



THE LIFE
OF
JOHN MITCHEL.

WITH AN
Historical Sketch
OF
THE '48 MOVEMENT IN IRELAND.

BY
P. A. SILLARD.

Third Edition.

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1908.

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TO

THE REV. C. P. MEEHAN, M.R.I.A.,

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY

Dedicated

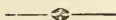
AS A SLIGHT TOKEN OF GRATITUDE

FOR HIS KINDNESS TO

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFATORY NOTE.



THIS little volume was written eight years ago, but its publication was (owing to circumstances) unavoidably delayed. In sending it forth now I feel fully conscious of its shortcomings and crave the kind indulgence of my readers; but it does not pretend to be anything more than a faithful sketch of the man and his times.

I may mention that it owes nothing in its compilation to the volumes recently issued by Mr. William Dillon, having been completed, as I have stated, long before the appearance of his work.

P. A. S.

DUBLIN, *February*, 1889.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS Life of John Mitchel will be found to deal principally with his public career; for that is what is most necessary to be chronicled with regard to one who was essentially a public man. Minute details in regard to his personal history are, doubtless, full of interest to all who will read his life; but they are beyond the scope of this volume, which aims at giving such a picture of the man, and the times in which he lived, as will enable the reader to understand and appreciate the nobility of his character, and the singleness of purpose and strong sense of duty which always actuated him.

Duty with John Mitchel was a sacred thing, and, in his eyes, admitted of no evasion.

“ Act,—act in the living Present !
Heart within, and God o’erhead ! ”

This was ever his guiding principle
Revolutionary periods have ever been

fruitful in the production of great men: the stormy passions of the times seem to require the genius of one who will be able to work those passions in the direction of great and useful ends. It was a gloomy period in Ireland, the year 1815, when John Mitchel first saw the light: there were many reasons for this.

Napoleon had fallen from the pinnacle of his power, and had been banished to St. Helena, and as Ireland had not yet ceased to look for aid to that great nation, where her persecuted children had found both home and glory for close on two centuries, the fall of Napoleon was regarded as a National calamity. The dreadful recollections of '98, recollections of unparalleled bloodshed and barbarity, were still vivid in the generation that outlived that terrible time. John Mitchel's father was himself a United Irishman, and it can be easily understood that he imbued his son's mind with the holy spirit of freedom, and an intense hatred of tyranny: doctrines and precepts which sunk deep into his mind; for no man in the present century of Irish

history has more uniformly exhibited such undying hatred of British rule in Ireland as John Mitchel.

The country was slowly recovering from the famine of 1822, and the Emancipation movement gathering volume just as he reached his eighth year. He was thus early brought into hearing and reading of some of the effects of that British Government which he later on so fiercely denounced. They were, indeed, momentous times in which his boyhood's course was passed, and he developed into manhood. When he entered Trinity College, in 1830, his mind was freshly stimulated by the great political and religious victory recently achieved, and which he regarded as the nucleus of further Irish National victories: but no; no more victories. Repeal, which many thought was almost an assured thing when Emancipation was achieved, was no nearer, but was, in fact, fading away into the dim future. As Mitchel himself afterwards pointed out in that masterly "Apology for the British Government," the English Government could afford to grant Emancipation (it suited

their purposes), but they could not—dared not—grant Repeal. He did not always think so; it was only after having participated in the Repeal movement, and seeing its utter uselessness, that he abandoned all constitutional forms, and openly advocated physical (not moral) force. This is a point which I would have the reader thoroughly understand—that Mitchel was no mere blatant revolutionist, but a man of peace, who was forced by the nature of events into advocating a policy which under less extreme circumstances he would have condemned. Consider the state of the country—the people dying by the roadside of famine, while the harvest was sufficiently plentiful to feed twice the number of people then in the country; and a stringent Coercion Act in force throughout the land. The outlook was, indeed, so utterly hopeless that he can hardly be blamed for regarding force as the only means of shaking off the vampire that was drinking the very life-blood of the country. True, he failed. But it was in a good cause; and though he failed, his spirit was not crushed; did he not return

after twenty-seven years to fight out the battle once again ? and

“ Freedom’s battle once begun,
Though baffled oft, is ever won.”

The lessons to be derived from Mitchel’s history are many, and potent for good if rightly understood. His motives were pure, genuine, and disinterested. He never sold his patriotism for money, or bent the knee to the powers that be for any consideration :

“ Far dearer the grave or the prison,
Illumed by one patriot name,
Than the trophies of all who have risen
On liberty’s ruins to fame.”

“ He was ever,” says Gavan Duffy, “ a trumpet to awake the slothful to the call of duty ; and the Irish people,” he adds, “ had such complete confidence in, and admiration for him, that they would have cheerfully followed him upon any road to which there was a visible issue.” They proved this by that ever memorable Tipperary election, which recalls to the mind the Clare election of forty-six years previous, and which was as emphatic an expression of the people’s sentiments.

