

From the moment that this was known, but one thought filled the anxious minds of every inhabitant of that once happy village—what vengeance in blood or fire would the Prussians require for this ill-advised and cruel deed? They were not long left in suspense.

A beautiful sunrise it was which brought the light of day to Vaux Vilaine on that fair autumn morning. The heavy dews which had fallen the night before glittered like scattered gems in the early sunshine, and the air was sweet with the breath of flowers, yielding up their perfume to the soft, warm breeze. The bleating sheep and cattle, lowing in the fields, seemed to call the people to their usual peaceful occupations, and the little church-bell, with its silvery tone, gave notice that the cure meant to celebrate an early mass on behalf of their dear patrie, so sadly in need of aid from heaven. All things were as they had been many and many a morning before, when the people of Vaux Vilaine rose to carry on the gentle, peaceful life, which made so sweet an existence for them, and nature still was doing her part in beauty and beneficence. The skies failed not to shed on all their brightest smile, but there were human passions at war upon earth, and, truly, the records of this tremendous struggle might well lead one to believe, that if all the demons of hell had been let loose, they could hardly have made more terrible havoc in God's fair world.

While yet the peaceful church-bell rung, and the sunbeams streaming through the lattice windows of the cottages woke the children in their cradles, there was heard coming, ever nearer and nearer, the heavy tramp of a large body of mounted Uhlans, galloping down upon the village. In a moment more they were swarming, a fierce and merciless crowd, in the main street, and in every lane and valley in the plain. A certain number were told off, who dismounted, and entering into all the houses, from end to end of the village, they dragged out every man they could find, and drove them in a mass into the church, where a very different scene was to be enacted from the quiet holy service the good cure had intended to hold.

The women, who would have followed their husbands and brothers, were driven back with blows and curses by the Uhlans, and the church doors were shut upon the whole male inhabitants of the village. What would be done to them now? The poor women shrieked and wept as they asked themselves that question.

Leonie and Vevette, united by the anguish of their common sense and terror, crept, hand in hand, nearer to the church than any of the others dared to go, and hid themselves behind the very tree beneath whose branches the three young men had held their conversation on that bright, peaceful evening, before even the shadow of war had cast its gloom on the earth, and when they were looking forward so gaily to the fulfilment of their various plans of happiness.

Meanwhile a strange scene was taking place in the church. The cure, already robbed for mass, was thrust rudely aside by the Uhlans, and knelt down in a corner, praying fervently, while the commanding officer of the troop of avengers went and stood on the steps of the altar. There, in a loud, ringing voice, which was heard over the whole church, he announced the tribute of blood which the clemency as he expressed it, of his superiors would allow exact for the murder of the colonel. They would not burn down the village, as would have been but just, nor would they put the inhabitants to the sword, richly as they deserved it, but they would be satisfied with the lives of three men out of those who now assembled in the church, who must be executed instantly, before the troops resumed their conquering march through France—not an hour's delay could be accorded. The officer added that the choice of the victims might be made by lot, among themselves, but it must be done then and there, without loss of time. As he concluded, he held up his watch before them.

"In ten minutes," he said, "your choice must be made; if you delay longer than that, I choose for myself, and I shall take the first three on whom I happen to lay my hands, and have them shot at once."

It was but too plain there was no appeal, and that it would be only wasting the precious moments to attempt it. Lepelletier, with some of the older men, began in silence and with trembling hands to prepare the lots with the three fatal numbers, which would be drawn by the men on whom the doom of death should fall.

But, suddenly, there was a movement in the crowd, and a young man came forward with a light, active step, and, laying his hand on Lepelletier's arm, to prevent him continuing his dreadful task, he made a sign that he wished to speak. There was silence over the whole church in an instant, and all eyes were turned on Evariste Rossel. Familiar as his features were to most of them, they looked on him now as though they had never seen him before, so completely was his thoughtful face transfigured by the pure heroic resolution that shone in his soft eyes and thrilled in his clear young voice, as he spoke, with the utmost simplicity, words death-laden to himself.

