

Dublin Notes.

(From the National Papers.)

No signal victories have been won by Campaigners in Kilkenny county. In one case the tenants of various properties about Listerlin, Slievearragh, and Ballyreddy, who were evicted a couple of years ago, have been restored to their farms, having secured reductions of about forty per cent., and getting a heavy load of arrears wiped out besides. The settlements in these cases were brought about mainly through the instrumentality of the Rev. Canon Holohan, P.P., of Rosbercon, and Mr. Hinson, solicitor, of New Boss.

We are glad to see a stir in the county Down, such as that which was witnessed at Sheepbridge. The men of Newry deserve great credit for the large share they had in making the demonstration the big success it was; but the surrounding districts, which sent in their stalwart contingents, with their bands, must not be overlooked. Two members of the Irish Party attended—Messrs. McCartan and Crilly. Mr. McCartan criticised very scathingly the recent decisions of the Land Commissioners in Belfast, raising the tenants' rents in many cases, and giving the most paltry abatements in a few others. Subsequently Mr. Crilly addressed the meeting, after making an effective protest against the presence of a police note-taker on the platform.

The burlesque prosecution in Tipperary, after dragging its dreary length along for nearly three months, has ended as everyone anticipated from the moment the impartial Shannon and his brother Removable took their places on the bench, except only in this, that Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien were not there to go to prison when the pre-arranged six-months' sentences were pronounced. Their shameless refusal to have their law tested by a case stated to a superior court was hardly anticipated. We will not insult our readers' intelligence by any further comment on those grotesque proceedings. It were, indeed, to waste words on unresisting imbecility. The Coercionists themselves—the most moderate and the most virulent, Mr. Courtney, M.P., and the *Daily Express*—have denounced the ludicrous burlesque, and the Coercion journals have bid the reports away in shamefaced paragraphs in their obscure columns. They were right in this for the evidence for the prosecution, which showed that during the whole time the combination has been in force in Tipperary, no man, woman, or child was hurt (except of course, those hurt by the police), completely dissipated the calumnies of the Coercionists who had been cramming the public ear with stories of diabolical outrages and savage intimidation.

A piece of jobbery on the part of the Castle has come to our ears so audaciously and transparently base and corrupt, that we should have hesitated to give it evidence except on the clearest evidence. For the reader to appreciate the nature of this job it is necessary he should know that as a rule the north-east and north-west circuits are combined in one Winter Assizes for Ulster, with one set of Crown prosecutors. This winter they are to be divided. There is a special Winter Assize to be held for the northwest circuit, in which the Olphert estate is situate, and who is to be the Crown Prosecutor? Who does our readers imagine? Why, Mr. Olphert, son of the exterminator! Comes the second question. Who and what is this Mr. Olphert? As a barrister he is utterly incompetent—absolutely briefless. He has never, we venture to assert, held one single brief in Dublin. For the last three circuits he has given up in despair. For the last three months he has not so much as put his nose into the Four Courts—hall, court, or library. He has been too hard at work at Falcarragh.

He, and not his father, we learn, is really the evictor of Falcarragh. The old man is secretly anxious for peace; the hopeful son insists that the extermination must continue. For this he is rewarded by the Coercion Government by this neat job. If any of his father's evicted victims, or rather his own, are sent to the assizes for defending their hovels against his emergency-men, he will have the double privilege of prosecuting them to conviction and being well paid for doing it. Admirably calculated is this to produce respect for the impartiality of the law. It is estimated that he will make about £350 out of the job. If the Government felt it incumbent on them to contribute this sum to the encouragement of the evictions, better to have paid the sub-exterminator out of the Secret Service Fund than go through the shameless pretence of paying him legal fees for legal work. It is worse than an alms—it is a bribe.

Besides believing that Mr. Parnell's retention of office will throw the course of Home Rule back for a generation, Mr. Davitt has a personal grievance against the member for Cork because of the falsehood the latter told him in regard to the O'Shea case. Mr. Davitt says that as soon as the divorce suit was mentioned in the newspapers he came over from Dublin expressly to see Mr. Parnell. He succeeded in getting at Captain O'Shea's case and his evidence, and was the first to inform the member for Cork what the case against him really was. Mr. Parnell then spoke to him as follows:—"Davitt, I want you to go back to Ireland to tell our friends that I am going to get out of this without the slightest stain on my name or reputation"; and he repeated the words again. Mr. Davitt says he fully believed him, and went straight away and told Mr. John Morley, who was delighted. Then he returned to Ireland and repeated Mr. Parnell's words to Archbishop Walsh, who was not only delighted, but intensely relieved. He also told the same thing freely in Ireland, and wrote out to friends in Australia and America to the like effect.

The Most Noble the Marquis of Clanricarde, as might be expected, has joined heartily in the Government scheme of concerted evictions. Fifty policemen are busily engaged in expelling his wretched tenants from home and holdings in the parish of Woodford, where the miser Marquis has already quenched one hundred and twenty humble hearths with the kind assistance of the beneficent Government. It seems a slur on Irish manhood that these atrocities, which would stir the blood of the most patient people in the world, are borne so tamely. But the certainty of redress is the secret of their patience. They know that in a year or two the accursed system must fall. Even in

the present, eviction no longer means the helpless, hopeless misery of the bad old days. The evicted tenant can count securely on the watchful charity of the Irish race at home and abroad—ay, and of millions of sympathisers of alien blood to alleviate as far as may be the sufferings to which he is subjected. Let but the Tenants' Defence Association cease for one hour its mission of mercy, and the evictors and their abettors would be taught a terrible lesson of the vengeance of an outraged and despairing people.

