

being adopted on the Thames, that the first and second army corps are to be placed on a war footing, magazine rifles issued to all the regular troops, etc., it is no wonder that the people begin to ask what it all means. Nor is the news from abroad reassuring. The Prussian military leaders are said to be counting confidently on a summer campaign, and the din of war-like preparations still resounds in Austria and in Russia. It seems incredible, however, that the Government, or any one but a military officer, can suppose England to be in any such danger of invasion, as would seem to be foreshadowed by great activity in strengthening coast and river armaments. Either the Island must be suffering from one of its unaccountable but periodical panics, or the real danger must be threatening some quarter other than that indicated. Gen. Boulanger is yet far from having reached the head, either of the French Government or the French War Office, and, even if he were in either place, the menace to English homes could not be very terrible. It is not easy to conceive of any other Power as likely to carry the war into the Thames.

IRELAND AND THE VATICAN.

We have already drawn attention to the papal condemnation of the Plan of Campaign. It has been shown, we hope, that, for all those who recognize the Pope as having authority in matters of morals, this decree is binding. The question is, in no true or accepted sense of the words, a political one. If any question can be decidedly referred to the moral category, this must be. We pass now to the second part of the papal decree—that which concerns the Boycott. "It is," says His Holiness, "contrary to justice and charity to persecute by a social interdict those who are satisfied to pay the rents they agreed to pay, or those who, in the exercise of their rights, take vacant farms. It will therefore be your Lordship's duty, prudently but effectually, to advise and exhort the clergy and laity not to transgress the bounds of Christian charity and justice, while they are striving for a remedy for their distressed condition." This is excellent, and it would be difficult to find fault with a single expression employed; and certainly there was great need that such a warning should be issued.

We are convinced that very few persons indeed have any notion of the real nature of the Boycott, of the principles upon which it is based, or of the means employed for giving effect to those principles. An English defender of the Irish Party had the effrontery to declare that the Boycott was nothing more than "exclusive dealing." Exclusive dealing means buying at the shops of persons who hold the same opinions, religious or political, as ourselves, and the like. This practice may be good or bad. Sometimes it may be necessary, sometimes it may be foolish or even mischievous; but whatever our opinions may be on this subject, it is a totally different matter from the Boycott. The boycotted person may not be served or helped in any way—must, in fact, be starved out; and any one who ventures to supply his wants is in danger of outrage, or even assassination.

We will take a familiar case, which has appeared recently in the newspapers, and furnish some particulars about it not generally known, and try to show our readers the meaning and moral of the story. It is the case of the Fitzmaurices, especially of Norah Fitzmaurice, who, with her mother and sister, has been boycotted by the National League. The facts concerning these poor people have been made public, and an appeal made to the "justice and benevolence of the Loyalists of Great Britain and Ireland" on their behalf. "The lives of the widow and daughters are in so much danger that they are continually guarded by police. They find it impossible to get a labourer to work for them, and have not funds to employ men from a distance."

There is another fact which, to a pious Roman Catholic, is scarcely less painful than the attempt to put an end to life. Norah Fitzmaurice, after an interval of six weeks, at last mustered up courage to go and hear mass. No sooner did she appear within the door of the church than the leader of the local branch of the National League gave a signal to the congregation, when the great majority of those present left the building, and, in spite of the remonstrances of the priest, refused to return. We cannot suppose that all of these people cherished such a hatred towards their neighbour; but they did not dare to neglect the word of command, lest they too should be included in the list of local pariahs.

Now, what had Norah Fitzmaurice done? She had seen her father murdered, and she had borne witness against the murderers. She had done what every woman who was not a monster would have thought it her simple duty to do. Her father had taken a farm from which another man had been evicted, and the sentence of death was pronounced upon him by the League (we shall justify this statement presently), and he was murdered in the presence of his daughter by three men who have since been executed.