"Mes amis," he said, and every individual in the sad assembly heard him distinctly, "if we cast lots for the victims of the enemy, it may be that the doom will fall on fathers of families who would leave widows and orphans to mourn them, not only in sorrow but in poverty and destitution. It is not well, therefore, that such as they are should be taken from the homes they support and protect, while there are others who have not, as yet at least, formed ties as close and binding. Of these I am one—my mother has other sons—my fiancée will find many a worthier man to seek her love, and I offer myself freely to die, that the husbands and fathers may be spared. I am sure that there are others, situated as I am, who will not less willingly give their lives to make up the number."

Evariste carefully avoided looking at Jules and Martel, as he spoke, for he would not seem to summon them, but they needed no other call

save his bright example. Instantly they started forward, and ranged themselves at his side. "We, too, give ourselves freely to the death," they exclaimed: "the number is complete."

Lepelletier had been on the point of remonstrating with Evariste, because he could not bear the thought of that young life quenched in blood; but when he saw that Martel, his own son, was among the offered victims, the word died on his lips, and he turned his face to the wall, groaning in unspeakable anguish. He felt, Brutus-like, he could not ask that a father of a family should die to spare his own unwedded son. No time was given him, however, to struggle with his heart. The Prussian officer held up his watch, exclaiming that the ten minutes were expired—he must have three men instantly for execution.

"We are here—we are ready!" said the three friends, coming forward with firm step and dauntless look. "One moment only," exclaimed Evariste, and taking his two companions by the hand, he drew them down on their knees before the cure, saying, "Father, absolve us; bless us in this supreme moment."

The good old man, appalled and bewildered, turned toward them his eyes streaming with tears. He seemed too much overwhelmed to know almost what he was doing; but, upheld by the habit of priestly functions, he murmured the form of absolution, made the sign of the cross, and blessed them in the threefold name of Him before whom they were about to appear.

They thanked him adding, "Adieu, mon pere," and rose from their knees. Instantly the Uhlans surrounded them, bound their hands, and hurried them to the door. One moment those gathered in the church saw their shadows darken the threshold as they passed out into the dazzling sunshine, and the next instant they were gone, to be seen of men no more forever! Then, with a simultaneous impulse, the whole assembly fell upon their knees, and as the cure, turning to the altar, intoned the *De Profundis*, the wailing voices joined in the funeral chant with one deep, heart-wrung cry, that rose in mournful appeal to the listening Heaven.

Meanwhile, across the sunlit church-yard the doomed men were hurried by their executioners; but their terrible march had a momentary interruption. Suddenly, from beneath the spreading branches of the tree which the victims knew so well, the graceful figure of a young girl bounded forth as if her feet were winged, and Leonie, flinging herself on the breast of her fiancée, exclaimed, in a tone of horror, "Evariste, que va-t-on faire de toi?"

"Adieu mon ange!" was his only answer; but the instinct of her woman's heart told her all the dreadful truth. She flung up her hands with a bitter cry, and as his bound arms could not hold her, she sunk at his feet as if she had herself already sustained the death-blow he was about to meet. Vevette, who had followed her, was clinging to Martel, uttering shriek on shriek.

"Remove these women," exclaimed the commanding officer, with angry impatience, and the soldiers instantly tore Vevette from Martel's arms, while others lifted up the senseless form of Leonie, and both were roughly flung aside upon the churchyard grass, and the captives hurried on without another moment's delay. Then indeed did the bitterness of death pass into the hearts of Martel and Evariste, while Jules, turning to them with a pathetic smile, said softly—

"I may well be thankful that I have no fiancée!"

Yes, truly, that hour had come to them, as come it will to all of us, when those are happiest who have fewest earthly blessings, and whose best treasures are garnered in that realm where all that has been brave and sweet and good, like the self-devotion of these three young men, will have a place throughout the eternal ages, among the imperishable things of God.

There was an open field just below the church-yard wall, which had been the favorite playground of Evariste and his companions through all their happy boyhood. There were they taken by the Uhlans, and placed with their eyes bandaged, facing the sun they were never to see again!

A few moments more, and through the wall of the *De Profundis*, rising and falling amid the sobs of men grown weak as women in their anguish of pity, there went the sharp ringing report of the volley which told that the sacrifice was consummated, and that if the brief earthly life of the noble young men was over, on the roll of the glorious army of martyrs their names would live forever more.

