

Dublin Notes.

(From the National Papers.)

MR. GLADSTONE'S determination to remove the last of the Catholic disabilities by an Act to enable Catholics to hold the offices of Lord Chancellor of England and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, proves that he is not, like Mr. Balfour, to be frightened by the threats of the Protestant Alliance. Last year Mr. Campbell-Bannerman had charge of the measure and was forced to abandon it; this year the Grand Old Man flings defiance at the bigots. The action is in strong contrast with the conduct of Mr. Balfour, who dropped his University Bill at the first symptoms of bigot opposition. Yet it is Mr. Balfour who gets the support of the Catholic Primrose Leaguers on the ground that the Tories are the friends of Catholicity. Save it from such cowards!

Lord Granville's opinion on Tipperary is that it was a singularly fortunate thing that Mr. Morley went to Ireland to judge with his own eyes what was the state of the country in which he felt so great an official and personal interest. The simple account of what the right hon. gentlemen saw, he said, had more effect in convincing the people of this country of the unsound state of affairs on the other side of St. George's Channel than all that had been previously written or said on the subject. When the Irish police found the Government poohpoohing violence on their part, temptation to them was great indeed to commit acts which were creating irritation, and which they must all deplore. In regard to the Tipperary prosecutions, he did not know whether the defendants were guilty or not; but for years it had been the policy of the wisest statesmen in this country to avoid political prosecutions. Yet here, after months had elapsed from the time when the illegal offences took place, these prosecutions were suddenly stirred up. He believed it was a very foolish thing for the Government to do. The great county conventions held at Navan, Galway, and Tullamore, show that the Bishops, priests and people in Meath, Galway, and King's county are resolved that the savage perseverance of the evictors in their brutal work shall only have the effect of strengthening the determination of the nation to save the victims of this disgraceful conspiracy. They proved also that nothing can make the people forget Mr. Parnell's services to Ireland. At all the conventions confidence in his political honesty and sagacity were passed, and touching proof was given of the popular gratitude to the man who has showed them how to fight their own fight if they want to win. No cloud that can fall can blot out the memory of the past. Meantime, the country can show in no better way its resolution in the present hour than by proving to Mr. Balfour that he and his confederates shall not prevail in the ruin of the men who have led the resistance to the policy of forcing up the ransom of Ireland for the sake of the garotters who have her in their clutches.

The extermination of the Falcarragh peasantry is complete. As far as Mr. Balfour and his law can accomplish it, two thousand hard-working, industrious peasants, whose only crime is that they refused to submit themselves to the uncorrected greed of the landlord, are ruined. In the midst of a winter storm, these poor people, young and old, strong and decrepit, are flung out on the roadside without shelter or without protection. What has been done at Falcarragh has been done at Woodford; and to the disgrace of English politicians, the Minister who held the arm of the evictors, in the winter of 1886, now apologises for the eviction of the people for the non-payment of the very rents he then declared to be unpayable. This was the noble part played by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach at Bristol; and this is the consistency of the politicians whose political philosophy consists in making all the blunders that the previous Governments of Ireland have made, and then defending themselves by a plentiful quotation of precedents for their stupidity.

The people, however, are no longer at the mercy of Mr. Olphert and those behind him. The Archbishop of Cashel, fresh from Rome, has given the lead to his own people in the work of fortifying the defences of the peasants. "We are all publicly pledged," he says, "to sympathise with and support our evicted brethren throughout the country, and to see they suffer nothing, or as little as possible, from landlord ruthlessness and rapacity." And his Grace renews his subscription of £50. This is the answer to those who were prophesying that the Bishops of Ireland would have the people to fight their battle uncounselled and unassisted. Like the action of the Bishop of Raphoe, this munificence of the Archbishop of Cashel will show that the old alliance stands for the protection of the evicted.

The purchase of an estate in the very centre of the Clanricarde estate by Mr. Roche, M.P., is an excellent move, and makes the fight against Clanricarde tenfold more simple; while the consequent reduction of rents will make the tenants more determined than ever to refuse submission to terms that mean confiscation and slavery. The estate was bought at thirteen years' purchase; and Mr. Roche has abolished all arrears and reduced the rent 48 per cent. Convenient sites can be had on the estate for the Clanricarde tenants, and there will be no danger of their being hunted forth on some technical plea. The plan takes the game out of the hands of the evictors and secures the situation in Galway. Clanricarde is now certain of defeat.

Lord Salisbury in his speech in the House of Lords revealed the true purpose of the Tipperary prosecutions. It is to punish the people who have punished Mr. Smith-Barry for his extermination of the Pensonby tenantry. He, of course, described the tenants' combination as a combination to steal, and a combination to defraud, though the people peacefully gave back to Mr. Smith-Barry all that even English law calls his, and a good deal more to boot. Then he added that the Tipperary proceeding was even worse than the ordinary combination, because the Tipperary combination was formed to punish a man "for exercising what was undoubtedly his right—namely, buying an estate in another part of the country in the open market." This is the first open demonstration of sympathy with the eviction syndicate which the Tories have given. Mr. Balfour pro-

claimed his indifference and independence, and declared that, if a combination of tenants was formed to resist a combination of landlords, his duty began and ended with applying the law of the fighting ring! A noble sentiment for a pretended healer of social jealousies! Now, however, we have it that the Tories regard the operations of the Syndicate as an ordinary incident of land traffic, and that it deserves to have the usual trade liberties preserved to it. This shows the spirit that is moving the framers of the coming Purchase Bill, and is a proof, if proof were needed, that the friends of the peasantry will require to be active and wary.