The whole district, and especially the League, was responsible for the murder of that man. While the poor girl was supporting the dying form of her aged father, four cars went by. The persons seated on the cars saw her case, but passed on without a word. One man who passed she knew, and appealed to him for help. "My father is shot," she cried out. Dan Mahoney was the man, his name ought to be preserved. He only said: "He is not dead yet," and walked on without coming near her. These people are not all beasts or fiends. No; but, like the murdered man and the boycotted women, they are the victims of a criminal and murderous conspiracy.

We must go a little further. There is positive evidence that the actual murderers had, and generally have, very little interest in the perpetration of these crimes. Daniel Moriarty, one of the murderers of Fitzmaurice, on the night preceding the termination of the trial, had an interview with the public prosecutor and two other persons, in the course of which he confessed his complicity in the murder of Fitzmaurice. Three other men and himself had been engaged for one pound apiece to "shadow and remove" the unfortunate man. There can be no reasonable doubt of the truth of this testimony, and it is amply corroborated by all the circumstances. One pound and a presumed immunity from punishment were sufficient inducements to these miserable men to dye their hands in the blood of a man (an Irishman and a Roman Catholic) who had been condemned by the League.

It is hardly necessary; but we will give one other specimen of the methods of the League. At the termination of the trial of James Kirby, at Wicklow, for the murder of Patrick Quirke, on November 8, 1887, in County Kerry, after the jury had returned a verdict of "Guilty," the prisoner, on being asked if he had anything to say, replied: "I had no more notion of doing it than you had. I own that to God and the world that I had no more notion of doing it than you had. It was not my crime. Nothing did that only plenty of money." This is from the *Irish Times* of April 9, in this year; and if our readers wish to multiply scraps of information of the same kind, they have only to read a few consecutive numbers of the very useful "Notes from Ireland," from which the greater part of the information here given is derived.

The meaning of all this is perfectly plain. These murders are not the work of momentary excitement or of private revenge. They are the result of deliberate organization. They are perpetrated by the paid agents of Murder Societies, and these societies are sown throughout the length and breadth of the land, and comprehend large numbers of the Irish population. It is difficult to understand how they can subsist under the Confessional. Perhaps, in this case, murder, or plotting to murder, is not confessed or regarded as a crime. Perhaps absolution is given on easy terms. There is only one question which remains for consideration in connection with this subject. It may be thought—indeed, apart from the evidence of stubborn facts, one would gladly believe—that these crimes are the consequences of mere spasmodic outbursts of savagery, that they are to be credited to the excitement caused in particular localities by special circumstances. At any rate, that they are local and not general. In short, it may be pleaded that the party of Home Rule, and even those who advocate boycotting, are not responsible for such crimes directly and indirectly.

Gladly would we believe this, but it is impossible. Not only the advocates of these measures, but a large proportion of the Home Rule Party must be held *directly responsible for these crimes*. We proceed to give irrefutable evidence on this point. On the 24th day of March in this year, a meeting of the local Junior Liberal Association (mark this!) was held at Huddersfield. There were present, with others, Mr. H. H. Asquith, M.P., Mr. T. D. Sullivan, M.P., and Mr. W. Summers, M.P., in the chair. At this meeting the song "God Save Ireland" was sung by the whole assembly standing. This song was written on the execution at Manchester of three Irishmen named William Philip Allen, Michael Larkin, and Michael O'Brien, on November 23, 1867; and it was first published in the *Nation* a fortnight after. Let it be remembered, these men were murderers; and this song, intended to glorify them and their crime, has become a popular anthem with a certain class of Irishmen. We give one verse:—

High upon the gallows tree
Swung the noble-hearted three,
By the vengeful tyrant stricken in their bloom;
But they met him face to face
With the courage of their race,
And they went with souls undaunted to their doom.
"God save Ireland!" said the heroes:
"God save Ireland!" said they all:
"Whether on the scaffold high,
Or the battle field we die,
Oh, what matter, when for Erin dear we fall."

This song alone, of all that were used at that meeting, was sung by the whole assembly standing. Mr. Summers, the chairman, has said that he