The story we have told is no fiction. It is but a few weeks since the village of Vaux Vilaine witnessed the execution of the three friends, who, lest the lot should fall on the fathers of families, volunteered to satisfy the blood-claim of the Prussians for the death of the colonel. We have given this little record of their fate, not to harrow the feelings of our readers by the mere recital of a tragedy, but to afford them another instance of that glorious springing of good out of evil, which has been the deathless consolation of the human race since the first man woke to the mystery of suffering.

Amid the horror and anguish, and aching helpless compassion with which this dreadful war has filled the world, such deeds rise up full of sweetness and refreshment, like the fragrance of flowers which only give forth their richest perfume when they have been crushed and beaten down under the foot of the destroyer.

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER LATELY ADDRESSED TO THE HOLY FATHER BY THE ARCHBISHOP AND BISHOPS OF THE PROVINCE OF WESTMINSTER.

MOST HOLY FATHER. We, the Bishops of the Catholic Church in England, the loving sons of Your Holiness, assembled, as our custom is, in our Easter meeting, place ourselves with all humility and gladness at Your feet; that we may share the reproach of Christ with You,

who at this time are contending and suffering with Apostolic courage and constancy for the Church of God.

The fiery darts that are daily launched against You by the wicked one, strike us also. Most willingly do we receive into our hearts the calumnies, derisions, reproaches, poured from every side upon the head of the Vicar of Christ; and that we may not fail to share in any portion of Your conflict, we commit, with all abhorrence of our hearts, to the execration of Christendom, and to the just and inevitable judgment of God, the sacrilegious occupation of the Eternal City, the violation of all sanctions and rights, natural and Divine, the lawless trampling down of justice, and the unhalloved contempt and breach of obligations and solemn treaties.

These assaults, however, of the gates of hell affect us, Most Holy Father, with neither fear nor dread; for never has Your supreme authority shone out with greater lustre; never have the faithful throughout the world turned their eyes and hearts with more dutiful obedience to You, the Centre of Unity, the Teacher of the Faith, the Doctor and Ruler of the Universal Church. From the calamitous disorders of the last 20 years, not only are the spiritual prerogatives of Peter most luminously manifested, but also that wondrous disposition of Divine Providence, whereby the Successor of Peter, independent of any Civil Power, Himself holds a Civil Principed; is justified of itself before the eyes alike of believers and of unbelievers.

Not once, but oftentimes, the Episcopate, dispersed throughout the world, or assembled, as especially in the years 1862 and 1867, at the Tomb of the Apostles, has declared that the Civil Principed of the Holy See was given to the Roman Pontiff by a special design of Divine Providence; and that it is, under the present order of things, of necessity; not indeed to the exercise of the Apostolic office in itself, as our adversaries erroneously dream, but in order that the Roman Pontiff, independent of any prince or civil power whatsoever, should, with the most perfect freedom, exercise the supreme authority in feeding and ruling the universal flock, for the good of the whole world. Never has that visible providence of God been more clearly manifested than in these days of insolence and reproach, when apostolic letters cannot be promulgated without a charge of treason against the crown; nor access to the feet of your Holiness lie open to the faithful, except through armed ranks of the enemy. Hereby, Most Holy Father, are your bonds made known and proclaimed throughout the world: For the faithful in Christ, on every land and shore, denounce with indignation the sacrilege perpetrated against You, the Vicar of Our Lord, by enemies and traitors sprung from that race which has inherited a special prerogative among the nations of Christendom—not only as an injustice, but as a rejection of the Kingdom of Christ.

Divine wisdom, Most Holy Father, has manifestly so disposed it, that on the eve of wars and political convulsions, and of the civil and fraternal conflicts by which Christian nations are so miserably torn, all those prerogatives, Divinely bestowed upon the See of Peter, should have been declared by the infallible authority of the Vatican Council; prerogatives whereby the Roman Pontiff, unarméd in peace of a world in arms, may securely judge and decree in the cause of faith, of truth, and of the sound principles even of civil government.

