

PROCESS-SERVING IN THE WEST.

MORE COLLISIONS WITH THE POLICE.

BRUTAL CONDUCT OF THE CONSTABULARY.

AT KNOCKRICKARD.

A correspondent of the Freeman, telegraphing from Claremorris on Saturday night, gives the following account of the serving of processes on the estate of Hans Browne, Brownhall, at Knockrickard:—

I followed in the track of the Royal Irish, and came upon them at a small village called Curry, where they were being put through some lengthened and elaborate manoeuvring, to even examining their rifles and pouches, by the two sub-inspectors in charge, Messrs. Carter and M'Ardle. Here I also learned that the whole force was under the command of a resident magistrate, Mr. T. S. M'Sheehy. The process server, Langley, was nowhere to be seen. I made inquiries as to what had become of him, and was told that, feeling a little weak, he was taken into the house of a man named Walsh and drink procured for him. On his recovery he came out, and taking his place in the middle of the constabulary they again set forward for Knockrickard. They had not gone far, however—only a few yards—when Langley discovered that all the ejections but one had been lost by him while in Walsh's. A constable was sent back to Walsh's house to inquire about the missing documents, but his inquiries were met with mingled chaffing, laughter, and groaning. It was at this place, Curry, that the first crowd met. It numbered about three hundred men, women, and little boys, but from this to the village of Oregawn, a distance of about a mile, it kept increasing, till at the latter place there could not have been less than three hundred women and about the same number of men and boys. It was here also that the Royal Irish met with the first serious opposition to their business. It would appear a small body numbering about 35 or 40 had been sent in advance of the main one, but they were kept at bay by some 400 women, who stood on the road leading to Knockrickard and refused to let them pass. The arrival of the main body was received by the women with groans, shouts of defiance, and cries of "Where is Langley!" His presence having been detected in the midst of the police, all the women made an indiscriminate charge upon them with a view of scouring him and his burden. A scene of the wildest confusion and dread ensued. The sub-inspectors drew their swords and rushed into the midst of the women, almost all of whom were barefooted and bareheaded. One young woman named Mary Fahy received a terrible gash on the back of the head, another what looked very like a bayonet stab in the arm, whilst several were knocked down, trampled upon, their faces blackened, and their garments torn. I must here remark that many of the constabulary bore themselves as became Christians under the circumstances, whilst others exhibited a savage cruelty. I saw several of them most brutally punch young girls in the breast and stomach with the butt end of their rifles, and from the glare of their eyes it was easy to understand the anarchy with which a command to charge or fire upon the unarmed crowd would be obeyed. But, to do the constabulary justice, those to whom I have so harshly but justly alluded were few, and the exceptions. The charge to capture Langley having been repulsed,

The resident magistrate, Mr. M'Sheehy, remonstrated with the women (all this time the men stood motionless by, but incited the women to resistance) on the foolishness of their acts. "We have a duty to perform," said he, "and though it be disagreeable, yet we still must do it."

A Voice—"We don't want to do anything to the police at all."

Another Voice—"Every policeman had a mother like we had, and they ought not to do the dirty work they are at to-day."

Another Voice—"Let them stab or fire, and we will do the same."

Mr. M'Sheehy—"Retire now, and let us do our duty. I should be sorry to see a hair of any of your heads hurt."

A Voice—"We are starving for something to eat, and here is what we are getting."

Again the anger of the women, fierce beyond belief, was rising, and they were on the point of bursting upon the police in a second charge when two men rushed past the front rank of the constabulary, and into the midst of the women, with sabres drawn, one of them saying, "I'll drive it to your heart," turning the point, and actually touching with it the lips of the woman addressed. The men could no longer control themselves, and they rushed past the women and confronted the constabulary, shouting, "Pat up your swords. We have but one life to lose, and we are now on the point of it. Better die now than hereafter of hunger." A consultation was held between Mr. M'Sheehy and the sub-inspectors, and before anyone was aware of the result the command to march was given. After much difficulty they succeeded in forcing their way through the crowd. It was yet fully a mile to Knockrickard, where the man lived who was to be served, and the whole journey was simply a series of efforts on the part of the women to "lay hold" of Langley. The women, who marched before the police, at a village named Oula drew several carts across the road to impede the progress of the constabulary. At length Knockrickard is reached, and a halt made before the door of the man's house to be served. It was a low, thatched cabin, with but one door and no window. All the women had by this congregated round the door, effectually barring all progress. Again Mr. M'Sheehy appealed to them not to resist the law, and to let Langley pass the ejection on the door, that being the only mode of service available to him. Several voices shouted—"No, never; we will die first!" "They may kill us if they wish, but we will never let him do it." Several voices from where the men stood said, "If they kill you, others will be killed too."

