

Dublin Notes.

(From the National papers.)

In Mr. Labouchere's opinion, there is nothing more comic than Captain Hamilton's sham plantation of the Coolgreany estate. "Whereas," writes *Truth*, "the rental of the whole place is only £1,000 a year, it was found necessary in the first instance to find £5,000 to start these "solvent" Protestants on their way. Five years' rent clean out of pocket to begin with may be good Protestantism, and (from a Tory point of view) good politics, but it certainly does not sound like good business." But the artful dodgers of the landlord class imagine that it is very good business, because they want to keep up the price of land. This purpose is the inspiring motive of the Clanricardes and the Smith-Barrys.

In Tipperary the war still rages fiercely. Last week (ending December 21) Mr. Arnold Power and his *posse* were again busy turning the people out of their shops, and many thriving establishments were again let go to Mr. Smith-Barry. In nearly every case, however, the tenants had had the stock and furniture removed in anticipation, so that the evictions were hardly more than mere formalities. The town is rapidly becoming deserted and derelict, but the people are hard at work reconstructing the new one. No disturbance takes place at any of the evictions, as the people preserve an attitude of dogged determination and passivity, so as to give no further excuse for the violence of Mr. Balfour's obsequious servants, the police.

Undeterred in the least by the sense of blood-guiltiness or the fierce reprobation of public sentiment, the constabulary continue all over the country to indulge in the same policy of wanton aggression and provocative violence which has already been productive of so many tragedies. On the night of Mr. O'Brien's release they behaved, in many places, with altogether inexcusable roughness and brutality. At Mallow a large body of them, under the command of District-Inspector Lanyon, followed a band and suddenly charged upon the people and batoned right and left. Several persons, including Mr. Hyde, T.C., were beaten brutally. In many other towns they signalled themselves by kicking about the tar-barrells and otherwise displaying their malignancy wherever they found the slightest chance of doing so. We find it hard to express our indignation at the conduct of wife-beaters, and whenever magistrates get the chance they feel a pleasure in giving them six months with hard labour. But these fine policemen of ours not only beat women in the streets with their heavy batons but ply them on children as well; and that glorious thing called law looks on smilingly.

We must confess a feeling of keen disappointment at the result of the boycotting prosecutions at Manchester. We had hoped better from an English jury, and we hope for better in the future. It is quite true the Government had its train skillfully laid. The dice were from the first carefully loaded against the accused. We are bound also to confess that the case was infinitely stronger and the evidence infinitely clearer than anything that has been brought before the Removables. The accused men, with almost incredible folly, had taken the detectives into their confidence, and every idle word they spoke was used against them with terrible effect. Above all and beyond all, the case was tried by Judge Grantham. Whether the prosecution was arranged for Judge Grantham or Judge Grantham for the prosecution is a matter of detail. It was by no coincidence he was there. Judge Grantham enjoys, as everyone knows, a unique reputation as a virulent partisan on the English bench. At the bar he had nothing but his partisanship to recommend him. His promotion excited strong protest at the time. Even since his elevation he has had to publicly apologise from the bench for an intemperate partisan attack on the *Star*. With such a man the jury got no fair play. They were compelled to surrender their judgment and submit to decide only on the facts which were unquestioned, leaving their legal effect with the partisan who presided.

Our brilliant contemporary, the *Star*, puts the point with admirable clearness:—"Now did the two men who were sentenced to three months' imprisonment for conspiracy use any violence? Certainly not. They acted precisely as the pickets in the dock strike acted. They brought moral pressure to bear. They advised the landlady of a house not to entertain the men with the cattle because the rest of her company would certainly leave. They went to Salford market with the cattle, but the only thing they did was to stand near them, to say that they were boycotted, and to advise buyers not to take them. That they did nothing more is obvious from the reply of a butcher who was thus addressed, and who bought the cattle, saying that he did not think that the boycotting made any difference. Where was the intimidation or terrifying here? Yet these unhappy men are sentenced by a Tory judge to three months' imprisonment for doing their duty to their country." The Coercion Government have thrown down the challenge of English prosecutions. It will be taken up again and again. They cannot have Judge Grantham perpetually on the bench; and even if they have, there is a saving faith in us that the time is not far distant, if the Government repeats the experiment of English prosecutions, when the English jury will get the facts into their own heads, and take the law into their own hands, and reverse the ill-considered verdict of Manchester.

It is not for us to dwell at length on the heartfelt cordiality of the reception accorded to Mr. William O'Brien on his release from prison. But we may be pardoned for pointing to it as proof of the salutary effect of the brave Mr. Balfour's Coercion Act in promoting respect for the law and degrading his political opponents. The *Daily Express*, with characteristic good taste, declares "the mobs of Galway and Dublin welcomed Mr. O'Brien." He was welcomed almost at the door of his prison by the Bishop of Galway, who ranks, we assume, in the *Daily Express* estimate, as a corner-boy in the City of the Tribes. He breakfasted with the Bishop of Galway; he dined with the Bishop of Clontarf. He was driven to his hotel in Dublin in the carriage of the Chief Magistrate of the metropolis, who has in his brief tenure of office done more for the city than all the Coercion

aristocracy put together. This man thus so honoured is, so far as the Coercion Act could make him, the darkest criminal in Ireland, and this is the zenith of the triumph of law and order under the successful administration of the brave Mr. Balfour.