With unshaken trust in the Wisdom and Almighty Power of Jesus Christ, we, the Pastors of England, and all the faithful of our flock, offer our daily supplications to the God of Peace for You, Most Holy Father, Successor of our Apostle Saint Gregory, restorer and father of the Church of the English; that, mindful of His mercies, He may dry the tears of the Church, and speedily lay His creative and ruling Hand on the perturbations of this world; that You in Your day, Most Holy Father, may behold the Church's victory and triumph; and that Your glorious Pontificate may by a singular glory be prolonged in the See of Peter beyond the number of Peter's years.

Most humbly imploring for ourselves and our people the Apostolic blessing, we are, Most Holy Father,

Your Holiness's most loving sons and servants, HENRY EDWARD, Archbishop of Westminster, THOMAS JOSEPH, O.S.B., Bishop of Menevia and Newport,

WILLIAM BERNARD, O.S.B., Bishop of Birmingham, WILLIAM, Bishop of Salford, JAMES, Bishop of Shrewsbury, RICHARD, Bishop of Nottingham, ALEXANDER, Bishop of Liverpool, WILLIAM, Bishop of Plymouth, WILLIAM, Bishop of Clifton, FRANCIS, Bishop of Northampton, ROBERT, Bishop of Beverley, JAMES, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, JAMES, Bishop of Southwark, London, Feast of S. Anselm, April 21, 1871. —London Tablet.

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

THE POPE'S GRATITUDE TO HIS PROUD IRISH SUBJECTS.—The subjoined communication from the Sovereign Pontiff has been received by the Lord Bishop of Galway the Most Rev. Dr. MacEvilly:—

Thus IX. to our Venerable Brother, John, Bishop of Galway, Apostolic Administrator of Kilmorrah and Kilmacduagh.—Venerable Brother—Health and Apostolic Benediction.—The course of public events in Ireland so fully accords with the expressions of your own and your people's love and devotedness as to make us receive with heartfelt gratitude your letter and the accompanying donation contributed by the piety of the faithful. For Ireland has left nothing undone, either by writing, speaking, or petitioning, to manifest her indignation at the injuries committed against the rights of this Holy See and of the whole Catholic Church, and to procure a speedy restoration to them. Wherefore we see reflected throughout your entire letter the mind and feeling of that most pious people; and this is the more agreeable to us in proportion to the clearness with which you announce that you adhere and cling to us in the closest possible union. For this union has, under God's blessing, always been the source of triumph to the Church, and will one day raise your country, of which it has been the chief glory, to a state of prosperity and happiness. This we desire for yourself and your people with our whole heart, whilst, as a presage of Divine favour and as a pledge of our gratitude and thorough good-will, we most lovingly bestow on you, venerable Brother, and on your entire diocese our Apostolic Benediction. Given at St. Peter's Rome, this 17th day of April, 1871, in the 25th year of our Pontificate.

PIUS IX., Pope. KILMORE NEW DIOCESEAN COLLEGE, CAVAN.—The interesting ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of Kilmore new Diocesan College, Cavan, on Tuesday last, by His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop was performed. The sermon was preached by the Most Rev. Dr. Conroy.

NEW CHURCH AT CLOGHMOY.—The foundation stone of a new church at Cloghmoy was laid on Sunday, by the Right Rev. Dr. Delany. A large number of the clergy of the diocese and a great concourse from the city were present. The Bishop addressed the congregation at the close of the ceremony, dwelling upon the rapid growth of beautiful ecclesiastical buildings throughout Ireland, as a remarkable manifestation of the vigour of the church, and the zealous piety of the people.

THE PEACE PRESERVATION ACT.—A return showing the working of the Peace Preservation Act during

the past year has been printed. Up to March last 99 publichouses had been closed in the Proclaimed district under the powers of the statute. The total arrests under the act were 341, including 193 persons accused of being out at night under suspicious circumstances. Of arrested persons 94 were sent to prison, 26 committed for trial, and 201 discharged as innocent. The grand jury presentments made under the act in cases of murder, &c., through which claims for damages on behalf of relatives are levied from the counties where the outrages were committed, have only been introduced during the year in a dozen cases. The greatest number of claims were in Tipperary, the next highest being Westmeath.

