

called four fresh policemen, of whose evidence no notice had been given to the accused, and these four fresh policemen told a new tale. The crowd, which, according to the evidence of the day before, was described as orderly, was now described as disorderly. It was now represented that the police had been interfered with and were in actual peril. There was stone-throwing, but it was outside the station, and no attempt was made to connect the accused with anything that took place outside the station, or anything worse than shouting or cheering. The result was that eleven or twelve of the accused men were sentenced to a fortnight's or a month's imprisonment with hard labor; and, one of them calling out that he would do the same again, the magistrate, with what I must call a truly contemptible vindictiveness, said, 'You shall have another week's imprisonment for saying that.' The upshot of the whole case was that these men—two of them, mind you, Town Commissioners, respected public men in the confidence of their fellow citizens—were punished, not for concerting a riotous meeting, not for throwing stones, not for attacking the police, not for doing anything to alarm reasonable and courageous persons, but simply for waving their hats and caps in honor of Mr. Blunt."

Now, I say that is, unfortunately, a typical case. [Cries of "No!"] Yes, it is a typical case. If gentlemen who doubt that will take the trouble, as I have done, to read the reports from day to day of what goes on in these courts, if they will take the trouble to hear evidence that Englishmen, not partisan Irishmen, have seen administered in these courts, they will agree that this is a typical case, that men are treated violently, that they are then summoned for an offence which is not properly proved—[A cry of "No!"]—what I say I hope to show in a moment—and for acts which are not in themselves an offence or a crime.

Somebody protested when I used the word "prove." I will ask him, and I will ask the House, to listen to a little extract which I am going to read to show the kind of evidence

which in these courts is thought good enough. It is the case of a certain Irish member, Mr. Sheehy, who was convicted, and this is a very short passage from the cross-examination of the shorthand-writer. Mr. Sheehy was brought up for words spoken; it was vitally important to know what were the words spoken, for which he was about to have inflicted upon him a very severe punishment. This is, in a very few words, a passage from the cross-examination of the government reporter:

"Did you ever study shorthand?"

"I did not. I might look over the book, but that is all. As far as I know, shorthand is not studied by any man in the barracks. There was no constable, to my knowledge, in Trench Park on the day of the meeting, who knew shorthand. The meeting lasted from three o'clock till a quarter to five, and Mr. Sheehy was speaking the greater part of the time. When Mr. Sheehy spoke a sentence or a sentence and a half, I took down all I could remember at the time. I took no note of what he would be saying while I was taking down the two sentences which I remembered at the time. I consider Mr. Sheehy a slow speaker."

"While you would be writing a sentence, how many sentences would he get ahead of you?"

"Well," said the constable or reporter, "he might get two or three."

"Then when you would complete your sentence, would you skim over what he had said in the meantime and then catch him up again?"

"Yes, I would try and remember what he would say in the meantime."

"When you say that you would try and remember, what do you mean?"



"I mean that when I heard a sentence or two I would take that down, and pay no attention to what he would say in the meantime."

How many gentlemen here must have been in English courts and heard the careful, austere, and impressive standards which the judges of those courts apply to evidence? I say, when you hear such evidence as that, do you not think you are listening to the proceedings of a court in a comic opera? Pray remark that in a charge of this kind a phrase or a qualification of a phrase may be of vital importance. It may make all the difference in the construction and the interpretation that the court would put upon a word spoken; and yet you see that the qualifying phrases and words might have been dropped out while the reporter was taking down the other sentences. It is a sheer caricature of evidence.

I must inflict one more story upon you—it is the last—because you must know it is no use using vague general words about Coercion. Realize what Coercion means. I ought to say that those words I have just read and that case was mentioned in the House of Commons. Those words were read out in the House of Commons. No answer was attempted to them by the government. I am not going to use any case which has not been challenged in the House of Commons.

