

speech for the prosecution. But the counsel for the defence take care to let it out in the course of the trial, that the Government had it in contemplation to prosecute the *Belfast Vindicator* for its inflammatory remarks, previous to the trial, on this atrocious case—the *Vindicator*, which is almost the only support of Catholic interests and safety in the north, and which has to vindicate them amidst such a population as filled the court-house on that occasion. It is all very well in England, where there is generally a reasonable hope of an impartial verdict, to call upon the press to abstain from comments before the trial. But in Protestant Ireland, where with an Orange jury there is no prospect of anything but verdicts against evidence, if an Orange scoundrel is to be protected; where in such cases the calm course of law is the calm course of injustice; where the juries are in hostile hands, and the sheriffs are the most reckless partisans—in Protestant Ireland, to talk of gagging the Catholic press because it tries before trial to shame the rogues into some semblance of honesty, we do pronounce to be a most vile and flagrant enormity. It is the enormity of the present Orange Government!

The journal which records this transaction, records also two ribbon trials on crown prosecutions at the Longford Assizes on Friday week. In these cases it was proved that the crown informer having to show that the prisoner had unlawful pass-words in his possession, had been guilty of the "ingenious device" of thrusting the papers into his victim's pocket in order to make good the case for the prosecution. The cheat was clearly proved on the trial of the first prisoner, who was acquitted. But after the acquittal the law officers of the crown pressed forward the trial of a second prisoner, on the unsupported evidence of the man who had been proved guilty of the fraudulent evidence in the former case. The same piece of villainy was proved against him in the second case, and the second prisoner was acquitted as the first had been. Such is the law, such the justice to be looked for by the Catholic peasantry of Ireland from the Orange Government of Lord de Grey.

JUSTICE IN ARMAGH.

Our readers have seen, and no doubt pondered, on the specimens we have laid before them in the last two weeks of the mode in which the Orange-Tory Government conducts the externals of justice, and in which the sheriffs and jurors under their control, and in their interest, too faithfully execute their pernicious designs. They have seen the public murders of a man who was only a peaceable Catholic, set free amidst shouts and yells of blasphemy. They have seen law-officers of the crown disclosing secret sympathies for the faction of the murderers. They have seen Orange jurors acquit in the teeth of the clearest evidence, on no better defence than that of an *alibi*. They have seen Lord Eliot and his underlings avowedly patronizing the employment of spies and informers—a most horrible invention for generating perjury whereby to shed innocent blood. They have seen

sham plots encouraged and made much of by the Crown advisers, and innocent men pushed on to trial on the unsupported testimony of an established perjurer. But they have not yet seen, or they have only just seen, a man of doubtful guilt, condemned to death by an Orange jury, carefully selected for its partiality; and a sentence of death, without hope of reprieve, passed upon him by an Orange judge, with the shouts of murder that burst from an indignant audience ringing in his ears, and drowning the sepulchral accents of his voice. Such a case occurred at the Armagh Assizes on Friday week. The prisoner, Francis Hughes, was put on his trial for the murder of Mr. Powell at Newtown Hamilton, the 2nd Jan. 1841. The prisoner had been twice before put on his trial for the same murder. On this occasion it seems to have been predetermined that he should not escape. Accordingly, when the jury panel, containing a number of most respectable Catholics, was called over, the Government functionaries challenged every one of them. Not a solitary Catholic was allowed to sit in judgement on the life and death of the miserable prisoner, and, in a most shocking sense predestinated criminal. Well, the trial proceeded. The evidence was most doubtful and conflicting. Discrepancies were shown in the evidence of the crown witnesses, and in this case—more strongly than in the M'Ardle case, where there were no discrepancies—the difficulties of the proof were countenanced and supported by strong testimony to prove an *alibi*. Judge Crampton charged the jury, who at five o'clock retired to consider their verdict, and at a quarter past eight returned with a verdict of guilty, which Judge Crampton declared himself certain to be an honest verdict. The scene on passing sentence we give from the Irish papers:—

"*Armagh Monday*.—At five minutes past nine, Judge Crampton entered the court and took his seat on the bench.

"Clerk of the Crown: Gaoler, set forward Francis Hughes.

"Mr. Whiteside: There is a matter, my lord, which we wish to submit; it is with respect to the challenge of a juror, which we think not strictly according to law.

"Judge Crampton: Mr. Whiteside, I will not interfere, either the one way or the other.

"Mr. Whiteside: My lord, we have no means of putting our objection on record.

"Judge Crampton: The effect, if I should entertain your objection, would only be to raise false hopes which could not be realized.

"Clerk of the crown: Francis Hughes, you have been convicted of the murder of Thomas Powell by a jury of your country. Have you anything to say why judgment of death and execution should not be passed upon you according to law?

"Prisoner: Gentlemen, I hope you will all hear what I say. I can declare that I know neither art nor part of the conspiracy, or of the murder of Mr. Powell. I am as innocent of it as the child that is unborn.

"Judge Crampton then rose, and after

a most affecting address, sentenced the prisoner to be executed on Wednesday, the 20th of April.