THE IRISH NATIONALISTS AND THE WESTMEATH DEBATE.—The debate on the Westmeath bill affords a topic for some sharp comments in the Irish journals. The Freeman expresses bitter disappointment that not even a dozen Irish members were found to oppose the Government. The Irishman finds consolation in the reflection that it will assist the cause of Fenianism by refuting the arguments—which the advocate of Irish independence sometimes had to encounter—that England had repented of her misgovernment for seven centuries, and was disposed to treat Ireland in a just and generous spirit.

MRS. EVERTS.—Referring to the impending eviction of a number of tenants at Mullagh, Co. Meath, the Rev. Mr. Kempston, Protestant rector of the parish, writes in the following terms, creditable alike to the people of whom he speaks and to himself. If the resident gentry all entertained the same feelings as this good clergyman for their poor neighbours, how soon we should hear the last of Coercion Bills:—"There is not in Ireland a more peaceable or orderly peasantry than those in this neighbourhood, amongst whom it has been my happy lot to reside for the last 10 years. A more industrious class than the tenant-farmers here, who are under notice of ejection, I venture to assert could not be found in any country; and yet these tenants with their families are about to be turned from their homes before my very eyes to make way for cattle to be fattened for the English market. My own glebe-house and land are situated in the very centre of their small farms, and from proximity and the mutual kind and neighbourly feeling which has subsisted between us, I am in full possession of the facts. It is not for non-payment of rent they are about to be turned out—not for exhausting the land, nor for allowing it to run to waste—not for misconduct, or being in any sense bad tenants—that they are thus about to be sent adrift. To my own knowledge they have always paid their rents to the day; they are continually improving their land by cultivating and richly manuring; and their lives are orderly and industrious. The real cause of their ejection is, I fear, that thirst for land which is gradually depopulating our country. The tenants have offered an increase of rent, or whatever value two arbitrators set upon their farms, but to no avail."

STATE OF TIPPERARY.—The state of Tipperary, as evidenced by the Baronial sessions, just terminated, has been remarkably tranquil and free from agrarian crime, during the past six months. The Fiscal Court estimates the entire extent of malicious injuries perpetrated throughout the whole county at some £30 sterling. This presents a very favourable contrast to the last returns which were exceptionally heavy, nearly £1000, having then been allowed as compensation for agrarian offences.

JOHN MARTIN'S SECOND SPEECH.—We (Catholic Times) were unable in our later editions of last week to give fully the splendid speech delivered by the member for Meath. We now subjoin it, so that all may have the oration complete:—

