

penalty of flogging, which can be inflicted under these Acts, would be abolished. Mr. Forster satisfied his interrogator, after some exchange of fire, by a virtual promise not to allow flogging as part of the sentence for Whiteboy offences. Released from one Irish member, the Chief Secretary soon fell into the hands of others: Mr. John Barry had an attack on the magistracy of Cork, and Mr. Parnell was anxious about the comfort of the gentlemen who are confined in Tralee jail; and, in order that the whole Irish administration might be made comfortable, another batch of questions was addressed to the Solicitor-General as to proceedings taken against the Land League in various parts of Ireland.

The most exciting incident of the evening took place immediately after the close of the questions on the paper. Lord Randolph Churchill asked a question, the suggestion of which was that Mr. Michael Davitt, the chief pillar of the Land League, who is out of prison on a ticket-of-leave, should be again imprisoned. There was an outburst of fury from the Irish members, and the noble lord was interrupted by loud cries of "shame," "shabby," and other uncomplimentary epithets. Before Mr. Forster could reply, Mr. Parnell aimed a cross-blow by asking if Mr. Davitt had not been released by the father of Lord Raulolph Churchill; if he had not already suffered eleven years' penal servitude; and if Mr. Davitt had not distinguished himself by outspoken denunciations of outrages and violence. Mr. Forster's reply was cautious. He would not say that Mr. Davitt's language was yet of a seditious character; but there was a significant addendum that a person in Mr. Davitt's position must expect to bear that his actions would be narrowly watched by the authorities. To Dr. Commins was reserved the duty of continuing the debate; and he distinguished himself by an oration which extended over two hours and a quarter, was delivered to almost empty benches, and went over much of the ground already traversed. Notwithstanding the length of this speech, the floodgates of eloquence were still open. Sir Patrick O'Brien made one of his incoherent and unintelligible harangues, and for some twenty minutes engaged the attention of the House, which had not the least idea of what he meant but all the same listened with the delicious languor and the entrancing want of thought which are produced by the perusal of the absurdities of "Alice in Wonderland." Then the debate was again adjourned.

FRIDAY, 14TH JANUARY.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* thus summarises the debate when the division was taken on Mr. Parnell's amendment to the address:—

The closing night of the debate on Mr. Parnell's amendment to the address was dull, decorous, and characterised, by that strange good temper which is the product of listlessness now and perhaps the prelude of a storm hereafter. The speeches were delivered to thin but patient and attentive audiences, and were calm in tone and quiet in delivery. Question-time was brief and without incident of note—in striking contrast with the passion and prolixity of Thursday's earlier hours. Mr. Labouchere emerged with his motion on hereditary legislators, which he had allowed to fall for some days into a state of suspended animation; Mr. Justin M'Carthy had an amusing notice in reference to one of his constituents who claimed protection from police protection; and Mr. Lalor, an Irish member, displayed an anxiety as to the doings of the Rebecca rioters of Wales which was not wholly an impulse of interest in the well-being of the principality. There were several allusions to the Irish magistracy, which led to the usual sharp interchange of questions and answers between the Irish members and the Chief Secretary. The prospect of a speech by Mr. Synan, who delivers prolix harangues in the voice of an exceedingly shrill Stentor, was not attractive, and there was a stampede from the House when the debate was resumed. Mr. Dillwyn, with many expressions of apology, announced that he should vote for the Government, and Mr. Mulholland, an Irish Conservative, made a rather effective and not unamusing analysis of a speech by Mr. Davitt. The demand for the right to speak continued unabated all this time, in spite of the dull void and the depressed condition of the House; and the debate appeared destined to go out in vapidly and dreariness. It was saved from this fate by Mr. Sexton, a young Irish member, who last night established his title to take high rank among the orators of the House. Hitherto remarkable only for an appetite for interrogation which was perfectly insatiable, for a fidelity to a particular seat only equalled by that of Mr. Hubbard, and for rhetoric more passionate than effective, Mr. Sexton last night proved himself capable of speaking with calmness, moderation, and dialectical skill. Starting rather inauspiciously with some personal comments of questionable taste on Lord Hartington, Mr. Sexton soon conciliated attention and favour, and gave an excellent sketch, from the Parnellite point of view, of the policy of the Land League, studious his speech with allusions of a not ill-natured satire which enlivened its progress; but he made the mistake of speaking half an hour too long. After this gleam of sunshine the debate again sank to a low level; the House emptied and the lobbies filled; those who remained inside sprawled on the benches and yawned unceasingly.

At ten o'clock the return of the diners-out again gave the House a brisk and modish appearance, and Mr. Hussey Vivian managed to give some sparkle to the scene by getting up a brief but stormy controversy with Mr. Parnell. Mr. Vivian alluded to the allegation that some young men had trampled in the blood of the late Lord Mountmorres—a statement which Mr. Parnell characterised as a "gross falsehood." There was a tempestuous shout of "Order" from the filled and excited benches; and the Speaker in a peremptory manner called upon Mr. Parnell to withdraw. The Irish leader making some demur, the manner of the speaker grew stern; and Mr. Parnell explained that he applied the term "falsehood" to the anonymous person whose statement Mr. Vivian had repeated—a withdrawal which, satisfactory as to order, but unsatisfactory as to essentials, aroused deep signs of irritation. Mr. Vivian then proceeded on his way, labouring heavily amid Irish interruptions. He was minatory against obstruction after his bland fashion, but finally, caught in the meshes of irregularity by the vigilant Irish, he was called to order by the Speaker. Mr. E. D. Gray made a short, sharp speech, quoting a declaration of an Irish bishop that the moment a man was arrested

under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act he would advise his flock not to pay rent and never again to pay rent until the last man was released—a declaration which excited much enthusiasm among the Home Rulers. Several English members rose after Mr. Gray.

