

THE PHOENIX PARK MURDERS

had seemed of so little importance that he (Mr. Chamberlain) had really not noticed it was omitted when Mr. Parnell read the letter.

Captain O'Shea here intervened with a very telling little speech, in which he made it quite clear that, although he was not well up in the etiquette of Cabinet Ministers, he had had a fairly long acquaintance with the usages of gentlemen, and from the latter point of view the conduct of Mr. Forster on the previous night was most extraordinary. He must characterise Mr. Forster's conduct as "disloyal to his old friends and malignant to his old enemies." . . .

The second reading of the Arrears Bill was moved by Mr. Gladstone on May 22nd. In the course of his speech he said: "Eviction in the exercise of a legal right may be to the prejudice of your neighbours, may involve the highest reprehension, may even imply deep moral guilt. There may be outrages which—all things considered, the persons and the facts—may be less guilty in the sight of God than evictions."

The Bill was bitterly opposed by the Tory Party.

I had written to Mr. Gladstone expressing a wish that he should see Mr. Parnell. He wrote in answer from Downing Street on May 25th, 1882, declining to do so *in private*, though in public he was more than ready to co-operate with Parnell.

I suggested in reply that we should meet and talk the matter over, and it was arranged that he should come to see me at Thomas's Hotel on June 2nd. He arrived punctually at three o'clock. We had a long talk about Parnell and about politics—chiefly, of course, as referring to Ireland. He was extremely