On the order for the day on the adjourned debate on the amendment on second reading, Mr. J. Martin resumed his speech. The hon. gentleman said—Mr. Speaker, and gentlemen, I was interrupted in my remarks on the last day we were discussing this bill by the rules of the house. I wish now to say a few words in addition to what I have already addressed to you. I shall try, sir, not to be long or to weary the house. But as the representative of the county of Meath, I feel myself compelled to make some remarks in respect to certain imputations cast upon the sheriff and sub-sheriff of Meath by Mr. Seed, one of the witnesses relied upon, I believe, principally by the gentlemen who have introduced this measure—called a bill for the protection of life and property in certain parts of Ireland. I shall refer first to the question which preceded this gentleman's statement. In page 91, question 2355, Mr. Seed makes several remarks in respect to the manner in which, according to his judgment, jury panels were constituted in Ireland, and he gives his advice to the Government as to how they should be selected and framed. But I shall not stop to discuss here Mr. Seed's theory of juries. I shall go on at once to the imputation which he has cast upon two of my constituents—namely, the sheriff and sub-sheriff of the county of Meath. Mr. Seed said, amongst other things—"A class of jurors will be found on all the panels of petty jurors in Ireland, as now constituted, who are wholly unfit to be entrusted with the trial of any prisoner for an agrarian crime. The formation of the petty jury panel is now entirely at the discretion of the sub-sheriff, who is often the friend of and influenced by the attorney for the prisoners." He goes on to say, "Now, it may be said that by adopting the latter measure of suspending trial by jury in certain cases the people will be deprived of their constitutional right, but it would not do so one whit more than the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, in which I entirely agree with him; and he goes on to say it would never do to do the same as was done with regard to the north of Ireland. "It would be dangerous to risk it there, and would furnish good ground of complaint that the innocent were made to suffer with the guilty." The same gentleman went on to state, "I think that the state of the petty jury panels in Ireland at this moment is perfectly frightful; it is utterly absurd at present, in my opinion, to expect that justice can be effectually administered if the petty jury panels are not amended. Now, for instance, take the jury empanelled for the special commission in Meath last June. I would not have returned the panel, nor would I, as Crown solicitor, have ventured to prosecute a case for the government at the quarter sessions if the persons returned on that panel were to try the cases. I knew them to be influenced by fear; I knew some of them to be implicated in the Ribbon conspiracy, and quite unfit to try any case." And then he states, that when he saw the Attorney-General at the Castle "he was quite shocked, as he well might be, when I handed him the panel" and he said, "What do you say to this?" And Mr. Seed replied, "Leave the matter to me—I will select a jury;" and the result was that he set aside 47 of the persons named by means of the police, and he succeeded in getting a jury of six Roman Catholics and six Protestants, one of whom was a Presbyterian, as I (Mr. Martin) am. Mr. Seed further states that he thinks the panels in the north of Ireland are generally better than those in Westmeath and Meath, and sub-sheriffs in the north are more respectable men and are not so likely to be influenced as those of Westmeath and Meath. Now, in reference to that statement, I have to remark on behalf of the sub-sheriff of Meath that the panel which Mr. Seed declared, in consultation with the Attorney-General for Ireland, so shocked him, was framed in this way. The high-sheriff and the sub-sheriff met, took the books, and went through barony by barony throughout the county, selecting the names of two of the highest ratepayers in each barony (hear, hear), and after exhausting it in that way they went back and took two of the next highest ratepayers (hear, hear), and in that way was the panel formed, and after that was done the high sheriff signed his name at