Well, here is a case, of a certain Patrick Corcoran. Patrick Corcoran is the foreman printer of the Cork "Examiner." He is therefore purely a mechanic. He was tried, his name being on the imprint of the newspaper, for publishing proceedings of the suppressed branches of the National League. On the hearing of the first summons the joint editor and manager came forward and said he alone was responsible for

everything that appeared in the paper, and that Corcoran was a mere mechanic and had no power or control in any sense or degree over the matter published. Well, of course, as he had no control over the matter published, he could not have what the lawyers call that guilty mind which was necessary, according to the Act, for the commission of the offence; because the Act requires that this publication should be uttered with a view of promoting the objects of the incriminated association. Well, Corcoran, this mechanic, was sent to prison for a month. [Cries of "Shame!"]

Yes, and mark the point. Most of you know that if a sentence is for more than a month, then there is a right of appeal. Corcoran's counsel implored the Bench to add a week to the sentence so that there might be this right of appeal, or else to state a case for a superior court, which would have been the same thing. The magistrate refused even that. That is rather sharp; but that was not all. They took up another charge, in substance the same, for publishing reports of meetings number two, and on the footing of the second summons they gave Corcoran another month's imprisonment. I hope gentlemen see the point—that by this method of accumulated penalties they managed to give him a two months' sentence, and yet to deprive him of the right to appeal which he would have had from a single two months' sentence.

These are illustrations which I commend to the attention of gentlemen who oppose this resolution, because they are inevitable features in the system which is the alternative to the system advocated in the resolution. [Cries of "No, no!"]

Well, I will have one word to say about that in one moment. But I ask you, in the meantime: Can you wonder



that under such circumstances as those of which I have given you three actual illustrations—that Irishmen do not respect the law and do not revere the tribunals where that law is administered?

Imagine how the existence of such a state of things would affect you who are Englishmen. Would you endure to be under exceptional repressive legislation of this kind so administered? I do not believe you would. Englishmen never have acquiesced in legislation and administration of that kind; they have fought against it from age to age, and Irishmen will rightly fight against it from age to age.

I listened with especial interest, and, if I may say so, with admiration to the speech of the gentleman who preceded me, in whom I am glad to recognize the germs of hereditary gifts; and, if it is not impertinent in me to say so, I hope he will continue to cultivate those remarkable gifts; and—forgive me for saying so—I hope he may one day use them in a better cause. The honorable gentleman struck the keynote. I accept that note. He said, “Think of the sons and daughters of Ireland.”

Think of the sons and daughters of Ireland; it is for their sake as much as for our own, not more, but as much—it is for the sake of the sons and daughters of Ireland that I am and have been an advocate of giving Ireland responsibility and self-government. Can you wonder? Put yourselves in the place of the sons and daughters of Ireland. These transactions, of which I have given you a very inadequate specimen, fill their minds. They hear scarcely anything else in the speeches of their leaders and in the talk of those in whom they have confidence. They talk of these things when they meet at fairs, when they meet at chapel, when they meet at athletic sports. And they read scarcely anything else in the

newspapers. And if they cannot read, then their children read these proceedings out to them.

Now think of a generation growing up in this demoralizing and poisoned atmosphere of defiance and suspicion and resentment, and think whether you are doing your duty; think how you are preparing for the growth of a generation in Ireland in whom the spirit of citizenship shall be wholesome and shall be strong. It is of no avail to tell me that a lawyer in his study has this or that objection to this or that section. What I see in Ireland is a population in whom you are doing your best to breed want of reverence for the law, distrust of the tribunals, and resentment against the British rule which fastens that yoke upon their necks.

When I said that the government were pursuing a policy of pure repression, somebody objected. I should like him to be kind enough to tell me what other dish there is on the ministerial table for Ireland, except repression. Let us go to the law and the testimony. We used to be told—I see old and respected friends of mine around me who are Liberal Unionists, and their party used to say that they would not assent to Home Rule, but that they would assent to an extension of local government in Ireland. [A cheer.]

