

DISORDER IN ROWAN.

Every effort to enforce the law and to punish murder in the county of Rowan fails, and the only protection that a man can rely on is his shotgun. Never, perhaps, in any State in the Union has there been such a complete collapse of government. The very forces to which we look for the protection and regeneration of society are prostituted to the ends of factional vengeance and the perpetuation of the power of a gang of reckless outlaws.

The remarks of the Attorney General, made to sustain a motion for the dismissal of a packed grand jury, is a confession that all the forces of the law, all power conferred by the statutes on the Governor and on the Attorney General, had been exhausted and that the ends of justice had been perverted.

It is difficult to understand how any lawyer, conscious of his duty to the State and to society, could accept the position of Mr. HOLBURT as Judge pro tem. of the Circuit Court, while in session at Morehead. We know nothing of the presiding Judge, nothing of his sympathies or affiliations, but by accepting the position he blocked the course of justice, he put it out of the power of the Governor to call a judge from a distant circuit, and made it impossible to secure a judicial investigation which would give the State at large any assurance of fairness and rectitude. By the very circumstances of his election, Mr. HOLBURT was precluded from securing that confidence and respect essential to a rigid execution of the law, and it was no surprise when he refused the motion of the Attorney General to dismiss the grand jury.

Geo. E. ROWE, the gentleman chosen to represent the State, evidently takes Z. T. YOUNG as his model prosecuting officer. When his attention was called to the material composing the grand jury, when it was clearly shown to him that it was picked in the interest of the Tolliver faction, he refused to take any action in the premises.

These gentlemen can not complain if their actions are criticised and their motives suspected. They have put themselves in positions which subject them to unstinted criticism and condemnation. Their actions indicate the reign of intimidation in Rowan which is irresistible. The power of the Tolliver gang is greater than the power of the State. Its organization seems perfect, and its influence all commanding. But it totters to its fall. It is making now its last desperate struggle. It has perverted the law and its machinery to its own base purposes. It has packed juries, intimidated magistrates, terrorized and humiliated the bar, and under the forms of law, though denying the power thereof, it has established a little State of its own, an autocracy, based on crime and brutality. Its downfall is near. It has measured strength with the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The issue is fairly made, and can not longer be evaded. Either the domination of the Rowan county outlaws must end or the State of Kentucky ceases to command the respect and obedience of its citizens. Government is organized to protect the life, liberty and property of its citizens, but in Rowan county it fails of all these ends, and there appears to be no power in the government of the State to punish perjury, violence, or murder in Rowan county.

If laws to bring such men to justice can not be found, they can be made. Lawlessness in Rowan can not go on unchecked and not spread to every end of the State. That the forms of law are so easily perverted is a subject which calls for the prompt action of the next Legislature. Measures must there be devised, will, no doubt, be promptly devised, for the restoration of government to Rowan county, for the punishment of crime, for the imposition of swift and severe penalties where officers of the State allow their fears, their sympathies, or their self-interests to swerve them from the performance of their sworn duties.