

FAIR PLAY.

(United Ireland, November 16.)

THE mission of the new, but already most powerful Tenants' Defence Association is, in a word, to secure fair play for evicted tenants. As convention follows convention with undiminished enthusiasm and success—four since we wrote last week, at Louth, Wexford, Kilkenny, and Roscommon—the dismay of the exterminators and their friends is more and more apparent. The Coercion journals no longer devote a column a day to prove the new Association is of no account. There is no longer wild talk of starving out the evicted tenants and replanting their holdings. Even in the distracted and distracting councils of the Coercion Government, regarding their promised Land Purchase Bill, we can detect symptoms of the fear which the rise and triumphant progress of the new Association has inspired. The Castle has hit on a notable device for counteracting its evil influence—a device worthy of the Castle. It has deputed the police to scatter abroad handbills advertising in good, set terms the existing perfections of the Irish land laws. These handbills are, in truth, an advertisement for the new Association. Our people are quick to remember that all the improvement in their condition therein set forth in exaggerated detail are the fruit of their own resolute organisation, and only by such organisation can the fruit be ripened to their full perfection. As Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., happily expressed it at the Wexford Convention, the story is interesting but not complete, and requires "to be continued in our next." There was a playful humour, worthy of Balfour himself, in selecting the constabulary as the missionaries to spread the glad tidings of the tenants' salvation. The same hands that scattered the blessed handbills abroad to prove to the tenant the impossibility of eviction might an hour later be swinging the battering-ram to the soul-stirring cry of "Back; away with him! Back; away with him!" and tumbling the same tenant's house about his ears. If we might venture to suggest, copies of the instructive handbills ought for the future be nailed up with the bundles of evictions at the market-place, or posted over the Removables' heads in the Coercion Courts to prove the infinite benevolence of the Government. The Government, of a certainty, watches the progress of the new Association with malevolent eyes, "willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike." Its power and progress provokes attack, but it is secured by the "unassailable legality" of its position. The Coercionists clamoured for full information as to the objects and methods of the new Association; they have got it. The while the Eviction Syndicate, to which in a special manner it is opposed, works in the dark, striving jealously to hide the identity of its members, the Tenants' Defence Association steps out boldly into the open and proclaims its members, its resources, and its objects to the world. The objects may be once again summarised: To secure fair play for the evicted tenants, whom the rack-renters are eager to victimise as a punishment for the resolution and self-devotion which has saved the tenantry of Ireland from destruction. Mr. John Redmond, M.P., at Wexford, gave a forcible and eloquent reply to the somewhat silly question, if the new Association meant the repudiation or the abandonment of the Plan of Campaign. It is an abandonment in the same sense as the main army abandons the gallant vanguard when it moves out in irresistible array to protect them from a treacherous ambuscade. The Syndicate has sworn that the evicted campaign tenants must be crushed. The Tenants' Defence Association swears they shall be saved. All Ireland joins in that mighty oath, which reverberates across both oceans and finds an echo in America and Australia. With the technical legality or illegality of the Plan of Campaign we are not here concerned at all. It is a thing apart from the present considerations. Mr. Gladstone regards it as a necessary, though possibly extra, legal combination. For ourselves, if the point of its legality was necessary to decide, we would prefer the deliberate opinion, given against interest, of the Attorney-General, now Mr. Justice Holmes, to the multitudinous decisions of the Removables, of the sufficiency of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant is satisfied. Whatever controversy can arise as to its technical legality, of its justice and necessity, there can be no question at all. As Captain Donnellan of Ballymona, Midleton, well said in his letter to Mr. Lane, M.P., enclosing a subscription of £5 to the new Association:

"It is easy for well-fed philosophers and legal luminaries to moralise on the iniquity of the Plan of Campaign, but self-preservation is, and always will be, the first law of nature."

Even the Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick, who certainly cannot be suspected of any bias in the tenants' favour, completely justifies the Plan of Campaign, with the solitary proviso that it has been joined before the publication of the Rescript. But it is not the legality of the Plan of Campaign that is now to be considered. Legal or illegal, it has done its work and won its battle. The exterminators, as they themselves confess are fighting no longer for victory, but for vengeance. The new Association takes the field, strong alike in its widespread organisation and its unassailable legality. If it be lawful to combine secretly to promote eviction, it is lawful to combine publicly to succour the evicted. Even the Removables, we fancy, would be scarcely rash enough to decide that the great objects of the new Association, to feed the hungry and shelter the shelterless, are criminal in the eye of the law.

The Rev. Patrick Boyle, O.M., has been appointed Superior of the Irish College, Paris, in the room of Very Rev. Father McNamara, who has retired after a rectorship of twenty-five years.

A subscription has been opened to erect a statue to Christ facing that of Giordano Bruno! Christ and Barrabas! It is to still further insult the Pope and outrage revealed religion, that these wretches are planning the raising of a monument, which they audaciously declare to be in honor of "the Great Rebel of Nazareth." A cry of indignation has already arisen in Italy, and will spread throughout the world if this horrible sacrilege is achieved. Much as Crispien hates the priests and the Pope, he is likely to hesitate before allowing such an outrage on Christian sentiment as this would be.

THE IRISH BISHOPS AND THE POPE.

At the recent meeting of the Irish Bishops held at Clonliffe College, the following letter of sympathy to the Pope, deploring the occurrences connected with the Bruno celebration, was adopted:—

MOST HOLY FATHER—We, the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, in general meeting assembled, prostrate at the feet of your Holiness, express our deep sense of grief at the execrable and unprecedented insults which most impious men have lately offered to Christ our Lord himself, and to you who are his Vicar on earth. Under your very eyes, these enemies have loaded with the highest honours an apostate who had abjured the Christian religion, and who was destitute of all virtue. In the holy city of Rome they have sacrilegiously worshipped the detestable enemy of mankind. Assuredly, your paternal heart, Most Holy Father, is filled with grief at the a subornness of your children, exclaiming, with the prophet:—*"Filios matris et exaltavi, ipsi autem spreverunt me."* But we, in accordance with the spirit of our Irish people, foremost in zeal for the house of God and the honour of your Holiness, cry with one voice: *"Exurgat Deus, et dissipentur inimici ejus, et fugiant qui odierunt eum a facie ejus: sicut defluit fumus deficiant; sicut fluit cera a facie ignis."* It behoves us, moreover, Most Holy Father, to affirm the necessity made more and more clear of preserving unimpaired the Temporal Sovereignty of your Holiness and the Holy Apostolic See. *"Nunc reges intelligite, erudimini qui judicatis terram."* For if, in the city of Rome, which has been consecrated by the glorious blood of the two Princes of the Apostles, and which is honoured through the entire world for its venerableness and sanctity, these crimes have been perpetrated, how much more ought secular princes to fear.

But since Your Holiness can neither prevent nor restrain in any way these insults and blasphemies, perpetrated under your eyes, it is manifest that Your Temporal Sovereignty is necessary for the full and free exercise of the Apostolic duties, and to curb the persistent enmity of the impious.

Prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness we humbly implore for ourselves and the flocks committed to our care the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Holy Cross College, Dublin, the 16th day of October, 1889.

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The Church of the Immaculate Conception at Smyrna, which contained precious treasures, has been destroyed by fire.

The Capuchin missionaries at Assab Bay are founding a Christian colony for liberated slaves on land granted for the purpose by the Italian Government.

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