminals" in the eyes of the world, while he himself pockets over four thousand pounds a-year for doing nothing but defaming them!

Will the English people but look at things as they really are, and not be deluded by specious names and phrases? They are horrified enough (not one whit too much) at the brutality of moonlighters, who once every six months or so come to the assistance of coercion in Kerry. The picture of men, and women, and children, attacked in their houses—beaten, bruised, and mercilessly maltreated by cowardly armed assailants—sets English hearts in a flame. One such outrage is a windfall that helps coercion newspapers and orators to keep their pity and indignation at burning and melting point for six months. But are the daylight outrages, and attacks on dwelling-houses, commonly called evictions, which are in full swing under this merciful Coercion Government every hour of the day and in every corner of Ireland, one whit less revolting? Is it less horrible to think of innocent men, women, and children savagely beaten with batons or crowbars, or prodded with bayonets, their houses torn down over their heads, because the ruffians who perpetrate these barbarities wear the uniform of constables or are in the pay of an absentee rack-renting evictor, and because they are engaged in vindicating the law?

What a week of barbarous episodes and barbarous anniversaries. A hundred people driven from their homes on a single estate, and to the list of murdered Irishmen whose corpses lie at Mr. Balfour's door another poor victim added. Gangs going to prison—gangs of peasants who have striven to defend their homes, and gangs of priests, and editors, and Members of Parliament who have striven to defend the peasants. Talk of Russia, forsooth? In Russia there are no Clanciarde evictions; in Russia the people are now rooted in the soil; in Russia there are no longer serfs, there is no longer the knout; in Russia there is no battering-ram. The despotism of Russia to-day is at least frank, and it is paternal and civilised compared with the despotism of Dublin Castle. If you seek a comparison in Russia you must go back to the Russia of Catherine, when the knout flourished, to find a parallel to the Ireland of Mr. Balfour and his battering-ram. The people will need all the sympathy and support they can get during the next few months, and the more English witnesses that are here to see during that period the better.

By-and-by, when all is over, history will be searched in vain for anything that will match in any one respect the extraordinary chapter which will be known as the "Parnellism and Crime Libel Commission." But of all the peculiar features of the episode the things which will stand out most prominently will be the arrant cowardice and the cynical insincerity of the libel party. Now that the day of judgment approaches, these are the qualities which the Unionists on all hands are displaying with the candid unreserve of people in a state of blue funk. Every wretched slander-monger, big and little, throughout the three kingdoms, who has up to this been contributing his yelps and barks to the howling chorus led by the *Times*, has suddenly taken to display a tendency to hurry away with his tail between his legs and leave the *Times* all alone in its glory. The smaller curs may be said to have done this *en masse* the day after Mr. Parnell filed his action in the Scotch courts; though to do the smaller curs justice, it was some of the big dogs who were the first to stampede. It was Mr. Balfour who, characteristically, took the very earliest opportunity of washing his hands of the *Times* libels and discounting the consequences of their breakdown. Mr. Chamberlain presently followed suit, having himself just experienced a most horrid breakdown in a little libel controversy conducted against the Irish leader on his own account. Then came the *Standard*, and then came the *St. James's Gazette*, and now comes the *Spectator* and Professor Dicey. The readiness manifested by all these eminent ex-patrons and ex-beneficiaries of the "Parnellism and Crime" long firm to believe that "Parnellism and Crime" was all the time a huge and foul libel is a very curious phenomena. The historical moralist by-and-by will doubtless reflect upon it as a singular commentary upon the morality of public life in this Victorian, this British Augustan age. It is rather hard on the *Times*, certainly (whom we are almost tempted to pity in its isolation); but it is also rather hard on those paragons of Unionist virtue themselves.

The attempt of these people is to persuade themselves—not to persuade anybody else, for they seem to feel that nobody else is likely to be taken in; the whole effort is an elaborate operation in self-deception—that, in the first place if the *Times* libels are bound to come to smash the whole structure of fraudulent Unionism need not necessarily come down with them, and, in the second place, if the structure is bound to come down, too, that they at any rate can manage to stand from under. Professor Dicey writes in great alarm to the *Spectator* to warn the Unionists of the danger that threatens their cause in the unfortunate misconception which is being allowed to take possession of the public mind regarding the Parnell commission. He bids them rouse up and combat it. "The battle of the Union cannot be decided by a forensic duel between Mr. Walter and Mr. Parnell," he exclaims; Mr. Parnell's "acquittal of every charge brought against him should not in the judgment of an Unionist be a decision against the maintenance of National Unity." Poor Mr. Walter is to be left severely alone by these virtuous Unionists; they have nothing to do with him. Neither have the charges made by the *Times* against Mr. Parnell anything to do with the Unionist cause. These charges are entirely devoid of political significance; they are purely personal to Mr. Parnell, and Mr. Parnell, as everybody knows, is a private individual, likewise entirely