We have good reason to know that the authorities at the Castle are in a terrible quandary about Mr. Shaw Lefevre. To prosecute or not to prosecute, that is the question. It is but a choice of evils. On one hand is the sacrifice of the last small remnant of the brave Mr. Balfour's reputation for courage or consistency, on the other a disastrous scandal in the prosecution and conviction by the Removables, and imprisonment, as an ordinary criminal, of an ex-Cabinet Minister for a speech, every word of which is cordially endorsed by the Liberals of England. It is truly an awkward quandary for the brave Mr. Balfour. Mr. Shaw Lefevre's speech at Drogheda was a direct, outspoken, and unmistakable appeal to the Campaign tenants on the Massereene estate to stick close to their combination, until their evicted brethren should be made partakers of the concessions which their sacrifices and self-devotion had wrung from the noble rack-renter.

For a speech addressed in the same terms to the same tenants Mr. John Dillon was sentenced to six months' imprisonment as an ordinary criminal, and narrowly escaped with his life from the terrible ordeal. For a mere indirect allusion to the Plan of Campaign which the Removables spelt from his speech to his constituents, Mr. Flynn, M.P., was sentenced to a heavy term of imprisonment. The "criminal" passage in Mr. Flynn's speech on which the conviction rested has been marked by the presiding Removable, Mr. Irwin: "So far," said Removable Irwin in his judgment, commenting on the speech of Mr. Flynn, "as these remarks go, they might mean a simple narrative of historical facts, *except for the unfortunate observation of Mr. Flynn*—I beg of you to remember these words of a great English orator, and stick firm to your just and lawful combination, and do not be driven from that either by the intimidation of the Government of the Castle or by the open violence of the bludgeonmen." Contrast this with Mr. Shaw Lefevre's direct and powerful exhortation to the Massereene Campaigners to stick close to their combination. A hundred such illustrations might be cited. Again, we ask, what is the brave Mr. Balfour going to do about it? And again we answer—Nothing. He will not allow any sensitiveness for his reputation for consistency, at which the very newsvendors in Ireland scoff, to involve him in the crowning disaster of a conflict with Mr. Shaw Lefevre in the Coercion courts.

An evicted tenant, named Thomas Fox, living with his brother-in-law at Oragorher, near Spencilhill, is now the object of police espionage to a point which makes his life miserable. The history of the cause of this officiousness is easily told. Fox, who was living with his father at Cranaher, on a farm belonging to John Blood, J.P., was sentenced to a term of imprisonment in July last, for intimidation. While he was in gaol his family were thrown out on the roadside, and, on his release, poor Fox found his former home inhabited by Emergency men. He has been since living with Mr. Patrick Meere, a respectable farmer, and secretary of the "suppressed" branch of the I.N.L., at Barefield. In August last the landlord was fired at when driving from Eunis, accompanied by his police escort. Fox and his brother-in-law were immediately arrested on suspicion, but, after repeated remands, were released. No evidence connecting them with the shooting being procurable since then, the police have followed Fox night and day. They visit his residence at all hours of the night, knock loudly at the door, demand admittance, and when admitted severely question the inmates as to the whereabouts of Fox, whom they well know to be inside, and all this without any apparent cause except the landlord's unsatisfied doubts.

The list of those who have perished through the operations of coercion is beginning to attain formidable proportions. Another death, directly traceable to the system, is chronicled this week. A respectable merchant of Tipperary, Mr. William Walsh, is the latest victim. Last March, while the coercion cases were being tried in the town, he was one of those who were batoned by the police. He had been standing at his own shop door when the police charged along the street, and was set upon by three of them, and beaten horribly about the head. As a result of the attack, he was confined to bed for six weeks, and had been, until the time of his death, under medical treatment. He succumbed last Saturday, to the inexpressible grief of his family and friends, for his character, both in private and political life, was of the highest. The only action taken by the authorities to atone for the wanton assault upon Mr. William Walsh was to prosecute him on some ridiculous charge under the Coercion Act, as soon as he had been able to leave his bed; but the charge broke down.

On Saturday, December 21, judgment was delivered in the London Queen's Bench by Justices Field and Manisty, on the application on the part of Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., for a new trial of his action against Lord Salisbury for libel. The decision of the two judges was almost a foregone conclusion. Anyone who had followed the course of the case and observed the animus with which they had approached it, as exhibited in their remarks while the arguments were proceeding, could hardly have a second thought on the matter. They upheld the judgment of Mr. Justice Stephen, who had tried the case originally, holding that his directions to the jury on the occasion were proper and reasonable, and that the point to be considered was not whether Mr. O'Brien's speech at Slievenamon was such as Lord Salisbury described, but whether it had the tendency to promote crime, as his lordship explained in his shambling and shabby defence. Lord Salisbury's little bit of Piggottism will, however, not be allowed to rest here. Mr. O'Brien will take it to the ultimate tribunal of appeal, the House of Lords, and so leave nothing undone to bring his high-placed libeller to justice.

The principle of arbitration has again been appealed to in regard to a large Irish estate. The Kingston tenantry had very little confidence in the Land Commission, owing to the treatment they had previously experienced; hence when the hearing of about a hundred cases came on last week before the sub-Commission at Mitchelstown—the Commission presided over by Mr. Doyle—they were strongly