I am glad to hear that cheer, but it is a very forlorn cry. I will ask you for a single instant to listen to the history of the promise of the extension of local government in Ireland. In 1842, forty-six long years ago, a Commission reported in favor of amending the system of county government in Ireland. A bill was brought in to carry out that recommendation in 1849. It was rejected. It was brought in in 1853, and it was rejected; again in 1856 it was rejected; again another in 1857, which also was rejected.

Then there was a pause in the process of rejection until



1868, when a Parliament and the government of the day resorted to the soothing and comforting plan of appointing a Select Committee. That, just like the previous Commission, issued a copious and an admirable report, but nothing more was done. In 1875 a bill was brought in for county reform in Ireland, and in 1879 another bill was brought in which did not touch the evils that called for remedy.

In 1881, in the time of the Gladstone administration, and at a time when Ireland, remember, was in a thousand times worse condition than the most sinister narrator can say she is now, the Queen in her Speech was made to say that a bill for the extension of local government of Ireland would be brought in; nothing was done.

In 1886 the distinguished man whom you had here last week himself said—I heard him say it one afternoon—he made this promise in the name of the government of which he was a leading and an important member—that it was the firm intention of the government to bring in a measure with a view of placing all control of local government in Ireland in the hands of the Irish people.

Some of you cry, "Hear, hear," but that is all gone. Listen to what Lord Hartington, the master of the government, has since said. The noble lord has said that no scheme for the extension of local government in Ireland can be entertained until there has been a definite repudiation of nationality by the Irish people. I do not want to press that too far, but at all events you will agree with me that it postpones the extension of local government in Ireland to a tolerably remote day.

Do not let Liberal Unionists deceive themselves by the belief that there is going to be a moderate extension of local government for Ireland. Do not let them retain any such

illusion. Proposals for local government will follow these Royal Commissions, Committees, Bills, Motions, into limbo, and we shall hear no more of extension of local government. This is only one illustration among many others, which, taken together, amount to a demonstration of the unfitness and incompetence of our Imperial Parliament for dealing with the political needs, the admitted and avowed political needs, of Ireland.

One speaker said something about fisheries. There was a Select Committee appointed in 1884, and there was another Royal Commission reporting a few weeks ago, but I am not sanguine enough to think that more will be done in consequence of the recommendations of that Commission than has been done in consequence of the recommendation of others.

Again, there are the Irish railways. I was wrong, by the way, that a Royal Commission was on fisheries—it was on Irish industries generally, fisheries included. On the question of railways there was a Royal Commission in 1867, and a small Committee was appointed in 1868. There were copious and admirable reports. There is another copious and admirable report laid on the table of the House of Commons this week. Nothing has been done, and I do not believe anything will be done. That is another field in which Ireland abounds in requirements and necessities, and which the British Parliament has not the power, knowledge, or inclination to deal with or to touch.

One gentleman who spoke to-night with great ability—and if people think these things I do not know why they should not be said—reproduced to my regret the old talk about the Hottentots. I confess this is the most painful part of the present controversy—that there should be men (I am sure he is one of them) of generous minds, of public spirit and pa-



triotism, who talk, and sincerely talk, of union, and the incorporation of Ireland with Britain, and yet think that this kind of language, and what is far more, this kind of feeling, is a way likely to produce incorporation and union.

I have seen a good deal of Irishmen. I saw a great, a tremendous crowd of Irishmen the other day on their own soil. They comported themselves, many tens and scores of thousands of them, comported themselves with a good humor, a perfect order, a temper generally of which any capital in Europe—London, Paris, Berlin, or Vienna—might have been proud. I think you can do something better with such a people than alienate them by calling them and by thinking of them as Hottentots, or as in any way inferior to ourselves. That is not the way to have union and incorporation. That is not the way to make the Empire stronger.

And I apply the same to the language that is used about the Irish members. I am not prepared to defend all that the Irish members have said and done. No, and I am not prepared to defend all that English members have done. But I ask here, as I asked in Dublin, is there to be no amnesty? Is there never to be an act of oblivion? These men, after all, have forced upon the British legislature, and have extorted from the British legislature, laws for the benefit of their own down-trodden and oppressed people. Those laws were either right or wrong. If they were wrong, the British legislature ought not to have passed them. If they were right, you ought to be very much obliged to the Irish members for awakening your sense of equity and of right.

