

Catholic missions a taste of the quality of the so-called Separation Law. And the Protestant missionaries naturally no more relish confiscation under forms of law than the Catholic missionaries do. The Governor (says the 'Catholic Times')

'Has excited the just indignation of the missionaries by declaring their churches and mission houses to be national property, and by forbidding the use of the churches for school teaching. The Catholic missionaries, who belong to the Jesuit Order, have, according to M. Augagnier, given much less trouble over this matter than the Protestants, probably from their knowledge of the futility of any protest. But the Protestant missionaries, who belong mostly to nationalities other than the French, have been able through the medium of the Continental Protestant press and societies to bring pressure to bear on prominent members of the Parliamentary "bloc", and these have tried to put some sort of brake on the go-ahead tendencies of the Socialist Governor. They appear to have reminded M. Augagnier of the dictum of Gambetta as to anticlericalism not being an article for transportation, for M. Augagnier, who publishes his defence in the "Matin" under the headline "Le Protestantisme c'est l'ennemi" ("Protestantism is the enemy"), scoffs at this notion of Gambetta's as a piece of stupidity, and likens "clericalism" to a virulent contagious disease which must be got rid of wherever it occurs.'

The Socialist Governor lays against the Protestant missionaries a charge of inciting the natives to disloyalty. This accusation, coming from such a source, we decline to believe. But there is another side to this question, which has been emphasised more than once in our editorial columns. Here is how it is set forth by our Liverpool contemporary :-

'The anticlerical Governor certainly scores a point when he reminds these gentlemen and their agencies and supporters abroad that they made no objection so long as all the rigor of the Separation Law was applied to the Catholic Church in France and its foreign missions. M. Pressense, in particular, and M. Sabatier and others like them, he roundly accuses of seeking under the cloak of a free thought movement to oust Catholicism and put Protestantism in its place, in which he is probably right, but that is another matter. The English public, and especially those fervent Nonconformist divines, who seem to regard the movement to dechristianise France in the light of a holy war waged by the French Government against an aggressive ultramontanist, and those "Liberal" Catholics who write so loyally of their Mother the Church in the pages of secularist journals, need to be told of these things, and we hope that one of the latest phases of French anticlericalism will be described in its true colors in every Anglican and Nonconformist journal in the kingdom.'

'The free and impartial secular press', says our English contemporary, 'will not enlighten them, and the Paris correspondent of the "Times" is of course silent.'

'Irish Outrages': XV. 'Faking' and Exaggeration (4)

Figures, like loaded firearms, need careful handling, or, like the muskets of 'McFingal', they may recoil upon the user.

'As some muskets so contrive it
As oft to miss the mark they drive at,
And, though well aimed at duck or plover,
Bear wide, and kick their owners over'.

This was the fate that befell the statistical musketry of Mr. Balfour. The exposure was easy and obvious. It drove him back on his rearward lines of pretext for coercion. The first of these was a political confidence trick—a series of 'narratives' or 'anecdotes' (so Mr. Balfour styled them): anonymous and uncorroborated gossip which (said he) 'I have obtained on my responsibility from what I consider an authentic source'! Says the historian quoted above (p. 292) :-

'In other words, the gossip which Mr. Balfour heard, and Mr. Balfour believed, the House of Commons was likewise to accept as gospel truth! Were ever the liberties of a single and a common pickpocket taken away on evidence so flimsy as that which justified the

Chief Secretary in taking away the liberties of a whole nation?'

'But,' continues our author (pp. 292-3), 'though the Chief Secretary was vague in his "anecdotes", and though the Bill was being hurried through as fast as the Government could manage, there was plenty of time to test and destroy most of the cases brought forward by the Chief Secretary'. We will here mention three of the 'anecdotes' on which Mr. Balfour based his plea for coercion. (1) A man named Clarke was (according to Mr. Balfour) indicted for obtaining money by means of a forged document; 'the case was proved in the clearest manner'; 'the judge charged strongly for conviction, but the jury, which consisted principally of farmers in the same rank of life as the prisoner, disagreed'. The real facts, as proved by Mr. Parnell (T. P. O'Connor, p. 293) were, briefly, as follows: (Clarke was a Protestant malster, not a Catholic farmer (as Mr. Balfour had represented him to be); he was not a National Leaguer; and 'he was acquitted owing to the complicated nature of the accounts in dispute' (ib.)) (2) The second 'anecdote', as told by Mr. Balfour, related to 'a most horrible outrage upon a girl' by one John Hogan. Says the author last quoted (p. 293) :-

'The association between an outrage upon a woman, and political or agrarian combination, is rather remote, especially in a country where such offences are rare and are bitterly resented; but in any case the whole story was an invention'.

Here again Mr. Balfour was rather unfortunate in his 'authentic source'. (3) The third case that we mention here was brought forward by the Attorney-General. It serves, perhaps even more than Mr. Balfour's 'anecdotes', to illustrate the desperate straits to which the Government was reduced in its efforts to find or make a plausible pretext for subjecting Ireland to the tyranny of a regime of coercion administered by the anti-Irish Tammany entrenched in Dublin Castle. We let the gifted author of 'The Parnell Movement' (p. 293) unfold in his own way an incident of which he was a witness :-

'"At the County Kerry Assizes", said the Attorney-General, "on March 11, 1887, Patrick Hickey was indicted for a moonlight offence at the house of Mr. Casey, a farmer. During the melee the disguise of one of the attacking parties fell off, and Casey recognised Hickey, his own cousin. No evidence was called for the defence, and a verdict was given, "Not guilty." Here certainly was a very bad case, if true; but what happened? "I rise to order", said Mr. T. Harrington. "I defended the prisoner, and I pledge my word to the House, and I am willing to abide by the decision of Mr. Justice O'Brien, if he did not directly charge for the acquittal of the prisoner on the ground that the charge was a fabrication, and if it was not at the judge's instance that I declined to examine any witness for the defence". And the only reply the Attorney-General had to this crushing refutation of his charge was a joke, and the statement that he had founded his assertion on a report of the case in the "Freeman's Journal".'

The second plea advanced for coercion by Mr. Balfour was that illegal pressure was exerted by some branches of the United Irish League. Two cases were specified, one in Mayo, and one in Sligo. It was promptly pointed out that, in the Mayo case, 'that branch was immediately dissolved', and that, in the Sligo case, the secretary of the League (Mr. T. Harrington, M.P.) had 'called for the resignation of the committee' ('Parnell Movement', pp. 293-4). One more pretext remained—the charges, at assizes, of some of the active and combative party politicians in the judicial ermine, to whom reference has already been made (p—). Let one case be taken as typical of the rest—the case of Mr. Justice Lawson. He rose to parliamentary life, and afterwards to the judicial Bench, for the then corrupt Borough of Portarlington in the days of open voting (1865) and narrow franchise. With a total of only 46 votes, he defeated his opponent by eleven. And