Mitchel was fortunate in that his end was no anti-climax—his star went out when most brilliant, without having become dimmed. He had already seen (and grieved at the sight) many grow cold in the service of their country, and forget, or ignore, many of the doctrines they had preached ; but it was not so with him : he ended as he had begun—a firm and unchanging champion of liberty—a foe to oppression of whatsoever kind—an enemy to all compromise—and a lover of truth and justice. Ireland has reason to be proud of him, and ought to cherish his memory reverently, for he was a great Irishman.

P. A. S.

6th December, 1880.

CONTENTS.

—:O:—

	PAGE
PREFATORY NOTE	(
INTRODUCTION)

CHAPTER I.

His Birth—Family—Father removes to Newry—
Mitchel goes to school—To Trinity—He
marries—Practises as a Solicitor in Newry and
Banbridge—His Father's Death—State of the
Dublin Press—Davis—A National Paper re-
solved upon—Charles Gavan Duffy Editor of
new Paper—The "Nation"—Its prospectus and
first appearance—Mangan's Verses—Unex-
pected ability of the "Nation"—Its contribu-
tors—Mitchel's first writings—Davis—His
poetry 1—9

CHAPTER II.

Young Ireland"—O'Connell receives their sup-
port—Their belief that the liberties of Ireland
must be fought for—Great meeting at Mul-
laghmast—O'Connell and Hogan—Meeting an-
nounced at Clontarf—Forbidden by Proclamation
—Determination of the enemy—The "Times"
on Repeal—The "Morning Chronicle" on the
"Union"—O'Connell decides not to hold the
Clontarf meeting—Troops marched out—The
projected massacre—The wisdom of O'Connell's
decision considered—Arrest of O'Connell and
the "Conspirators"—The Agitation gathers
new strength—Lord Cloncurry on the projected
massacre—Opening of "Conciliation Hall"—
Smith O'Brien joins the Repeal Association—

His letter—His example followed by other Protestants—The State Trials—Scene in Court—The Verdict against O'Connell—He addresses a letter to the people of Ireland—Debate in Parliament on the state of Ireland—O'Connell in the House of Commons—His Speech—Sentence and imprisonment of O'Connell, 30th May, 1844—More Protestants join the Repeal Association—Meeting in Down County to sympathize with O'Connell—Mitchel the bearer of an Address—His description of the "Prison"—Decay of the Repeal Agitation—Reversal of the judgment—Liberation of the prisoners—Triumphal procession in Dublin—Labours of the "Nation"—The "Planet" and "The Men of Twenty-Five"—Additions to the "Young Ireland" party—The "Library of Ireland"—Mitchel writes a life of Hugh O'Neill	10—27
--	-------

CHAPTER III.

Death of Davis—His Aim and Labours—O'Connell at Derrynane—His letter to the Repeal Association—Fate of MacNevin—Famine—Lord Brougham on Irish Distress—O'Connell's Proposals—O'Brien repudiates English alms—Meeting of Parliament—Queen's Speech—Another Coercion Bill—The "Nation's" comment on the Queen's Speech—Total extermination of the Irish people—Mitchel becomes Editor of the "Nation"—A collision with the Government—Charles Gavan Duffy arrested—Jury refuse to convict—Triumph of the "Nation"—Publication of "Life of Hugh O'Neill"	28—37
---	-------

CHAPTER IV.

Defeat of Sir Robert Peel—New Ministry—Imprisonment of Smith O'Brien—Discussion in the House of Commons—O'Connell's Speech—The Repeal Association endorses O'Brien's action—Meeting of the '82 Club—Address to O'Brien—	
---	--

His Reply—Scene in Conciliation Hall—O'Connell's Letter—Lord John Russell's Accusation—Mitchel's Speech in Conciliation Hall—He Secedes from the Repeal Association—O'Brien's Narrative—Practical End of the Repeal Association—Conviction of the Seceders that the destinies of Ireland were handed over to the Whigs—Proofs—Meeting in the Rotunda—Establishment of the "Irish Confederation"—Meeting of Dublin Citizens—O'Gorman's Speech—Mitchel's—Harvest of '47 abundant—Thanksgiving in England—Repudiation of Alms by the "Nation"—Meeting of the "Irish Confederation"—Mitchel's Speech	38—60
--	-------

CHAPTER V.

Death of O'Connell—His Character—Mitchel's Remarks on his Oratory—Confidence of the Irish people removed from the O'Connells—Government "Administration of the Famine"—The "Times" and Mr. Murray on Emigration—Lord Clarendon, Viceroy—Parallel with Mountjoy—Agricultural Lecturers—Subterranean Agencies of Government—Birch—Secret Service Money—Monahan, Attorney-General—Galway Election—Confederate opposition—"Young Ireland"—Differences in the "Nation" party—Alarm of the moneyed classes—"S. G.O."—Mitchel exhorts the people to arm—Summoning of Parliament—New Coercion Bill—Mitchel on a Whig in power and a Whig out—Break up in the "Nation" Office—Differences in the "Irish Confederation"—O'Brien—Mitchel leaves the Confederation—The "United Irishman" Newspaper,	61—89
---	-------

CHAPTER VI.