devoid of political significance: Even if he were proved guilty, of what consequence would it be to anybody but Mr. Walter and himself? "To convict Mr. Parnell of complicity with wrong-doers need not convert Home Rulers into Unionists." It would be amusing if it were worth while to confront these panic-stricken utterances with a series of extracts from the speeches and articles of the Unionist party during the various periods when Parnellism and Crime was in a state of more or less violent eruption, particularly during the most recent period, while the Commission Bill was going through the House of Commons. The statements of the Goschens and the Matthewse; and the W. H. Smiths and their organs in the Press, and the rank and file behind them, would form an interesting contrast in a parallel column. But it is really not worth while to go into all this. It is too recent; everybody remembers it; and, above all, howl and wriggle as they may, all their contortions will be of no avail.

When the mention of Mr. Balfour's name was received with loud hooing at a late great meeting, on the grounds of Noeton Park, England, the Lincolnshire seat of the Marquis of Ripon, his Lordship, who presided, pithily remarked, "It is no use booing at Mr. Balfour. What you have got to do is to turn him out, and that you won't do by groaning at his name, but by voting at the polling booth." In other words, the scandal of Mr. Balfour's administration is the shame of the English electorate.

The members of the West Hull, England, Liberal Club, recently visited Fountains Abbey, on the estate of the Marquis of Ripon. There was a large attendance. A meeting was held on the grounds, and a resolution adopted condemning the Irish coercion policy of the Government, and expressing sympathy with the leaders of the National movement, and "execration" of the inhuman treatment to which many of them had been subjected. The Marquis of Ripon delivered an address, in which he said that when the working classes of this country realised what was going on in Ireland they would make short work of the Government, which was bringing disgrace on the fair name of England before the nations of the world.

EARL GREY ON IRELAND.

(Continued.)

BEFORE considering his educational proposals, I will draw attention to the persistent manner in which he argues in favour of making the ministers of the three different churches in Ireland stipendiaries of the State. I have no doubt that in advocating this plan he is quite sincere in his motives from his point of view, but for my own part, I think a State-paid clergy a very undesirable thing either for the State or the Church, and least of all for the people. Catholicity has suffered much in the past through its connection with the State in various ways. It suffers from it to-day even in countries like France, Spain, Italy, Austria, etc., where its connection was of a natural growth. I have often heard it stated on good authority, but cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement, that a Catholic priest is not a whit more respected by his people than a minister of the Protestant religion is in England. He is merely a State officer paid to perform religious services at so much a year. How different in Ireland where there were no State-paid priests. I often think that if the French priests threw up their stipends and united religiously and politically with their people, the sunny land of France would be as glorious a country as ever it was. Ireland will never have a State-paid clergy.

But to return to his lordship's educational theories. He says:—"It can hardly be wrong in principle for a nation to sanction any public provision for instructing the people in religion. . . . To me it has always appeared very difficult to understand how some of those who insist upon making provision for the secular education of the whole people can hold it to be wrong that any provision whatever should be made for their being instructed in religion. I am far from being indifferent to the great benefits arising from the general diffusion in a nation of that secular knowledge, and that cultivation of the understanding by which men are rendered more able to engage in all the various engagements of life, and to serve better both themselves and the community. But experience has only too clearly proved that mere intellectual instruction is not sufficient either to make men good subjects to the State, or to secure their own welfare. For both these objects they require to be taught the great truths of religion and their duty to God, a sense of which can alone subdue the 'unruly wills and affections' of mankind; indeed, for the peace, order, and prosperity of a community, it is far more important that its members should generally understand and feel their responsibility to their Creator, than that they should be well instructed in secular knowledge." On this thesis, he argues that private institutions should be aided from the State purse. It must be observed, however, that since the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the Conservatives have been in power several times, and have unfortunately done nothing to extend the noble principles laid down by Earl Grey. The remainder of the chapter is taken up with a minute *precis* of the debates on the Irish Church, in which he points out that several speakers spoke in glowing terms of the "prosperity of the country" at the time, and thus imply that the Church could not be a cause of discontent in Ireland. I do not see that it was more than a sentimental grievance since 1838. At that time the tithes were commuted, and the landlords were forced to pay them. The tenants had nothing to do with them. The landlords squeezed every penny they could out of their tenants, and after being relieved of the tithes in 1869, I have not heard of their making the slightest abatements on that account therefore, it was immaterial to the tenants whether the money went to the landlords or parsons, but from an economic point of view it was better for the country to have the amount paid to the parson, because they lived in the country, while the landlords, as a rule, lived out of it. Disendowment and disestablishment were altogether a landlord question as far as the tithes were concerned. However that may be, the measure was *per se* a just one, and paved the way for a general union