Mr. M'Sheehy—"I sympathise deeply with you. If I had property I should not do such a thing."

A Voice—"You are a good man, but if you had a wife and a large family and nothing for them to eat you'd do what we are doing."

Mr. M'Sheehy—"I have been five or six years amongst you and I have never injured anybody, but whatever I could do for you I have done, and now I ask you to allow the law to be carried out. We have a duty to discharge, and if we were here till to-morrow morning we must do it before we leave."

A Voice—"The women's blood will be spilled first."

Mr. M'Sheehy—"Now, I'd be sorry to see a hair of any of your heads hurt, but the law must be obeyed."

He then ordered that a double line of constabulary be formed from the road to the door of the house, but before this could be done the women should be first removed, which was accordingly done. The women, of course, resisted, and the scene that followed, which lasted fully fifteen minutes, baffles description. And here, again, I most immeasurably censure the conduct of many of the constabulary. Many of them dragged the women by the hair, then flung them on the ground, and I saw one young red-headed stripling actually punch with the butt end of his rifle one poor old woman, with bloody face, who had been flung down. In this encounter several more women received cuts on the hands and heads, and one young girl, named Bridget M'Gorn, received a very deep wound in the cheek. She said it was a stab from a sword. A man named Pat Carroll also received a very severe scar on the back of the hand. At last, however, the women were removed, and the double line to the door formed, through which passed Langley, who posted the ejection on the door. Immediately after the police left for their respective destinations, but the people remained at the house. On my expressing a desire to see the interior permission was readily granted. I entered, and here is what I saw: A wife and seven children crowding round a scanty fire of sticks. The house itself is all one, having no division of any kind, and, so far as I could see, but one bed for the entire family, and that consisting only of a heap of straw rolled up in the corner. On speaking to the man himself—his name is Thomas Collieran—I learned from him the following particulars. The number of acres he holds is eleven; the Government valuation, £12 13s; the rent he has been paying is £23 10s. He also told me that for the support of himself and his wife and seven children, the eldest of whom is only ten years old, for the coming year he has about a barrel and a-half of potatoes, "whatever I'll get for one stack of oats, glory be to God," said he, bending his eyes to the ground, his voice betraying his emotion; "the two pigs I had, and that I thought would put me over this bad year, were taken from me; but," added he, lifting up his head, and his eyes again brightening, "we don't know what God has in store for us. We will hope the best. There's a good time coming." With these words still ringing in my ears, and hoping that poor Tom Collieran's words, "There's a good time coming," may be verified, I quitted the house, and shortly after Knockrickard, whose memory shall long remain green in my heart.

AT TUBBERCURRY.

The reporter of the Ship's Champion, writing from Tubbercurry on Wednesday night, the 7th inst., says:—