Mitchel's Letter to Lord Clarendon, 12th February, 1848—Nature of the Enterprise—John Martin's Letter—Father Kenyon's—The "Boyle	
--	--

Gazette on the Famine—"Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Bill"—"For Land and Life"—Waterford Election—Meagher, Costelloe—Mitchel opposes Meagher's Election—His reasons—News of the French Revolution—Mitchel returns to the Confederation—O'Brien in the Confederation—Meagher, Reilly—Moral Force in Paris—John O'Connell—The "Morning Post" on "Irish Sedition"—The "Dublin University Magazine"—Lord Stanley and the "United Irishman"—Letter to Lord Clarendon—Government Meanness—Address to the French people—Mitchel's Speech in the Swift Club—Effect of vicious teaching on the Irish people—Mitchel recalls the memory of the Men of '98—The Morality of War . . . 90—135

CHAPTER VII.

Proposed Meeting in Dublin—Mitchel's Letter to the Irish people—To Lord Clarendon—John O'Connell an English Ally—Holding of the adjourned Meeting—Mitchel's Speech—Thomas Devin Reilly and the True Franchise—Prosecution—Increased "Sedition"—Letter to Lord Clarendon—Conciliation Hall and Lord Milltown—"Justice to Ireland"—Patriotism not to be found in Conciliation Hall . . . 136—159

CHAPTER VIII.

Paper Coronets *versus* gold ones—"Justice to Ireland" a fraud—Milltown exposed—Meeting of Irish Confederates—Mitchel's Speech—The Constitution of '82—"A Song for the Future"—Preparation for Mitchel's prosecution—Jury packing—The *Spectator* on the approaching prosecution—Mitchel's motives above reproach—French aid clap-trap—Parliament; Treason Felony Bill—Smith O'Brien in Parliament—A Whig in Office and a Whig out—"The Union must be maintained" . . . 160—184

CHAPTER IX.

Commencement of Mitchel's Prosecution—Striking of The Grand Jury—The Attorney-General determines to proceed on the Information—Arrest and Committal to Prison of Mitchel—"The Man in Jail for Ireland"—Opening of the Commission Court—The "Trial"—Holmes' Speech for the Defence—The Closing Scene—Mitchel's reflections on his Trial—Newgate—No attempt at Rescue—He is carried off—The *Shearwater* sails for Spike Island—Meagher restrains the Clubs—Mitchel commences his "Jail Journal"—His reasons—Arrival in Spike Island—Placed on board the *Scourge* for Bermuda—Arrival in Bermuda—The Hulks—Reflections—Removed to Cape of Good Hope—The *Neptune*—Anti-Convict Rebellion at the Cape—English Attorney-General *versus* South African—Sailing orders for Van Diemen's Land—Rejoicings in Cape Town—"Her Majesty's Gracious Pardon"—"Except the prisoner Mitchel"—Arrival in Van Diemen's Land—Ticket-of-Leave—John Martin—Meeting of the "Felons"—Life in Van Diemen's Land—Mitchel is joined by his family—Smith O'Brien—Patrick Joseph Smyth arrives in Van Diemen's Land—Plans for escape—Defeated—Arrest of Smyth—Released—Falls sick—Escape—Sail for Sydney—California—New York . . . 185—246

CHAPTER X.

Rejoicings in New York—He establishes the *New York Citizen*—Removes to Tennessee—The *Southern Citizen*—He writes the History of the Famine Conquest—"The Last Conquest (Perhaps)"—"Five Years in British Prisons"—Criticism thereon—He publishes his "History of Ireland"—Visits Paris—Literary work there—Removes to Virginia—The Civil War—He gives his support in the *Richmond Enquirer*—Battle of

Fort Sumter and Gettysburg—His two sons killed—He is arrested and imprisoned—Released—Returns to New York—Edits the *Irish Citizen*—James Anthony Froude visits America—His purpose—Father Burke confounds him—Mitchel's exposure of Froude's slanders—His visit to Ireland in 1874—Arrival in Cork—Enthusiasm of the people—He proceeds to Dublin—Tipperary becomes vacant—He addresses the electors—Returns to America 245—260

CHAPTER XI.

Sketch of Irish History from 1848 to 1875—The Clubs restrained—The Irish Confederation reconstituted—John Martin establishes the *Irish Felon*—His aim and position—He is arrested, "tried," and transported—Habeas Corpus Act suspended—O'Brien attempts an Insurrection—Ballingarry—Mitchel's remarks thereon in his "History of Ireland"—O'Brien's arrest and "trial"—The Conquest completed—"The Celts are gone"—Encumbered Estates Act—More Poor Law—Landlord and Tenant—Royal visit to Ireland—Death of the principal men of '48—Ireland subdued—Home Rule Conference in Dublin, 1873—No practical results therefrom—Only hope for Ireland 261—274

CHAPTER XII.

