

Dublin Notes.

(From the National papers.)

MR. GLADSTONE at Wrexham gave another striking exhibition of those marvellous powers of mind and spirit, and even of body, which render him, as an old man, one of the wonders of the age. He opened a new railway, he inaugurated the Welsh national festival, he delivered a most vigorous and stirring political oration to a great political meeting, and he delivered to the Eistedfodd a non-political address of great literary beauty on the language and nationality of Wales. No wonder after such a day's proceedings that his enemies should be anxious to close his mouth! This visit to Wrexham was signalled by an attempt on the part of the *Times*, and the Unionists generally, to spoil the visit or stop it altogether, an attempt which Mr. Gladstone rightly accepted as the highest compliment that could be paid him from such a quarter. The *Times* had endeavoured to make out that, having agreed to address the Eistedfodd as a non-political celebration, the Liberal leader had no right to address a meeting of a political character in another place in Wrexham the same day. Of course Mr. Gladstone ignored this ridiculous contention, which the local Unionists spared no effort to make the most of, and the next suggestion thereupon was to break up his meeting. All their blackguard tactics ended, as might be expected, in miserable failure, and their only effect was, no doubt, to improve Mr. Gladstone's speech immensely by stirring up that fire in the orator's breast which always lends a thrilling warmth to his eloquence. Whether this was the cause or not, the speech was one of more than usual verve and trenchancy.

The opening portion of Mr. Gladstone's political speech at Wrexham was devoted to the attempt of the *Times* to dispose of his denunciation of the treatment of Irish political prisoners by impaling him with one of Mr. Balfour's *tu quoques*. It was an effective, a crushing reply, in the course of which the speaker harrowed up his hearers' feelings by a recital of the treatment of Mr. Mandeville, Father McFadden, and other Irish political prisoners, which should make a fitting companion chapter to his famous letter to Lord Aberdeen on the prisons of King Bomba. Mr. Balfour's treatment of his political prisoners, he declared, was a disgrace to the Irish Government, and would be a disgrace to any Irish Government, if ever there was one which did the like. It would be a disgrace to his own Government, he implied, if the contention of his enemies was true, which he conclusively proved it was not. He might have spared himself some protestation had he been aware of the fact which the *Freeman* pointed out on Tuesday that those invaluable remonstrances of Dr. Robert MacDonnell's were addressed not to a Government of which he was the head, but to a Tory Government, and that when the *Habeas Corpus Act* was suspended in 1866 it was Earl Russell who was Prime Minister. Certainly no Government of modern times ever stripped prisoners naked in their cells and placed them on bread and water in punishment cells while suffering from diarrhoea for refusing to take exercise with criminals. It is, indeed, a remarkable comment on Mr. Balfour's administration that people have to travel to Poland under Russia and to Naples under Bomba to find a parallel for its atrocities.

We (*United Ireland*) are sometimes taxed with strong language. We must plead guilty to the charge of serving up the facts hot and strong to our readers, being less particular about politeness than truth. It is a comfort to find that one sturdy journalist on the other side of the water speaks out with at least equal freedom. We take the following passage from the close of Mr. Labouchere's comments in *Truth* on Mr. Dillon's imprisonment.—"But in either event, if Mr. Dillon is put to death, Mr. Bomba Balfour will not be able to escape the responsibility of having worked for and brought about the event. It is in vain for B. B. to go about the country with the scalps of Larkin and of Mandeville reeking at his belt, and prate about the 'Prison Board,' and the 'Prison System,' and the 'Law of the Land.' The responsibility, sole and undivided, is his, Bomba Balfour's. Bomba Balfour is the 'Prison Board.' Bomba Balfour is the 'Prison System.' Bomba Balfour is the only 'Law' that remains in Ireland. If Mr. Dillon dies in gaol (or of home comforts just after his release) he will die deliberately slaughtered by Bomba Balfour, just as indubitably as if Bomba Balfour were to go to Dundalk and stick a knife into him. If Mr. Dillon is killed, B. B. cannot say, 'Somebody else did it.' If it is done, it will be B. B.'s own doing, and nobody else's. B. B. put him into Dundalk Gaol, knowing (we have Mr. Blunt's word for it) that he would probably die. B. B. keeps him in Dundalk Gaol, knowing that he will probably die. If he does die, a verdict of wilful murder against Bomba Balfour is the only verdict which a conscientious coroner's jury can by any possibility return."

When Mr. Dillon is killed he will assuredly leave the record of a brilliant and blameless life behind him, but he cannot leave a better or manlier letter than the posthumously-published letter of Mr. Mandeville to Mr. Sydney Halifax, which during the past week has made such a stir in the land. From that letter it is quite clear that in killing Mr. Mandeville, Mr. Bomba Balfour, the infamous underling Barr, and the poor, weakling, over-persuaded Ridley, had to struggle against a fine constitution, high spirits, and a most firm and masculine mind. There are no womanish complaints and finicking grievances in Mr. Mandeville's letter. He finds no fault with prison diet, or the prison accommodation, or the prison rules, fairly and humanely administered. He was quite prepared and willing to "rough it" in gaol. The only things he finds fault with are, first, the mean and cruel attempt to degrade him to the level of a criminal; 2ndly, the dastardly system of punishing him with an attack of illness whenever he refused to allow himself to be so degraded; and 3rdly, the incompetence (to call it by no worse name) of the medical authorities, who because his symptoms (when he had fasted twenty hours) did not present the "rough prison test" of diarrhoea, refused to believe that he had diarrhoea at all, and after fourteen hours' suffering certified him as still "fit for punishment," and made him undergo thirty more hours of it. "I consider," he says, "that I was being savagely ill-treated." The world now knows that he was being

slowly and savagely murdered. The punishment bread (less than half-grown, and not more than half-baked wheat) which, in the effort to keep life and soul together, he forced down his ulcerated throat, was to him, in his temporary state of illness, poison, just as efficacious, deadly, and cruel as the ground-glass, which the mediæval poisoner used to mingle with his victim's food, until the wretch expired from "natural causes."

