

Dublin Notes.

(From the National papers.)

ON the very day that Pigott disappeared, Professor Maguire, of Trinity College, died. This gentleman was one of the trio who had supplied Mr. Houston with funds to carry on his infamous traffic with Pigott. He had advanced £850 to that enterprising speculator towards the purchase of the precious documents. Dr. Maguire died quite suddenly at his lodgings in London. Whether or not the terrible outcome of the *Times*' case had any connection with his startling end no one knows as yet, but it is quite reasonable to suppose that the Professor—who was in his own way as virulent an anti-Irishman as Pigott or the *Times*' scribe, Mr. Wolfe Flanagan—was not altogether unaffected by the awful collapse of the vile plot.

The Torture Chamber still flourishes. Undeterred by the remonstrances of friends, or the execrations of enemies, Mr. Balfour goes on his way dealing out brutalities so coolly that one is tempted to believe he has been an accident of nature. The Sioux Indian tribe should have been his *gens*, and the wilds of the American woods his location. Mr. Carew, M.P., is the latest victim of his mean spite. He has been forcibly stripped, clipped of his hair and moustache, and left shivering in his cell—for he would not don the garb of infamy—in the same way as Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Mandeville, Mr. Hooper, and others have been. So the policy of getting rid of political opponents, on the principle revealed by Mr. Balfour to Mr. Blunt, goes bravely on. Amongst the medieval instruments of punishment for persons who were obnoxious to the Balfours of those ages was a hideous thing called the Scavenger's Daughter. If an inanimate object could have a spirit, and that spirit were capable of physical transition, we should say that Arthur James Balfour is a lenial descendant of that medieval feminine monstrosity.

John Dillon's was a glorious speech. In its fierce earnestness it scattered the subterfuges and falsehoods of the Chief Secretary before it as chaff is scattered by a high wind. He claimed that to the hope of conciliation, despite coercion, the credit of such improvement as there is in the condition of Ireland is due, and proved his claim home. He startled the House with the revelation that poor old Forster boasted also in his day to have conquered and pacified Ireland, and his grounds were the same as Mr. Balfour's—the reports and statistics of his Removables. On the outrage on William O'Brien John Dillon dwelt with a scorching indignation, which those who know the deep and warm personal friendship between the two men are at no loss to understand. Mr. Balfour writhed under the fierce attack, and interposed incessantly with whining excuses and apologies. He was driven along from subterfuge to subterfuge till he was cornered at last in the astounding confession (Pigott's is scarcely more startling) that when he stood up to ridicule the sufferings of William O'Brien for the amusement of the laughing hyenas who fed with him at the brutality banquet he had no official report whatever on the subject. His sole source of information was a copy of the *Freeman's Journal*, every statement in which he denied with insolent assurance. John Dillon retorted on him with superb scorn the passage in his own speech to his tittering parasites at the banquet, in which he declared that, "judging from an experience of nearly two years of official life in Ireland, I should say that the powers of mendacity are absolutely inexhaustible." In this sentence, at least, Mr. Balfour spoke truth, and proved it.

Balfour the Brave has taken to doctoring his coercion statistics. He no longer vaunts his vigour. He wants credit now for humanity and moderation. He is, on his own showing, the mildest-mannered man that ever gloated over a deadly fusillade on an unarmed crowd; or had a political opponent stripped naked in gaol. The public will not accept Mr. Balfour's jerry-mandered statistics on trust. One ingenious fraud of his was promptly exposed by Mr. Healy. On the figures, as set out by Mr. Balfour, it appeared that his Removables acquitted in 50 per cent. of the cases that Pether the Packer sent before them. A searching question or two from Mr. Healy extorted, however, a reluctant confession of the fraud underlying the figures. A Nationalist is sent before the Removables on half-a-dozen summonses for the same speech, "intimidation," "conspiracy," "incitement to conspiracy," "illegal assembly," etc., etc. The Removables convict on one, two, or three charges as they may be directed. The Castle generously withdraws the others. The withdrawals count in official statistics as acquittals by the Removables. That's how it's done. We venture to think that one in every three hundred would be about the real proportion of acquittals by the Removables.

From this we may conjecture what trust there may be put in Castle statistics. The brave Mr. Balfour's declaration that there are now only 111 prisoners under coercion is a fraud on the face of it. We have ourselves a shrewd suspicion how this affair is worked out. There have been a suspicious increase of prosecutions under our old friend King Edward III. of late. These, of course, would not in official statistics come within coercion. It is so manifest an advantage to a Nationalist to be sent to gaol by one Removable sitting at Petty Sessions without appeal instead of by two Removables in a Coercion Court with some qualified right of appeal, at any rate, that the official ignoring of King Edward III. is plainly justified. Again, the vast number of contempt of court imprisonments are also plainly out of place on Castle statistics. Nor does that ingenious system of imprisonment, by way of remand, find mention there.

Pigott's telegram to Solicitor Shannon from Madrid, demanding the money he was promised, is one of the most shady incidents in the shady transaction. It is no use repeating that Pigott was a notorious liar. So he was, of course; though the "Forger," on his own showing, took a very long time to find it out. But there was no question of deceit in this telegram, as it was intended only for the person to whom it was addressed, and who is himself charged with making this promise. The circumstance is the more suspicious remembering that it was after an interview with this same Shannon that Pigott reiterated his perjuries, on affidavit, and the telegram was despatched to Kingstown which resulted in the burning of the damning Houston

correspondence. The matter needs investigation—it may be criminal investigation. It is not without significance that a brother of this same Shannon is one of the most recently-appointed of the Removables.