The Tipperary Election, 1875—Mitchel elected unopposed—His election a national triumph—He lands at Cork—Enthusiastic reception—Debate in the English Parliament—Tipperary election declared void—New Writ issued—Captain Stephen Moore—Mitchel again elected—Majority—Victory complete—Mitchel at Newry—Last illness—Death—His Character 275—28

BIBLIOGRAPHY of John Mitchel's Writings 283—285

LIFE OF JOHN MITCHEL.



CHAPTER I

His Birth—Family—Father removes to Newry—Mitchel goes to school—To Trinity—He marries—Practises as a Solicitor in Newry and Banbridge—His Father's Death—State of the Dublin Press—Davis—A National Paper resolved upon—Charles Gavan Duffy Editor of new Paper—The "Nation"—Its prospectus and first appearance—Mangan's Verses—Unexpected ability of the "Nation"—Its contributors—Mitchel's first writings—Davis—His poetry.

JOHN MITCHEL was born at the Manse, Camnish, near Dungiven, in the county of Derry, Ireland, on the 3rd of November, 1815. His father was the Reverend John Mitchel, the Unitarian clergyman of the district; his mother, Mary Haslett, was descended from the old Derry family of Haslett.

In 1823, his father removed to Newry, where young Mitchel, then about eight years old, was sent to Doctor David Henderson's school, where he remained until his sixteenth year, when he went to Trinity College, Dublin, to study for the bar.

While in Newry, he made the acquaintance of John Martin, whose friendship he enjoyed until his death. Though he did not distinguish himself in his college course, he was known to his intimates to possess rare talents, and abilities of a high order. Before the completion of his studies, he (after an ineffectual elopement and capture) was married, by special licence, on the 3rd February, 1837, to a young lady of sixteen, remarkable for her great beauty—Miss Jane Verner, daughter of Captain James Verner. The ceremony was performed in the parish church of Drumcree, by the Rev. David Babington. After a brief visit to Dublin, he entered on the duties of his chosen profession, and practised as a Solicitor in Newry and Banbridge until after his father's death, which took place towards the end of February, 1843.

About this time, the Dublin Press had fallen very low; and a few young Trinity students, at whose head was Thomas Davis, resolved upon establishing a truly National paper; convinced that a journal devoted to Ireland, guided by truth, and sustained with earnest ability, would create a new era in the progress of the country's civilization and ambition. Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy, late editor of the *Belfast Vindicator*, who was then in Dublin, undertook, at the sugges-

tion of Davis and the others, the ostensible editorship of the new paper, which was called the *Nation*, and the first number of which appeared on the 15th of October, 1842.

The prospectus, which was drawn up by Thomas Davis, and issued in August, was as follows:—

“The projectors of the NATION have been told that there is no room in Ireland for another Liberal Journal; but they think differently. They believe that since the success of the long and gallant struggle which our fathers maintained against sectarian ascendancy, a NEW MIND has grown up amongst us, which longs to redress other wrongs and achieve other victories; and that this mind has found no adequate expression in the press.

“The Liberal Journals of Ireland were perhaps never more ably conducted than at this moment; but their tone and spirit are not of the present but the past;—their energies are shackled by old habits, old prejudices, and old divisions; and they do not and cannot keep in the van of the advancing people.

“The necessities of the country seem to demand a Journal able to aid and organise the new movements going on amongst us—to make their growth deeper, and their fruit ‘more racy of the soil’—and, above all, to direct the popular mind and the sympathies of educated men of all parties to the great end of nationality. Such a Journal should be free from the quarrels, the interests, the wrongs, and even the gratitude of the past. It should be free to apply its strength where it deems best—free to praise—free to censure; unshackled by sect or party; able, Irish, and independent.

“Holding these views, the projectors of the NATION cannot think that a Journal, prepared to undertake this work, will be deemed superfluous; and as they labour, not for themselves but for their country, they are prepared, if they do not find a way open, to try if they cannot *make one*.

“Nationality is their first object—a nationality which will not only raise our people from their poverty, by securing to them the blessings of a domestic legislature, but *inflame and purify them with a lofty and heroic love of country*—a nationality of the spirit as well as the letter—a nationality which may come to be stamped upon *our manners, our literature, and our deeds*—a nationality which may embrace Protestant, Catholic, and Dissenter, Milesian and Cromwellian, the Irishman of a hundred generations, and the stranger who is within our gates; not a nationality which would preclude civil war, but which would establish internal union and external independence—a nationality which would be recognised by the world, and sanctified by wisdom, virtue, and time.”

The muse of James Clarence Mangan thus celebrated the *Nation's* appearance:—

I.

“’Tis a great day, and glorious, O Public! for you—
 This October Fifteenth, Eighteen Forty and two!
 For on this day of days, lo! THE NATION comes forth
 To commence its career of Wit, Wisdom, and Worth—
 To give Genius its due—to do battle with Wrong—
 And achieve things undreamed of as yet, save in song,
 Then arise! fling aside your dark mantle of slumber,
 And welcome in chorus THE NATION'S FIRST NUMBER.