The result of the Dublin municipal elections is most satisfactory. Now that they are over it is no harm to say that considerable anxiety existed as to the result. There had been losses in the Registration Courts, and in some cases dissension in the choice of candidates. The Unionists saw their chance, and as it coincided with the temporary triumph of the attack on Mr. Parnell, they already showed that they were ready to represent the anticipated success as a defection from the Nationalist strength in Dublin. They showed their hand too plainly in that matter, and it is an evidence of the popular resolution that on the cause must go, no matter what happens, that the revelation of the plot was enough to rally the Nationalist strength as it never rallied before. The majorities were all larger than the Nationalists anticipated, and the occasion for the Unionist whoop did not arise. The incident is a most encouraging proof of the absolute unity of the Nationalist forces of the city at the present crisis; and that is but typical of the unity that prevails elsewhere.

An American contemporary informs us that on board the Champagne with the Irish envoys to America in their trans-Atlantic voyage was Mr. Charles A. Dana, the famous American journalist. Our contemporary expects that the result will be the enlistment of another strong champion to mould the opinion of the civilised world in our favour. "His generous heart has been stirred by the recital of Connemara, of Tipperary, of Mitchelstown, which Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien poured into his ear. His soul has been fired by their graphic accounts of the fight they are making for liberty. Hitherto, the story of Ireland's wrongs may have struck him as something far-away—something to be treated rather in the abstract than in the concrete. He now, perhaps, for the first time has realised in all its awfulness the whole misery that English misrule has brought upon Ireland. The pictures of that misery as etched in the cold, scathing language of John Dillon, or painted in the glowing colours in the scorching words of William O'Brien, or sung for him in the genial, happy verse of T. D. Sullivan, can never leave the mind of Mr. Dana. Were he even less fair-minded than he has always proved to be, he could not resist such solid reasons as these men gave him for their convictions, and become a convert to the cause of Home Rule in Ireland."

The public bodies in the West are beginning to give some attention to the Irish language. At the Gort Board of Guardians on Saturday, it was unanimously resolved: "That in future the advertisements of the Union be published in the Irish language side by side with the same in the English language. We tire for Home Rule—for having Ireland a nation once again; therefore, to be consistent, we must not fail to aid in preserving our nation's language, which, notwithstanding the efforts of the British Government to destroy it, is still, as in the days of Duach and Guaire, spoken and understood in our district." Bravo, men of Gort! When a spirit like yours is rife in the governing boards of our educational system we shall hear the old music again.

Mr. R. J. Kelly has compiled a most valuable pamphlet on the Congested Districts. It states all the facts of the problem offered by them to the statesmanship of the country, and draws a conclusion, sober, sane, and patriotic. In it Mr. Kelly says of Mr. Balfour's scheme, it only touched the fringe of this great and urgent question. That it is a great and urgent question the statistics conclusively attest. The best way of dealing with the difficulty would be, in Mr. Kelly's opinion, by the purchase of the great tracts of easily and economically reclaimable land scattered through the island, and the settlement of peasant colonies thereupon. The waste lands more abound in the very districts known as Congested, embracing a large section of the Western Unions, principally those of Belmullet, Ballina, Westport, Swinford, Claremorris, Tuam, Glennamaddy, Clifden, Oughterard, Galway, and the North part of Donegal. This grant need not necessarily be a free gift, but of the more wholesome character of a loan advanced upon easy terms of repayment. "The plan has the merit of being one that will add to the resources of the country itself, and of the Empire of which it forms a part. It keeps men at home to become producers, and it does not, as emigration did, flood the American manufacturing market with a cheap labour that hurts, harms, and hampers English trade, and makes men rivals abroad who might become customers at home."

The new proclamations of the National League are a welcome tribute to Mr. Balfour's continued success in keeping the popular organisation in a state of efficiency. Monaghan and Waterford have already had opportunities of dancing on his proclamations, and Fermanagh is now given the privilege of trying the light fantastic on the same inviting carpet. The proclamation of Fermanagh and Monaghan is sufficient answer to Mr. Balfour's eulogy of Ulster and his lying assertion to the people of Liverpool that the existence of the Coercion Act makes no difference to the people of that province.

So Mr. Balfour has at long last accepted the responsibility for the "Don't-Hesitate-to-Shoot" telegram. The burst of candour was provoked by an irreverent interrupter from the gallery at Liverpool. We do not think the confession could have been extorted from Mr. Balfour in his calmer moments. He immediately recognised the gravity of the confession himself, and straightway endeavoured to minimise its importance. This he did in his usual fashion—by a lie. He said that the despatch of the telegram had the effect of awing "the mob," and that there was no collision and no bloodshed. There is a direct misstatement and a false insinuation in that assertion. Captain Plunkett's telegram was immediately followed by a police murder. The inspector to whom it was addressed immediately ordered his men to fire upon a crowd in the streets of Youghal, although the local magistrate declared there was no necessity for