Dr. Tanner, M.P., for whose arrest in London the most elaborate preparations had been made by the police, succeeded in passing through their lines, outside the House of Commons on Friday evening, March 1, and took part in the division. He received an enthusiastic greeting from his colleagues. Subsequently he was escorted out of the House by a great body of members, who, with Dr. Tanner in their midst, marched down to the Westminster Palace Hotel, singing "God save Ireland." After addressing the crowd from the steps of the hotel he retired inside, and was afterwards arrested in the smoke-room by Sergeant Sweeney, on a warrant issued in connection with a speech delivered in Tipperary last October.

There is nothing which surpasses the brutality of the Irish police save their stupidity. This latter attribute was beautifully exemplified in their attempt to smuggle Dr. Tanner, M.P., through the country. After the prisoner had been landed at Kingsdown, where frantic but unsuccessfull efforts were made by the Metropolitan police to keep everybody likely to welcome Dr. Tanner off the landing-place and railway-station, he was taken out of the train at a bye-station, as in the case of Mr. O'Brien, and driven by an obscure route away to the Kingsbridge. Notwithstanding all precautions, the doctor got a very hearty greeting at many places on the route to Clonmel. At the station at that town and in the streets the police once again behaved as utter blackguards. They batoned the people on the platform in a shocking manner and without the smallest show of provocation. They beat a representative of the *Tipperary Reporter*, who was present on his lawful business, in a manner which would shame Choctaw savages. They left the unfortunate man streaming with blood from his head and face, and while blindly making his way out in this condition another cowardly hound came up and beat him again. The foreman printer of the same paper was treated in so barbarous a manner that he now lies in a very critical state. Many other persons, whose names are not given, were subjected to the same gross ill-usage. Can nothing be done to put a stop to this policy of unbridled ruffianism?—for that it is a part of a deliberate policy is now patent to everyone in the country.

Symptoms are apparent at last that the supporters of the Government have grown tired of coercion. Even the *Times* is beginning to hedge. A few days ago it went so far as to praise Mr. Parnell for the moderation of his recent speech, and spoke of the proposal to extend local government to Ireland in a rational tone; and later on it inserted a letter from Mr. Aird, M.P., a Tory, proposing that a conference of the heads of all parties should be held to agree on a scheme of Home Rule. The *Irish Times* follows suit, but in another direction. Twice this week it called on the Government to drop its coercion and come with its remedial measures. It is sick of the batonings, the arrests, and the other incidents of Mr. Balfour's specific. The little incidents are significant in their way. In a double sense they are "signs of the times."

It is plain that the order has gone out to heap all possible indignities on Catholic priests, with an eye, doubtless, to the effect at Rome. There is no other way of accounting for the manner of their arrests. Father Kennedy, we remember, was arrested after midnight by the police breaking into his house and dragging him from his sick bed. Father McFadden was arrested almost on the altar-steps, and the grotesque and horrible outrage was put upon him of a charge of the murder of District-Inspector Martin, whom the priest vainly strove to save, and out of whose corpse the coercionists have been diligently manufacturing political capital ever since. Father Clarke's arrest brings one's mind back to the good old penal days, before Land Leagues were dreamed of, "when priests were hunted down like wolves," and even harbouring them was a crime. It was resolved, it seems, that not merely the priest himself, but all who dared shelter him, should be involved in the outrage of the arrest. The house of Mrs. Dargan, of Mount Hill, was broken into with improvised battering-rams long after midnight by a gang of uniformed ruffians, the sleeping chambers of the ladies of the family ransacked by brutal policemen, and, finally, the priest himself dragged out of his bed and carried off like a common malefactor.

The outrage was not merely grossly brutal, but absolutely wanton. In the House of Commons subsequently, the brave Mr. Balfour was constrained reluctantly to confess that there had been no concealment or evasion whatever on the part of Father Clarke. For the last month he has been going about his parish openly in the discharge of parochial duties. It is by repulsive raids and wanton insult to all the people hold dearest that their affection is to be consulted for law and order! Still further we learn that for the first time in the case of a priest, Father Clarke has been ordered to take exercise on terms of fellowship with the scum of the gaol, pickpockets, burglars, etc., and, refusing, has been punished with repeated sentences of solitary confinement and bread and water. Just fancy it; the priest in his priestly robes turned loose in a yard full of degraded criminals. What means this new freak of Balfour the Brave? Does it spring from the fear that his policy of prison torture is on its last legs, and a resolve to make the most of the little time now left him to take it out of his political opponents, lay and clerical, in gaol?

Father Kennedy was released on Thursday, March 7, from Cork Gaol, after undergoing his second sentence of two months' imprisonment for proving merely that the National League is not at all suppressed and about Meelin. He was met by an immense crowd of citizens, headed by many members of the Cork Corporation, and brought in triumphant fashion to the Mayor's office, where addresses were presented and he endeavoured to make replies—a task which in his enfeebled condition was painful and difficult. At Mallow, Kanturk, Banteer, and Meelin crowds of people, wild with delight, were waiting to give the gallant *Soggarth* a glowing welcome home. Father Kennedy has suffered much in health from his incarceration, and needs rest and recuperation sadly. Yet in his reply to the addresses he declared that he was ready to face again, not two or three months, but twenty months of the same thing, to strike another