II.

“ Here we are, thanks to Heaven, in an epoch when
 Mind
 Is unfettering our captives and couching our blind ;
 And the Press with its thunders keeps marring the
 mirth
 Of those tyrants and bigots that curse our fair earth.
 Be it ours to stand forth and contend in the van,
 Of truth’s legions for freedom, that birthright of
 man,
 Shaking off the dull cobwebs that else might en-
 cumber
 Our weapon—the pen—in THE NATION’S FIRST NUM-
 BER.

III.

“ We announce a New Era—be this our first news—
 When the serf-grinding Landlords shall shake in
 their shoes ;
 While the ark of a bloodless yet mighty Reform
 Shall emerge from the flood of the Popular Storm !
 Well we know how the lickspittle panders to Power,
 Feel and fear the approach of that death-dealing
 hour ;
 But we toss these aside—such vile vagabond lumber
 Are but just worth a groan from THE NATION’S FIRST
 NUMBER.

IV.

“ Though we take not for motto, *Nul n’a de l’esprit,*
 (As they once did in Paris) *hors nos bons amis,*
 We may boast that for first-rate endowments, our
 band
 Form a phalanx unmatched *in*—or *out* of—the land.
 Poets, Patriots, Linguists, with reading like Parr’s—
 Critics keener than sabres—Wits brighter than stars ;
 And Reasoners as cool as the coolest cu-cumber
 Form the host that shine out in THE NATION’S FIRST
 NUMBER.

V.

“ We shall sketch living manners—and men—in a style
 That will scarcely be sneez'd at, we guess, for a while ;
 Build up stories as fast as of yore Mother Bunch,
 And for Fun of all twists take the shine out of
 ‘ PUNCH ; ’
 Thus our Wisdom and Quizdom will finely agree
 Very much, Public dear, we conceive as you see
 Do the lights and the shades that illumine and
 adorn
 Each beautiful page in THE NATION'S FIRST NUMBER.

VI.

“ A word more :—To OLD IRELAND our first love is given ;
 Still, our friendship hath arms for all lands under Heaven.
 WE ARE IRISH—we vaunt it—all o'er and all out ;
 But we wish not that England shall ‘ sneak up the spout ! ’
 Then, O Public ! here, there, and elsewhere through the world,
 Wheresoe'er TRUTH'S and LIBERTY'S flags are unfurl'd,
 From the Suir to the Tweed, from the Boyne to the Humber,
 Raise one Shout of Applause for THE NATION'S FIRST NUMBER.”

The new paper had been announced under auspices calculated to ensure its success, but its unexpected ability, the ground it broke in the national policy, and the vast intellectual resources it developed, eclipsed the

prestige under which it was deemed necessary to usher it into existence. It was at once a proof of greater powers than the country had yet witnessed, and a prophecy of a different fate from what she hoped for.

So commenced the *Nation* newspaper; and for three years it was, next to O'Connell, the strongest power in Ireland on the national side.

Among its numerous contributors, were, Thomas Davis, John Blake Dillon, Thomas MacNevin, Michael Doheny, and young Mitchel who seized this golden opportunity to give vent to his enthusiasm in short articles which sparkled with wit and eloquence: in fact both his and Davis's writings were the principal attractions of the paper from a literary point of view. Davis, in particular, loved to revive historic memories, forgotten stories, fragments of tradition, in short, anything which would supply him with substance and spirit wherewith to mould and animate nationality. His songs, so soft and tender, and yet so redolent of manliness and hope, inspired the ambition to compose a minstrelsy as wild and vigorous as themselves.

The following verses are eminently typical of his sweet and soul-stirring melody:—

"MY LAND."

I.

"She is a rich and rare land ;
 Oh ! she's a fresh and fair land ;
 She is a dear and rare land—
 This native land of mine.

II.

"No men than hers are braver—
 Her women's hearts ne'er waver ;
 I'd freely die to save her,
 And think my lot divine.

III.

"She's not a dull or cold land ;
 No ! she's a warm and bold land ;
 Oh ! she's a true and old land—
 This native land of mine.

IV.

"Could beauty ever guard her,
 And virtue still reward her,
 No foe would cross her border—
 No friend within it pine !

V.

"Oh ! she's a fresh and fair land ;
 Oh ! she's a true and rare land ;
 Yes ! she's a rare and fair land—
 This native land of mine."

The character and sentiments of this rare and gifted Irishman are better set forth in the verses which follow, than any words of mine could do :—

"A NATION ONCE AGAIN."

I.

"When boyhood's fire was in my blood,
 I read of ancient freemen,

For Greece and Rome who bravely stood.
 THREE HUNDRED MEN AND THREE MEN.*
 And then I prayed I yet might see
 Our fetters rent in twain,
 And Ireland, long a province, be
 A NATION ONCE AGAIN.

II.