We would be deeply grateful for a Coercionist explanation of the recent proclamation suppressing the National League over a vast tract of country, principally in Ulster. On their every-day working hypothesis, the brave Mr. Gifford has completely crushed the National agitation. How comes it, then, that the National League in those districts has now for the first time become dangerous? Over fifty townlands are suppressed in the county of Fermanagh, and about seventy in the county of Monaghan. To these are added two in the county of Waterford. Now, we do not enter into the charge—apparently the well-founded charge—that has been plainly made, that the League was suppressed in the district because of its active intervention in the Parliamentary Revision Courts. We prefer taking the matter as far as possible from the Coercionist's own point of view. We assume, therefore, with the Coercionists that the National League was suppressed the moment the vigilant Government discovered it was dangerous. Just see in what a quandary their own explanation lands them. The Coercion Act was passed to put down the National League. The result of four years of vigorous and successful Coercion is that the League has grown so powerful and dangerous in these districts that the last desperate devices have to be put in force against it. As for suppression, one might, of course, as well hope to suppress flame with oil as suppress the National League by Viceregal proclamation. "The more they dam it up the more it burns." So much, at least, the Castle blockheads ought to have learned by this time.

All Ireland is up and stirring in aid of the Tenants' Defence Association, each district inspired with a generous rivalry of generosity. Everywhere we hear of conventions held and subscriptions pouring in. Every penny will be needed. The resumption of the Falcarragh evictions is plain proof that a very brief experience has convinced our amiable Chief Secretary that the policy of small bribes and big promises which he tried on in some poverty-stricken corners of the West and North won't pay. He has resorted to his old plan of starving out the tenants' combination. For every one of the fifteen hundred souls, men, women, and children, now in progress of eviction at Falcarragh, together with the five thousand families already evicted, food and shelter have to be provided from week to week by the funds of the Tenants' Defence Association. This thought is a spur in the side of the people's generosity. Eviction is the battleground the Government has chosen. On this they have elected to fight their last fight in concert with the exterminators of Ireland. Their plan is, by wholesale concerted evictions, to exhaust the resources of the Tenants' Defence Association, "make examples of the tenants" on certain estates, including, of course, the Ponsonby, the Olphert, and the Clanricarde, and so terrify the tenants of the rest of Ireland into abject submission to any terms it may please their masters to impose.

Brennan, a drunken and ruffianly emergencyman, which adjectives might indeed fairly describe the entire class, was sentenced to a month's imprisonment at the Clonmel petty sessions for breaking into the house of a labouring man named Kearney, smashing his furniture, and threatening to shoot the old man with a revolver, all without even the shadow of suggested provocation. If it had been Kearney who had winked at one of Brennan's pigs he would have got six months from the same bench on which the Marquis of Waterford presided.

Mr. Balfour gave his Liverpool audience one vivid glimpse, at least, of what he saw in Donegal:—"We were," he said, "no searchers after the picturesque, but on one occasion we walked through a village upon that stormy coast, which we were told, and truly told, was one of the finest places of scenery on the West coast of Ireland. We walked up between the poor hovels and the wretched holdings, looked at the people digging out their black and rotten potatoes, and the wretched twice-shorn sheep attempting to get a living on the poor pastures that surrounded these people's homes, and we walked on and over the brow of a hill, not a hundred yards from these homes and we came to a point from which you could not see the dwelling or the habitation of man; and we looked down, and we saw some of the finest cliff scenery in the United Kingdom. We saw the long rhythm of the Atlantic coming in beneath us slowly from the West; and I think every one of us who saw that felt that the bitter discord between the poverty, the narrowness and squalor of the scene that we had just passed through, as compared with the spacious splendour of the natural scenery we were looking at, brought home to us how the work of man, or rather the carelessness and indifference of man, had marred some of the most magnificent of Nature's handiwork." To complete the picture he should have added that a visitor coming two days later would have found the forces of the British Empire, with a battering-ram provided at the public expense, engaged in driving those same wretched peasants, with their wives and little ones, from their miserable hovels out into the wild rain-storm that beat upon the desolate mountain side. Mr. Balfour declared that he found his experience as Chief Secretary very "entertaining." This is part of his entertainment.

We are quite certain the words of the Most Rev. Dr. Nulty, Bishop of Meath, will be received with respect by the tenants of Ireland—"The same Government," he said, "that assisted evictions in the past were bringing in a land bill called the Land Purchase Act. He said that Bill was to buttress up and build up landlordism, and create a peasant proprietary that had an interest in landlordism. By the Bill the tenants who were in arrears would be obliged to purchase the land at more than its value. He was not against peasant proprietary or compensating the landlords, but they should not get more than the land was worth." The Bishop's view is emphasised by the multitude of petitions that have been presented of late by over-hasty purchasers under the Ashbourne Act, vainly petitioning relief from their cast-iron contract.