"Prisoner (holding up both his hands): By the great God who is above me, I know neither art nor part in the murder of Mr. Powell, no more than the child that is unborn.

"The shouts of the populace, who completely filled the hall of the court-house, became at this moment absolutely frightful. Cries of 'murder' issued from every part of the house, in which, we believe, the prisoner joined, and despite of the utmost exertion of the police, the alarming scene continued for a considerable time. With considerable effort, after the prisoner was removed, quiet was restored.

"At the earnest and repeated solicitations of the convict, Mr. Powell (the eldest son of the late Mr. Thomas Powell) had a long interview with Hughes in the goal on Sunday. We have not heard distinctly what transpired on the occasion. Mr. Quinn (the gentleman in whose employment the deceased was at the time of the murder) also had an interview with the prisoner this morning (Monday) at Hughes's own request.

"After both the interviews here described, the prisoner made solemn declarations of his innocence."

Was the prisoner innocent or guilty? God in heaven knows; but that if the above statements are true, the prisoner is, or is to be, a murdered man we entertain no doubt whatever. He may, or may not, be the murderer; but he is sentenced to death by a packet jury, after a sham trial. Here, then, are complete the three lessons of Sir Robert Peel's Irish and Orange government. Catholics may be murdered, and through Orange juries, packed by Orange sheriffs, the known murderers shall go free. Catholics, by the agency of hired functionaries of the Castle, shall be entrapped into secret associations, or have it sworn against them that they are members of such associations when they are not, and with the clearest proof of fraud staring them in the face, the Government will unblushingly help on the victim to his ruin, and the prejured informer to the earning of his official stipend. Thirdly and lastly, Catholic prisoners, whether innocent or guilty, shall be tried by packed and partisan juries, created for securing convictions by every disgraceful artifice of power. And there are people who say that Ireland is safe under this Government; that there exists under Lord de Grey the ordinary protection for life and property; that the Irish Catholics are not placed under the ban of authority, and wear their lives on the tenure only of permission! It is horrible to read of these things; and it moves our indignation beyond the power of language to express it. The prisoners counsel in this last case protested warmly against the deliberate exclusion of every respectable Catholic juror, through the means of a Government challenge in direct violation of a pledge given by Sergeant Jackson to Mr. O'Connell in the House of Commons. But it availed nothing. The prisoner must die. Such is the Peel government; plausible, hollow, and tricky at home; treacherous and cruel, through its underlings at least, in Ireland. This kind of government cannot last. It must end: it must mend; or the worst consequences will follow.

AFGHANISTAN

The early history and origin of the Affghans appears to be veiled in obscurity; the general impression is, that they are descendants of the Jews, to which race they bear, in some respects, a striking resemblance. The several tribes which inhabit the country between the river Indus and Persia are included under the general denomination of Affghans; they are of a predatory, wild, and savage character and bear a resemblance to the ancient clans of Scotland in habits and manners, and have very limited ideas of any form of government. Many of the tribes have lasting animosities; and occasionally deadly feuds occur; however, upon cases of emergency, every Affghan is called upon, and expected to join the general standard, by which means large bodies of the several tribes are assembled, who being undisciplined, might be conquered by but a few welltrained men; but the natural defences of the country are their safety and barriers against a systematic form of invasion. The national character has been well defined by an old warrior of their own nation, who observed, that "they were content with discord—content with alarms—content with blood—but would never be content with a master." Awfully, indeed, and to England's sorrow, has the characteristic portrait of these savage tribes been but too faithfully delineated.

The distance between Cabool and Jellalabad is 105 miles. Down the valley of Cabool, which runs nearly due east, there is a considerable descent for 10 miles then turning south, at the distance of 10 miles, runs a long and narrow defile between lofty, barren and craggy hills through which rushes an imbetuous mountain stream which must be repeatedly crossed. The greatest elevation in this pass is considerably higher than Cabool, being 7,500 feet above the level of the sea. On a still higher ground, and at a distance of about 10 miles beyond this defile, is situate the small town of Tezeen; through the whole of this distance, and for 90 miles beyond Tezeen, the country wears a most savage, wild and uncultivated aspect; it is intersected with rough and naked hills, encompassed by inaccessible mountains, overlooking which, on the north, are seen the summits of the Himalaya mountains, on the south, the Safaed Koh, the tops of both ranges are crowned with perpetual snow.—The route through this mountainous district abounds with much greater difficulties than the Bolan Pass. On approaching Gundamak, at the commencement of the valley of Jellalabad, the country improves in cultivation, and contains numerous small villages, which are surrounded with orchards and gardens; proceeding onwards, the country becomes wild and hilly, and is intersected with deep ravines. On approaching Jellalabad, cultivation and fertility again appears; the town is situate in the middle of a plain, extending from east to west about 20 miles, and from north to south about 12 miles; it contains but few houses, and stands about 2000 feet above the level of the sea: the town is exceedingly dirty, as also are the inhabitants, who are generally very poor. The sugar cane, cotton, rice and Indian corn, are cultivated on the borders and near the Cabool River, which runs through the plain. The natives have a very curious method of ferrying over the stream, it is