“ And, from that time, through wildest woe,
 That hope has shone, a far light ;
 Nor could love’s brightest summer glow
 Outshine that solemn starlight :
 It seemed to watch above my head
 In forum, field, and fane ;
 Its angel voice sang round my bed,
 ‘ A NATION ONCE AGAIN.’ ”

III.

“ It whispered, too, that freedom’s ark
 And service high and holy,
 Would be profaned by feelings dark
 And passions vain or lowly :
 For *freedom comes from God’s right hand*,
 And needs a godly train ;
 And righteous men must make our land
 A NATION ONCE AGAIN.

IV.

“ So, as I grew from boy to man,
 I bent me to that bidding—
 My spirit of each selfish plan
 And cruel passion ridding ;
 For, thus I hoped some day to aid—
 Oh ! can *such* hope be vain ?
 When my dear country shall be made
 A NATION ONCE AGAIN.”

* The Three hundred Greeks who died at Thermopylæ, and the Three Romans who kept the Sublician Bridge.

CHAPTER II.

“Young Ireland”—O’Connell receives their support—Their belief that the liberties of Ireland must be fought for—Great Meeting at Mullaghmast—O’Connell and Hogan—Meeting announced at Clontarf—Forbidden by Proclamation—Determination of the enemy—The “Times” on Repeal—The Morning Chronicle” on the “Union”—O’Connell decides not to hold the Clontarf Meeting—Troops marched out—The “Projected Massacre”—The Wisdom of O’Connell’s decision considered—Arrest of O’Connell and the “Conspirators”—The Agitation gathers new strength—Lord Cloncurry on the projected massacre—Opening of “Conciliation Hall”—Smith O’Brien joins the Repeal Association—His Letter—His example followed by other Protestants—The State Trials—Scene in Court—Verdict against O’Connell—He addresses a Letter to the People of Ireland—Debate in Parliament on the State of Ireland—O’Connell in the House of Commons—His Speech—Sentence and Imprisonment of O’Connell, 30th May, 1844—Protestants join the Repeal Association—Meeting in Down County to sympathise with O’Connell—Mitchel the bearer of an Address—His description of the “Prison”—Decay of the Repeal Agitation—Reversal of the judgment—Liberation of the Prisoners—Triumphal Procession in Dublin—Labours of the “Nation”—The “Planet” and “The Men of Twenty-Five”—Additions to the “Young Ireland” party—“The Library of Ireland”—Mitchel writes a Life of Hugh O’Neill.

THE genius, perfect unselfishness, accomplishments, and cordial manners of Davis, soon brought around him a gifted circle of young

Irishmen, who afterwards received the nickname of "Young Ireland." O'Connell knew and felt that he was receiving, for the present, a powerful support from them; but he knew also, that they were outside of his influence, and did not implicitly believe that Repeal would be yielded to "agitation;" that they were continually seeking, by their writings, to arouse a military spirit among the people; showing plainly, that while they helped the Repeal Association, they fully expected that the liberties of the country must be *fought* for in the end: it was in appearance only that they worked in harmony.

On the 1st of October one of O'Connell's great meetings took place at Mullaghmast. This historic spot was noted as the scene of a massacre of some chiefs of Offaly and Leix, with hundreds of their clansmen in 1577, by the English of the Pale. At this meeting O'Connell took the chair in his scarlet cloak of Alderman, and had placed on his head by John Hogan, the first of Irish sculptors, a magnificently embroidered green cap, modelled after the form of an ancient Irish crown. Mr. Hogan, in placing the cap on O'Connell's head, said, "Sir, I only regret this cap is not of gold."

It was intended that this meeting was to be followed by another, still greater, to be held on the historic shore of Clontarf, on

Sunday the 8th of October, 1843; but late on the preceding Saturday evening a proclamation was posted on the walls of Dublin, signed by the Irish Secretary and Privy Councillors and the Commander of the Forces, forbidding the meeting; and charging all magistrates and officers, "and others whom it might concern, to be aiding and assisting in the execution of the law, in preventing said meeting." O'Connell had often said, "Let them not dare to attack us." It seemed as if they had resolved to accept the challenge: and they had.

Nothing can be conceived more bitter than the language of all sections of the English Press, when it was determined to crush at once the Repeal agitation by force.

"A Repeal (said the *Times*) is not a matter to be argued on; it is a blow which despoils the Queen's domestic territory—splinters her crown—undermines, and then crushes her throne—exposes her to insults and outrages from all quarters of the earth and ocean; a Repeal of the Union leaves England stripped of her vitality. Whatever might be the inconvenience or disadvantage, therefore, or even unwholesome restraint upon Ireland—although the Union secures the reverse of all these—but even were it gall to Ireland, England must guard her life's blood, and sternly tell the disaffected Irish: You shall have me for a sister or a subjugatrix; that is my *ultimatum*."

And the *Morning Chronicle*, speaking of the Act of "Union," said :—

"True, it was coarsely and badly done; *but stand it must*. A Cromwell's violence, with Machiavelli's perfidy, may have been at work, but the treaty, after all, is more than parchment."