I return again—I am going to conclude in a moment—I return again to the point. You have the future in your hands, because what has been said is true; the future depends upon the opinions of the men between twenty and

thirty, which, I take it, is the average of the audience I have the honor of addressing. What is the condition of Ireland?

Here, too, I will repeat what I said in Dublin. In Ireland you have a beggared gentry; a bewildered peasantry; a random and harsh and aimless system of government; a population fevered by political power and not sobered by political responsibility. This is what you have to deal with; and I say here, with a full sense of important responsibility, that rather than go on in face of that distracted picture, with the present hard, incoherent, cruel system of government in Ireland, rather than do that I would assent to the proposal that has been made, if that were the only alternative, by a great representative of the Unionist party, by Lord Grey.

And what does Lord Grey suggest? Lord Grey suggests that the Lord-Lieutenant should be appointed for ten years, and during those ten years—it is a strong order—during those ten years he is to make what laws he thinks fit without responsibility either to ministers or to Parliament. It is a strong order, but I declare—and I believe that Mr. Parnell has said that he agrees—that I would rather see Ireland made a Crown colony to-morrow than go on in the present hypocritical and inefficient system of sham representation. You may then have the severity of paternal repression, but you will have the beneficence of paternal solicitude and supervision. What you now have is repression and neglect; and repression and neglect you will have until you call the Irish leaders into council and give to the majority of the Irish people that power in reality which now they have only in name.

One minute more and I will sit down.

The resolution raises very fairly the great issue that now divides and engages all serious minds in this country—the issue which has broken up a great political party, which has



tried and tested more than one splendid reputation, and in which the Liberal party have embarked all their hopes and fortunes as resolutely and as ungrudgingly as their forefathers did in the case of Catholic Emancipation. The opponents of this Resolution ought to have told us, what no opponent to-night did tell us—for I listened very carefully—they ought to have told us what it is they mean. Merely to vote a blank and naked negative to this resolution? It is not enough, it cannot be all, merely to say "No" to this resolution. You are not going through the familiar process of rejecting an academic motion or an abstract proposition.

In refusing this proposition you are adopting an amendment. I have taken the liberty to draft a Unionist amendment. I will gladly place it in the hands of any Unionist member who may think it expedient to move it. This is the alternative amendment to the resolution of the honorable mover.

"That, inasmuch as Coercion, after being tried in every form and under all varieties, has failed to bring to Ireland that order and content we all earnestly desire, Coercion shall be made the permanent law of the land; That as perfect equality between England and Ireland is the key to a sound policy, Coercion shall be the law in Ireland and shall not be the law in England; That as decentralization and local government have been long recognized and constantly promised as a necessary reform in Irish affairs, the time has at length arrived for definitely abandoning all reform in Irish local government; That since the backward condition, and the many admitted needs of Ireland urgently call for the earnest and unremitting attention of her rulers, the exclusive attention of this Parliament shall be devoted to the consideration of English, Scotch, and Welsh affairs; That, in view of the fact that representative institutions are the glory and strength of the United Kingdom, the Constitutional demands of the great majority of the Irish representatives shall be dis-

regarded, and these representatives shall have no voice in Irish affairs and no share in Irish government; and, finally, That as Mr Pitt declared the great object of the Union to be to make the Empire more secure by making Ireland more free and more happy, it is the duty of every true Unionist to make Ireland more miserable in order to prevent her from being free."

That, sir, is the amendment which you are, I fear, presently going to vote. [Cries of "No!"] Yes, you are. That is what you are going to vote, and I have failed in the speech which you have most kindly and indulgently listened to, if you do not see that that amendment, with its stream of paradoxes and incoherencies, represents the Unionist policy. That is a policy which judgment condemns and which conscience forbids.