During the day there was an unusual stir in the town owing to the fact that Mr. Phibbs, J.P., of Doobag, had set off this morning at the head of sixty police to assist Brette, the district process-server, in serving processes on his estate. For the past week this was expected. About ten days ago Brette attempted to serve the processes, but failed. Ever since crowds of men and women kept vigil on the hill-sides all day long, looking out for the process-server. At length it leaked out that he had applied for a strong escort, and that the landlord himself was to take the field in command. This Mr. Phibbs lives about three miles from Tubbercurry, in the direction of Doocastle. He is a late importation with which fate has blessed this side of the country. He is a member of that pious brotherhood who don't cook their dinners on Sunday, and who from Chancery attorney has turned country gentleman and justice of the peace. His advent to this locality was heralded by an iron hut, which, with its five policemen, was sent from protecing Bridge, of Galtee Castle, to protect Phibbs, of Doobag. The presence of the hut was felt to be an outrage on the peaceable character of the locality. Through the exertions of the priests and gentry of the district it was soon removed, and Mr. Phibbs was left to the shelter of his frieze coat and his big beard. The lands which this gentleman happens to own about here are Eacra and Tullinaglag, in the parish of Kilmastigan, and Mullawn, in the parish of Cleonacott. The two former especially consist almost entirely of reclaimed bog of the very worst kind. They are about two miles from Tubbercurry on the Aclare side; they are separated from each other by strips of swamp, which scarcely afford footing for snipe, and which give a good notion of what Eacra and Tullinaglag were before the poor serfs, who call Phibbs their landlord, reclaimed them. The half naked people present a pale and ill-fed appearance; their wretched houses, black, damp, and badly thatched, are fast sinking into the mud. Though living in the midst of a bog, they have now no turf; and neither crops nor cattle can be raised on such a hungry soil. The rents at any time are excessive far beyond the means of the tenants or the value of the land, yet even in this desperate year they were willing to pay them if any reasonable abatement were allowed. To-day, amidst all the terrorism of processes, police, and bayonets, they reminded him of the swampy soil on which he was endeavouring to pick his steps, they pointed out the misery that was written on themselves and their houses, and in feeling words appealed to him to allow them 20 or 25 per cent, and they would gladly pay him the rents due. But not a word of sympathy was offered. Not a penny would be allowed. When I visited the scene of the process-serving to-day, the sight was wild and exciting in the last degree. About 60 policemen with fixed bayonets, under command of Sub-Inspector M'Lelland, marched from house to house on each side of Brette. At their head, in great frieze coat and thick shoes, trudged Phibbs himself, with countenance dogged and sullen; round about swarmed 2,000 men, women, and children, shouting and hooting, but showing no sign of violence or resistance. The guiding spirit of the party was Lewis Golden, sheriff's bailiff, summons-server, &c., &c., who pointed out the particular houses to the process-server. It appears that Stenson, who is Phibbs's bailiff here, did take the field in the morning, but, alarmed at the attitude of the people, after walking a few houses, he refused to continue. I have said that except mere groaning the people showed no sign of resistance. The doors in almost every case were closed. When the process-server advanced to put the process under the door, a few women crowded round it, the paper was pushed in, and the party passed on. This was the form of procedure during the day. Yet this peaceable hearing did not prevent the police from making pretty free use of their bayonets. From what I saw, I must say that in the circumstances the police showed as bloodthirsty a disposition as any body of men could evince. About me I saw

men bleeding and torn by bayonet wounds in every part of the body. One man was literally covered with blood from wounds on the face. Even weak women were not spared. A little girl named Stenson was knocked down senseless, and a poor woman named Mary Walsh, on the eve of her confinement, was stunned by a blow from the butt end of a policeman's musket, and remained unconscious for some time. After the processes were served the whole party returned to town. Phibbs, guarded by three police, drove through the streets amidst the groans and curses of the people. The rest of the escort followed, closely pursued by over 2,000 stalworth peasants, marching four deep, and hooting and shouting loudly. The scene, as that mighty procession swept through the town, baffles description.

In a despatch dated Tubbercurry, Thursday night, the same writer says:—

During the day the town was in a state of siege. About 120 policemen, under command of County Inspector Ross, Sub-Inspectors Egan and M'Lelland, were patrolling the town under arms, while at a short distance outside the town over 3,000 people were assembled to resist the action of the police and process-servers, if they attempted to persevere in serving the processes. The situation looked so alarming that Canon Stanton, P.P., fearing the result of a collision between the police and people, went to Mr. James Donahoe (the agent of Mr. Henry Brette, of Dublin, on whose property the processes were to be served to-day), and asked him not to risk the terrible consequences, which were inevitable if he persevered. It must be said, to his very great credit, that he at once consented—the processes were taken back, and the police dispersed. The people held their ground until dusk. During the day they observed the utmost good order. This being the last day for service people about here are breathing more freely—grateful to God that so peaceably has passed off what promised to be a terrible day.

NEAR HEADFORD.

