

an occasional mistake on the part of the Crown; an occasional admission to the jury-box of a person they deem unsuitable; an occasional disagreement of the jury. How are these evils, in the view of England, to be remedied? This is her way. During the greater part of the last hundred years Ireland has been governed, not even under the form of freedom, but by means of Coercion Acts, Acts suspending the Habeas Corpus, and such-like devices. There are, I believe, eighty-seven such monuments to freedom recorded in the statute books, an average of one a year. But latterly, in the year 1887, a permanent law, the "Crimes Act," was passed, which enables the Executive, by proclamation, to suspend whenever and wherever it pleases the operation of the cardinal provisions of the ordinary law: which provides (even when a jury trial is allowed) that it shall, at the instance of the Crown, be at a place selected by the Crown, and by a special jury, meaning, in Ireland, a jury of the minority party; which creates also some new crimes, and provides for the trial and punishment of these and other crimes under a very summary procedure without any jury at all, and by specially chosen magistrates alone. There is a further provision which, of itself, at once and without proclamation, has permanently deprived all Ireland of the ordinary securities, and applied these obnoxious provisions in charges of unlawful assembly or riot; charges, I need not tell this audience, which may touch closest the most fundamental popular rights of free and public meeting, speech and resolve. It is by a review of the actual working of this system that one can learn most clearly the hollowness of the pretence that Ireland is free any more in administration than in legislation, and realise the sad truth that the main securities for justice are abolished.

WHAT COERCION MEANS.

What, then, is the system under which, in matters pertaining to public justice, Ireland is, at the will of the Executive, being ruled to-day? For two years past frequent use has been made of the permanent section—that is, the standing Coercion clause; and scores of summary prosecutions have taken place under its arbitrary provisions. Under the powers of the same Act great districts, comprising nearly half of Ireland, have been recently proclaimed. Thus the constitutional protections of the subject in vital matters have ceased; and new crimes have been created. Thus it is no longer necessary that there should be a clearly framed charge against the accused. The proceeding being summary, it is decided that a charge lacking the distinctness necessary for a good indictment is yet good enough to convict the accused under the Crimes Act. Thus no longer is the question of guilt or innocence to be decided on the evidence by a jury of fellow citizens. Packing is not a sufficient weapon for the Crown.

THE REMOVABLES.

The people, it is said, will not convict. And what is to follow on the refusal to convict? A remedy of the grievance? Reluctance to prosecute