the foot, and it then became the legal panel for the commission (hear, hear). Mr. Seed, however, is the Crown solicitor, and I suppose above the law (hear, hear). Nevertheless, it is true that these two functionaries, the Attorney-General and the Crown solicitor—two government functionaries, whose business it is to set an example of obedience to the law—I insist upon that—these two gentlemen set aside the legal panel and framed a panel of their own. But what opportunity, has Mr. Seed, who is relied upon by the Government for this exceptional legislation, of forming an opinion of the state of this part of Ireland? How is he qualified to give such authoritative information? (Hear, hear). He is not a native of Westmeath or Meath; he has not a residence there (hear, hear); but he merely receives £200 a year for acting as Crown solicitor, in discharge of which duties he visits the county three times in the course of each year. And this is the man who presumes to say he knows the state of Westmeath and Meath better than the sheriff and sub-sheriff, and who takes upon himself to pronounce upon their ignorance, to make a new panel and set theirs aside (hear, hear). Mr. Seed in one of his answers, says the panel was bad because he knew it contained the names of some Ribbonmen, and if that were so, Mr. Seed ought to be put in gaol, if knowing a man to be a Ribbonman he did not come forward with his evidence and prove it (hear, hear). I am aware it must sound strange to English ears to hear an Irishman insist that the law should be carried into effect (hear, hear). They might think that law is a very good thing for England, but it is too good a thing for Irishmen, who, like myself, entertain and acknowledge Irish sympathies. Mr. Seed can have no means of knowing anything about Meath or Westmeath except what he learns from the police; and if the police know any man who has committed a crime it is their duty to give their evidence and bring him to justice (hear, hear); but the law says no man is a criminal until he has been pronounced guilty in the form of law, but the bill you are about to pass is to give the executive an indemnity beforehand to break the law. The right hon. gentleman the member for Dublin University, and even some Irish members with patriotic tendencies, argue in favor of the bill on the ground that its execution is to be entrusted to a few English gentlemen, who are known to be conscientious and honorable men, and that it is certain they will not injure any man in Ireland, except by mistake or accident, and that they are not disposed to use any absolute power placed in their hands except for the public good (hear, hear). I admit that experience shows that the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant and of the Chief Secretary for Ireland had been temperate, moderate, and anything but cruel, because since August last it has been in their power to ruin any Irish national journalist at their pleasure if they found them writing anything which they disapproved of, and yet I have the pleasure of being able to state that they have not yet ruined any journalist in Ireland, though I cannot doubt that sentiments contained in the Irish national journals are very displeasing to them (hear, hear, and laughter). The noble lord, in moving the second reading of this bill, remarked that he thought the Irish national journals were free enough and perhaps he meant it; notwithstanding the sword of Damocles is hanging over the heads of each of the Irish national journalists (hear, hear), who has still the courage to give utterance to his sentiments. But I do not like, and I cannot reconcile myself to that state of things. I do not like that any Irish journalist, any more than an English journalist, should have to write his political opinions under surveillance (hear, hear). I would have every journal in Ireland, whether advocating English or Irish interests, to be free of the law and to fear no man's displeasure (hear, hear). Reference has been made by the hon. gentleman the member for Oxford University, and other English members, to the state and condition of Ireland, and I have received a communication from the north of England, in which I am requested to ask the hon. members for Newcastle, Sunderland, Tyne-mouth, whether or not it is a fact, that in regard to shipwrights, the builders, and other trades in the towns which they represent the employers of labour are not just now in a state of vassalage to their workmen? (hear, hear). Whether, during the recent strikes in Newcastle of the bakers, joiners, and other trades, that men who were not union men were—in spite of the law and their employers—intimidated into giving up their work and leaving the neighbourhood. It seems to me that intimidation is not confined to Ireland (hear, hear). I also desire to ask the member for Lancashire whether the learned judge who presided in the Crown Court in that county during the last assizes did not declare that crime in England is now more appalling than in any other country in the world (hear, hear). It appears to me, from this sort of evidence, and I could obtain more if I searched for it—though this has been voluntarily communicated to me—that I can show there is a great extent of intimidation, and a great amount of criminality prevailing in England (hear, hear). I shall merely read from the report the actual facts with regard to crime in the three counties of Meath, Westmeath, and King's County, for fourteen months, ending February 28 of last year. In King's County there were no murders, but there had been two attempts at murder during 74 months (hear, hear). It would be absurd to suppose that English gentlemen having some knowledge of the state of crime in English counties would bring in a coercion bill for the purpose of dealing with three murders and seven attempts at murder. But, then it was said that there was another reason for its introduction—that of threats and intimidation. But before I proceed to read the number of cases of intimidation in the police returns I shall venture to give my own opinion upon the matter, which is, that my method of dealing with threatening letters and notes is to throw them into the fire (hear, hear), and the best way to deal with intimidation is to turn a deaf ear to it.

An Hon. Member.—But if a bullet went through your ear?

Mr. Martin.—Why, then, I could not do it (laughter); but if that were done it would be an overt act (hear, hear), and would be a matter that must come before the law, and let the law deal with it. The total number of threatening letters returned leads me to remark that a mischievous wag, if he were a good penman, might write the whole 213 threatening letters and documents, and get through them all in a single day. And then I am ashamed to see this great assembly of English, Irish, and Scotch members proposing to tear the free constitution of England to tatters for the sake of 213 threatening letters and notices, and cases of intimidation (hear, hear). I say the present law can deal with any disorder whatever existing in Westmeath or in any part of Ireland as easily and as effectually as it deals with disorder and crime in England (hear, hear). I will not further weary the house, but before I sit down I will state that I have a vast deal more that I should like to say upon this question, but I am aware there is a moral as well as an intellectual gulf between me as a mere Irishman expressing the sentiments of a vast majority of the people of Ireland and those of the two counties, but it would require a great number of speeches before I could get through all I have to say. I cannot make myself sufficiently in accord with the people of England in a single speech, and it is with great reluctance I have been induced to make the few remarks to which I have given utterance (hear, hear).

Sir P. O'Brien and Mr. Synan indignantly protested against the bill as unconstitutional, and the Irish Solicitor-General, as in duty bound, making a long speech in defence. Mr. Digby and Sir John Gray were not in favor of the amendment, as it indirectly accepted the principle of the first portion of