A reporter of the Irish Times, writing from Headford, county Galway, on Thursday night, the 8th inst., says:—

The morning broke gloomy around Headford, but the elements were not more dark and threatening than the looks cast upon Murphy, the bailiff, who, with a blackthorn under his arm, his pockets crammed to bursting with ejection processes, and a look of dogged determination upon his face, tramped along stoutly in the centre of his dark-coated guardians. About four miles from Headford I encountered the process-serving party, who had set out between eight and nine o'clock, and had already served about a dozen tenants. It might be well now to say a word or two with reference to Mr. Skeritt's property, upon which the operations of the day were conducted. To begin with, Mr. Skeritt is an absentee landlord, and I question very much if a single one of his tenants could give you the faintest idea of where his residence is fixed. The estate is a pretty large one, and the land of the county Galway is not very bad, but the tenants are poor. The houses in which or upon which the notices were served—for in the greater number of cases they were nailed to the closed door, the bailiff being unable to effect an entrance—presents a poverty-stricken appearance, and the occupants are not an over-cleanly or over-thrifty-looking class of people. They were, I am informed, offered an abatement of ten per cent. on their rents, but refused to accept it. At a wayside cabin I, for the first time, saw an ejection process served. The constabulary wheeled to the right about, halted, and formed in line in front of the house. A woman and her children stood in the doorway crying. The bailiff advanced, selected a paper from a bundle of others he carried in his hand, presented it to the woman, returned, and—"March!"—we were once more on our way. At Balrobach another halt was made. The name of the tenant to be served appeared on the front of the house thus—"Thomas King, licensed to sell beer, ale, and spirits for consumption on the premises." The hour was one not mentioned in any liquor bill which has yet passed through Parliament, but the door was closed, the place as silent as if untenanted, and Murphy's demand for admission remained unanswered. The village of Balrobach—if the cluster of hovels which goes by that name can be called a village—grows to the summit of a hill the base of which skirts a marsh at present covered by six or seven feet of water—a marsh where snipe and plover abound, and which is a favourite haunt for the wild geese that flock in such numbers to the Corrib at this season of the year. A crowd of women and boys had collected at the entrance to this village, and their excitement when they saw the bailiff at work nailing the notice to the door was most painful to witness. The police then marched about a hundred yards down the boren which leads to Balrobach, and stopped at the first house. The door was closed. The process-server, preceded by half a dozen policemen, advanced amidst the cries and curses of the crowd, knocked, and, receiving no response, proceeded in the ready fashion with which I had now become accustomed to execute service. The passions of the peasantry had been roused to a fury. Mud and missiles of various sorts were flung chiefly by the women, and the constabulary were ordered to fix bayonets. It seemed at this moment to me unaccustomed to the wild excitement which prevailed that something desperate was about to happen; but, as was clear afterwards, there was not the most remote cause for apprehension. The men kept in the background, and, with their arms thrust up to their elbows down into their trousers' pockets, incited the women to offer resistance. The valour of the latter was made unpleasantly apparent to Murphy, who was bespattered with mud from head to foot. Nearly a dozen other notices were served by affixing them to the doors in Balrobach, and the constabulary then proceeded to another part of the estate, closely followed by the greater portion of the crowd which had collected during the proceedings thus described. During a tramp of about six Irish miles along narrow roads and lanes three other tenants were served without any trouble. We had then reached Killooney, where the ivy-covered ruins of an old church stand on the shores of a small lake. Almost beneath the shelter of the walls of a closed-up burying-ground were two houses with closed doors, a certain sign in this part of the country that something unpleasant was anticipated by the inmates. The people here again assumed a threatening attitude. The police fixed bayonets, took possession of every avenue to the little stream-surrounded homestead, and prevented the ingress of anyone. While Murphy did his work here I took leave of the party, satisfied that the few "billets-doux" remaining in the bailiff's pockets would be disposed of satisfactorily without any further trouble.

NEAR OUGHTERARD.