To appreciate the following extract from a leader in the *Daily Express* it is necessary to remember that its editor, Dr. Patton, is on the staff of the "Forger" as London correspondent, and may therefore be fairly assumed to be in a special manner behind the scenes. Dr. Patton strongly objects to the suggestion that if it is proved that Mr. Parnell—"Did not sign certain letters, 'the *Times* is,' as the saying goes, 'up a tree.' Mr. Parnell is master of the situation, and the issue of the fight means victory for Home Rule." We, for our part," he continues, "have said over and over again that if the letters were proved conclusively to be forgeries we should still be as much Unionists and coercionists as we were before the letters were written, or could have been written. We shall remain Unionists, even if someone is convicted and punished for forging Mr. Parnell's name." It will not do. The coercionists will not be permitted by the country to shirk the issue they have themselves raised. If it is proved, as it will be proved, that they have accepted in the last resource the aid of falsehood and forgery to blacken the characters of the Irish members, to justify coercion and defeat Home Rule, they must abide the penalty of the crime.

The *Central News* informs us that—"Colonel John O'Callaghan, of Newport, on whose Bodyke property numerous evictions were carried out in June last, the tenants being reinstated on satisfactory terms six months subsequently, has now through his agent, Mr. Hofer, come to an amicable arrangement with his tenants on the Milford and Fortanne estate. A clear receipt was given up to November, 1887, the tenants paying a half-year's judicial rent, less 25 per cent. in every case. By this arrangement £7,632 and one year's rent were wiped out." All this has been brought about by the abominable agency of the Plan of Campaign. Though the beneficent Coercion Government backed the gallant Colonel with horse, foot, and dragons in his abortive eviction campaign, the irrepresible Plan prevailed in the end. Surely Mr. T. W. Russell and his friends, the landlords, are right in describing the Plan as an unmitigated curse to the tenantry of Ireland!

In regard to Ireland, at any rate, the over-populationists may assuredly make their mind easy. Under our present rulers the Irish are flying from the land in the blind and tumultuous panic of despair. Last year saw 82,923 people (of whom whom 75 per cent. were between the ages of 15 and 35) driven across the Atlantic, beggared and heart-broken. This year is only half gone, but up to the present the record is even worse. In the three months of April, May, and June 1 (*Truth*), see in the *Nation* 42,823 souls were driven out of Ireland. That is to say, 1,338 more than in the corresponding months of last year, and 5,902 in excess of the average exodus in the corresponding periods of the past decade.

I observe, too, that a philanthropic circular is afloat (and attracting a good deal of attention), whose author declares he has had applications from 35,000 girls and women, between the ages of eighteen and thirty, eager to get away from the coercion-cursed land. At a cost of £2 per head (if he can only raise it) this philanthropist is prepared to emigrate these 35,000 souls of population, "sink or swim," as the phrase runs. Whether they sink or swim is, of course, nobody's business. The important point is that they should not remain at home to be the mothers of Parnellites. Clearly, with these facts before him, the "over-population" fanatic need be under no anxiety with regard to Ireland. She bids fair soon to be an utterly depopulated country under the rule of the "brave" nephew of the truly "terrible Marquis."

But for my part, knowing Ireland east, west, north, and south, pretty much as well as I (*Truth*) know the palm of my hand, and my acquaintance with her being nowadays, I am sorry to reflect, of some considerable standing in point of years, what strikes me most about this flight of "the redundant population" is that invariably, according to my observation, when the "redundant population" goes, its place is supplied exclusively by the rag-weed, the gorse-bush, and the thistle. The land from which the Celt is being driven, as if he were a wild and noxious beast, is not being used, but wasted. Countless acres which I remember to have produced crops (of a sort), and men and women of a very good sort, now produce nothing but fresh air. If they produced sheep and cattle in anything like the proportion of their capability I would not so much complain. But they don't even do that. Fresh air is their only crop, and except an occasional tourist there is no one to breathe it. The landlords have not the capital, or the knowledge, or the energy to put to profitable use the land which they have stolen from the people. Where land has been put under cattle it has been treated, not like a European cattle-farm, but like an American rancho run. It has been asked to grow nothing but the "natural grasses," the most wasteful crop that farmer ever grew, and year by year the "natural grass" has given place to the "natural dock" and the "natural thistle." Of course, the people who have gone away were all Nationalists. But I should have thought that even from the Tory point of view it was more profitable to grow Nationalists than to grow nettles.

Mr. Bomba Balfour's bag this week (ending August 30) contains only a ben Parnellite, one Mrs. McGrath, for whom (though she was in fairly good health and spirits previously) the shock of eviction proved too much. Such, at least, was the opinion of the coroner's inquest. But Mr. B. B., as we (*Truth*) know, does not care for coroners. The only judicial officer whose opinion he values is one of his own "Removables."

No sooner has a temporary stop been put to the operations of the evictor in one part of the land, but they break out afresh in another. A few days ago it was on the Vandeleur domain that the battering ram was at work, now it is on that of "devil's work" Clanciarde. Nearly every day last week the district around Woodford has been agitated and excited by the movements of the miniature army-corps and the black battalions protecting the hideous riff-raff sent down