At five minutes past one the division was taken, with the result of—For Mr. Parnell's amendment, 57; against, 435. The result was received with comparative tranquillity.

The following description of the scene referred to above between Mr. Parnell and Mr. Vivian is taken from the London correspondence of the *Daily Express*:—

The debate to-night was characterised by several scenes, but by far the most violent was the one in which the name of the unhappy Lord Mountmorres was bandied about from side to side. Early in the evening Mr. Dillwyn excited some anger by declaring that he had it on authority that men waded through the blood of the murdered Lord Mountmorres. The Home Rulers stamped Mr. Dillwyn under with great promptitude; but four hours afterwards Mr. Hussey Vivian, the Welsh member, returned to the point and said he could confirm Mr. Dillwyn's statement. Hereupon Mr. Parnell rose, and with a face grim and pallid, denounced the statement as a "gross falsehood." A yell of anger arose on the Liberal benches, answered by defiant cheers from the Home Rulers, and from this moment it was in vain the Speaker tried to get a hearing. At length he said that such language could not be applied to any member of the House. This was followed by screams—positive screams—of "Withdraw"; but Mr. Parnell coldly, slowly, almost contemptuously, repeated that, whoever was the authority of the hon. member, he had uttered a gross falsehood. After another burst of passion had subsided, Mr. Vivian went on to declare that his authority was a gentleman in her Majesty's service, but the Home Rulers received this with ironical laughter; and on a second struggle between Mr. Parnell and Mr. Vivian, the Speaker ruled the latter out of order. The scene was one of the most exciting of the debate, and it made it very clear that Mr. Vivian was no match for Mr. Parnell either with regard to the rules of the House or the power of denunciation.

MONDAY, 17TH JANUARY.

The *Freeman* thus sketches the scene in the House, when Mr. Justin M'Carthy moved his amendment to the address:—

Mr. Justin M'Carthy rose to move his amendment objecting to the use of military forces for the upholding of ejections, about a quarter to six, and spoke for nearly an hour. His moderate arguments were very cogent.

Mr. Gladstone had evidently not recovered from his recent illness, and was unusually irritable. He vented all his bad humour on Mr. M'Carthy and punctuated his abuse all through by constant rappings of his hand on the desk-box in front of him. He declared that he had difficulty in believing his own eyes when he read Mr. M'Carthy's amendment, for he doubted if during the many centuries the Speaker's chair had been occupied such a disloyal motion had ever been proposed. He looked on the amendment as an insult to the Throne, for it asked the Queen to renounce the rights she had sworn in her Coronation Oaths. He deprecated the waste of precious hours in considering such extraordinary questions.

Mr. Dillon continued the debate in an extremely spirited speech, in which he accused the Government and not the Irish members of being the obstacles to the passing of the Land Bill, and of erecting barriers in the pathway of carrying the measure. He held that if coercion were passed crime in Ireland would be increased tenfold, and the "hear, hears," which followed showed that the opinion was shared in by a good many Irish members. There was a tiff between Mr. Healy and Mr. Newdegate, which ended in the latter being called disorderly, and then Mr. Daniel Grant, returned by the votes of the Irish electors of Marylebone, said the discussion struck at the roots not only of law but of civilised society. Mr. T. D. Sullivan protested against the whole course of proceedings since the opening of Parliament, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor held out a hope of the recruiting officers being boycotted in Ireland. Mr. Healy, taunting the Ministry with their silence, said the mouths of the right hon. members were closed because they were filled with the crumbs of office. Mr. O'C. Power was the next to come to the front and he could only account for the gross misrepresentation of Mr. Justin M'Carthy by the fact that the Premier was asleep.

Mr. Parnell then rose, and created a profound sensation by the outspokenness of his remarks. He rebuked the unjust and ungenerous attempt to stifle free discussion, and stated that the Irish members had only occupied twelve hours in the debate of the past eight nights, and that was short time enough to instruct English representatives as to a country with which they were imperfectly acquainted. He asked what was the use of the Irish people sending members to Parliament at all if they were not to be allowed to state their opinions. He expressed his own ideas about separation pretty strongly, remarking that if landlordism in Ireland could be abolished they would, by the union of all Ireland, obtain the restoration of her legislative independence. If a fair chance presented itself of obtaining the freedom of Ireland, it would be the duty of every Irishman to do that which he believed to be the best for his own land, but he had always said it would be criminal to involve the Irish people in an unequal and useless struggle. He was peremptory in his idea that if coercion were passed there would be a cessation of rent in Ireland after the arrest of the first men, and that ten or fifteen thousand people would be arrested. He earnestly entreated the Government—before they went too far, before they engaged in a struggle in that House and in a struggle in Ireland which they could not measure—to pause, and, in the words of the right hon. gentleman, the member for Birmingham, "declare, by bringing their measures of conciliation and concession forward first, that force is no remedy." There were loud and continued cheers from the Home Rulers when the hon. gentleman sat down.

The *Irish Times* thus describes Mr. Parnell's speech:—

Mr. Parnell resumed his habitual freezing tone when he got up, speaking very low and very slow, but with the iciness of attitude, deliberation, and distinctness which betokens a provoking self-possession.