Meanwhile O'Connell took measures to turn back the crowds on all the roads by which they were likely to come in; and thus the meeting was prevented. The troops were marched out, and drawn up on the beach; the artillery was placed in a position to rake the place of meeting, and the cavalry ready to sweep it; but there was no enemy.

O'Connell's action on this occasion has been greatly found fault with; but certain it is that he only did what, under the circumstances, he thought was best. He had very little time for reflection; the proclamation was designedly posted late in the evening; the people were fast coming in from all parts of the country, for miles around, and their safety was his one engrossing thought. Had the meeting been held, according to arrangement, the people might not have been molested, but this is only conjecture. If they were, O'Connell rightly considered that the responsibility would rest with him, and he very naturally shrunk from being the cause, even unwillingly, of bloodshed.

Within a week, he and eight others were held to bail to take their trial for "conspiracy and other misdemeanours."

The "Government" proceeded with great ostentation to prepare for the State Trials of the "Conspirators" who were nine in number—Daniel O'Connell; his son, John O'Connell, M.P. for Kilkenny; Charles Gavan Duffy, Editor of the *Nation*; the Rev. Mr. Tyrrell of Lusk, county Dublin (he died while the prosecution was pending); the Rev. Mr. Tierney of Clontibret, county Monaghan; Richard Barret, Editor of the *Pilot*, Dublin; Thomas Steele; Thomas M. Ray, Secretary of the Repeal Association, and Dr. Gray, Editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin.

While the proceedings were pending, the agitation seemed to gather new strength. There was general indignation even amongst anti-repealers at the Clontarf transaction; and Lord Cloncurry made no scruple to term it a "projected massacre."

The Repeal Association now held its meetings in "Conciliation Hall," a new building projected by O'Connell. On the occasion of its being opened on the 22nd of October, the chair was taken John Augustus O'Neill, of Bunowen Castle, a Catholic gentleman who had been in early life a cavalry officer and member of Parliament for Hull, in England.

This first meeting in the new Hall was specially notable for the adhesion of William Smith O'Brien. The family of O'Brien had been Protestant for some generations, and Smith O'Brien, though always zealous in promoting in Parliament everything which might be useful to Ireland, had remained attached to the Whig party, and was hardly expected to throw himself so warmly into the national cause, and at so dangerous a time. His Whig associates, not having been accustomed to meet with men of his stamp, confessed their surprise.

The letter in which he sought admission into the Association was as follows :

“ Cahermoyle, Rathkeale, *Oct.* 20, 1843.

“ DEAR SIR—I beg to transmit herewith an order for £5, my first subscription to the treasury of the Loyal Repeal Association of Ireland.

“ As it is due to those who have hitherto honoured me with their confidence that I should state the reasons which induce me to take this step, I shall feel obliged if the Association will allow the following remarks to appear in the next report of their proceedings:—

“ When the proposal to seek for a Repeal of the Act of Union was first seriously entertained by a large portion of the Irish people, I used all the influence which I possessed to discountenance the attempt. I did not consider that the circumstances and prospects of Ireland then justified the agitation of this question. Catholic Emancipation had been recently achieved, and I sincerely believed that from that epoch a new course of policy would be

adopted by Ireland. I persuaded myself that thenceforth the statesmen of Great Britain would spare no effort to repair the evils produced by centuries of misgovernment—that the Catholic and Protestant would be admitted to share, on equal terms, in all the advantages resulting from our constitutional form of government—that all traces of an ascendancy of race or creed would be effaced—that the institutions of Ireland would be gradually moulded so as to harmonise with the opinions of its inhabitants—that in regard to political rights, legislation for both kingdoms would be based upon the principle of perfect equality—that an improvement in the social condition of our people would become an object of the deepest interest to the British Parliament—that the disadvantages resulting to Ireland from the loss of her legislature, and from the transfer of her public establishment to London, would be compensated by equivalents such as would enable every friend of the Union to point to numberless benefits as consequent upon that measure—and that in interest and feeling the two nations would be for ever identified as one people.

“Fourteen years have elapsed since that event, and the experience of each succeeding year has tended to show the fallacy of these expectations, and to dissipate these hopes. I have elsewhere taken an opportunity of illustrating in detail the progress of misgovernment. Recapitulation is almost unnecessary. We have seen that the anti-Catholic prejudices of the English people are still as strong as when they brought these countries to the verge of a civil war by protracted resistance to Emancipation. The feelings of the Irish nation have been exasperated by every species of irritation and insult—political equality has been denied us. Every proposal tending to develop the sources

of our industry—to raise the character and improve the condition of our population—has been discountenanced, distorted, or rejected. Ireland, instead of taking its place as an integral part of the great empire which the valour of her sons has contributed to win, has been treated as a dependent, tributary province; and at this moment, after forty-three years of nominal union, the affections of the two nations are so entirely alienated from each other, that England trusts for the maintenance of their connexion, not to the attachment of the Irish people, but to the bayonets which menace our bosoms, and to the cannon which she has planted on all our strongholds.