A reporter of the Freeman, writing from Gal-

way on Friday night, the 9th inst., thus describes the operations of that day:—

As I anticipated last night, the available constabulary force lying in Galway, consisting of about one hundred men, proceeded this morning at an early hour to Mr. Martin's estate, under the command of Sub-Inspectors Singleton, Gibbons, and Gamble, accompanied by Mr. Hill, R.M., Galway. They were met by Sub-Inspector Bull, Oughterard, and a number of men belonging to the district. The process-server was a stranger. He was brought down specially from Dublin, I believe, and for the last couple of days has been living at one of the most expensive hotels in Galway, under the strict supervision of the police. He is a small, sharp-looking individual, about 30 years of age, and goes to work in a very methodical and professional manner. He carried a satchel or haversack slung over his left shoulder, and pulled out the document he required without much delay. His stick was longer and stouter than Murphy's, and he certainly turned it to better account, for with it he quietly pushed home the tacks that secured the processes on the cabin door, whereas Pat looked about for a stone, and pounded them clumsily into their places. But he is far less sensitive than Murphy, and far less courageous as well. His satchel contained about twenty ejections, all of which he disposed of in the course of the day, but in no case was personal service effected. At the first few houses visited he was allowed to pass almost unnoticed, but as he proceeded the people began to assemble, and before long he was confronted everywhere by an excited crowd of both sexes and all ages, which assailed him and his escort with all manner of verbal abuse, from the most outlandish malediction to the mildest sarcasms. He wore a dark grey cape, much like the ordinary Royal Irish regulation garment, which gave him the cut of an amateur policeman or a newly appointed letter-carrier. As the brigade advanced towards Killawna the little chapel bell was tolled, with what object does not appear. This had the effect of putting them on their mettle. Closing up their ranks, and keeping a good look-out, they marched forward, prepared to cope with any force that might be mustered against them. The crowd of rustics groaned and hooted. As usual, the women essayed to seize the man with the satchel, and missiles, soft and solid, were hurled. Orders were promptly given to charge the assailants, and as promptly obeyed. The same performance was repeated again and again. Occasionally a stone was flung from behind a fence or other place of vantage, whereupon a squad of men doubled off in that direction and cleared all before them. A person named Jas. Welby, of Porridge-town, who was detected in the act of hurling a large stone from behind an embankment, was arrested after a spirited pursuit through the fields. Welby, who is a tall, powerfully built young man, was securely handcuffed and placed in the ranks. Further on another young man named Martin was discovered to have an open knife in his hand, and as it was suspected that he intended to use it, the instrument was taken from him and confiscated. Martin states that he was simply dressing "scallops" with the knife, and had no intention of otherwise using it. The process-server finished his day's labours in Porridge-town, and left the field in a much more cleanly condition than his conferees at Headford.

AT MAAM.

At Maam serious disturbances were threatened. On Saturday, when the police arrived in that district to protect a process-server named Armstrong, who was to serve ejections on the estate of Colonel Clements, a sight was witnessed which is described as follows by the Freeman:—

On the road on the opposite side, skirting the western hill, a crowd of men, armed with cudgels, pitchforks, spades, and scythe blades, stood silently watching their approach, immediately in front of the little hovelery from which the late Earl of Leitrim excluded the Earl of Carisle, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, upon the occasion of his visit to that part of her Majesty's dominions, by jacking it with his tenantry. As the police wheeled round to the right, towards the courthouse, the crowd commenced to converse in Irish in animated accents, and followed the forces four deep, halting as the latter pulled up at the primitive temple of justice. Presently a man on horseback appeared riding rapidly towards the courthouse, from the direction of Carmonay, waving his hand. The people with one accord hurried towards him. Reining round his steed, he galloped back along the road, and the crowd followed him on the run.

On Monday Armstrong and the police proceeded on their mission, and met with a great gathering of the peasantry, who, however, carried no longer the formidable weapons they had on Saturday. The reason is given, as follows, by the Freeman correspondent:—

The men were armed with sticks, but the agricultural implements displayed so plentifully on Saturday were not to be seen, and the demeanour of each and all had undergone a marked change. This was owing to the influence of the Catholic clergy of the district, who exhorted their respective flocks yesterday to lay aside their resistance to the law, and offer no violence whatever to the process server and his legion of protectors. The presence of the country people in such numbers was simply intended as a passing remonstrance. When they had proceeded a couple of miles, the Rev. Mr. Conway, Adm., Ross, met them on horseback, and renewed his exhortations.

The Daily Express says:—

There was some scuffling when the Riot Act was read, and the police charged and wounded several persons. The police at Maam had been short of food, fuel, and bedding, and many of them returned from yesterday's work without having tasted food for twenty-four hours. Two waggon loads of food were despatched from Galway at midnight on Monday night, which reached them on Thursday morning. Eighty more police arrived in Galway the same day, thirty of whom went forward en route to Shrule, on the borders of Mayo.

The Irish Parliamentary Party.

The following circular has been published in the daily papers:—

8th January, 1880.

SIR—A meeting of the Irish Parliamentary party will be held on Tuesday, the 20th of January, in the City Hall, Dublin, at 12 o'clock, to take into consideration the distress now existing throughout Ireland, and to transact the business usually transacted at the annual meeting of the party held previous to the opening of Parliament. Your attendance is urgently requested.—Faithfully yours, CHARLES H. MURPHY, JOSEPH N. M'KENNA.