“What results could arise from a Repeal of the Legislative Union more destructive of our national happiness than those which we derive from this mode of maintaining it?”

“For myself, I have not been able to witness this course of events without feeling that the conduct of the British parliament has fully justified the endeavour to obtain the restitution of our national legislature; but a strong sense of the difficulties which obstruct the accomplishment of that measure—a thankless apprehension of inconveniences which it might possibly cause to England—a lingering hope that a nobler or wiser spirit would still exhibit itself in the policy to be adopted towards Ireland—perhaps, also, personal considerations connected with my own education and individual position,—have hitherto restrained me from engaging in pursuit of the remedy proposed by my fellow-countrymen for wrongs which equally with them I resent: I resolved, before I should throw myself into your ranks, to leave no effort untried to obtain redress by other means. Of our labours in parliament during the last session you know the result. We condescended

to address to the Government entreaties and expostulations, humiliating to ourselves and to the country whose interests we represent ;—all was in vain. We made a last appeal to the British people; our warning—the friendly remonstrance of men averse to agitation, and for the most part favourable to the Union—was treated with neglect, ridicule, or defiance. Still a hope remained on my mind that the government, alive to the evils to which Ireland is exposed from the continuance of national discontent, would call parliament together in the autumn, and submit some general system of conciliatory measures for its tranquillization. Lest I should be led to form a precipitate decision, I availed myself of the interval which followed the close of the session to examine whether among the governments of central Europe, there are any so indifferent to the interests of their subjects as England has been to the welfare and happiness of our population. After visiting Belgium, and all the principal capitals of Germany, I returned home impressed with the sad conviction that there is more human misery in one county in Ireland than throughout all the populous cities and districts which I had visited. On landing in England, I learn that the Ministry, instead of applying themselves to remove the causes of complaint, have resolved to deprive us even of the liberty of discontent—that public meetings are to be suppressed—and that State prosecutions are to be carried on against Mr. O'Connell and others, on some frivolous charges of sedition and conspiracy.

“I should be unworthy to belong to a nation which may claim at least as a characteristic virtue that it exhibits increased fidelity in the hour of danger, if I were to delay any longer to dedicate myself to the cause of my country. Slowly, reluctantly convinced that Ireland has nothing to

hope from the sagacity, the justice, or the generosity of the English parliament, my reliance shall henceforth be placed upon our own native energy and patriotism."

The example of a man so much esteemed as O'Brien, had the effect of inducing many other Protestants to join the Repealers.

The State Trials began in the Court of Queen's Bench on the 2nd of November 1843. The details are of small interest, and would have been so to the numerous spectators but for the brilliant speeches of Shiel, Whiteside, and MacDonogh, and the occasional jokes which enlivened the galleries and awaked the judges. A spectator thus describes the court on one of the days:—

"To the apathy of weariness succeeded an abstracted activity; and the audience of this solemn trial, where greater interests were at stake than ever court of law determined before, fell into groups and knots, and gave their minds to everything but the scene that was passing before them. The Attorney-General travelled on his weary way alone. No eye was turned towards him—no ear listened to him but those of a few old, imperturbable lawyers. And at one of the most important points in the indictment might be seen a sight without parallel. Two of the traversers reading newspapers—one copying documents for his defence—two writing autographs in ladies' albums—one noting a brief, and the rest absent from the court; while the majority of the junior bar were joking or reading—the audience eating sandwiches or chatting—a painter making sketches

of the ladies in the gallery—fully half of the jury playing with their pens—the other half making gigantic exertions to do their duty—two or three of the counsel for the defence reading their briefs—and one of the judges fast asleep !”

Early in February the “ trials ” ended : the jury (being packed) brought in a verdict of GUILTY. O’Connell addressed a letter to the people of Ireland, informing them, that if they would “ keep the peace for six, or, at most, twelve months more,” he would promise Repeal. In the meantime he and his friends were appointed to come up before the Court on a certain day in May to receive sentence. When the verdict became known in London, a stormy debate on the state of Ireland took place in Parliament, in the midst of which O’Connell entered the house. *He* had got somewhat to say on the state of Ireland. Having listened to the debate for a week, he, amid breathless silence, arose, and, in an able speech, reviewed the whole career of British power in Ireland, with bitter and taunting comments. Referring to the prosecution, he said :—

“ I have, at greater length than I intended, gone through the crimes of England since the Union—I will say the follies of England. I have but little more to say ; but I have, in the name of the people of Ireland,—and I do it in their name,—to protest against the late prosecu-

tion. And first, I protest against the nature of that prosecution; forty-three public meetings were held, and every one of them were admitted to be legal; not one was impeached as being against the law, and every one of them making on the calendar of crime a cipher; but by multiplying ciphers, you come, by a species of legal witchcraft, to make it a number that shall be fatal. *One meeting is legal, another meeting is legal, a third is the same, and three legal meetings, you say, make one illegal meeting.* The people of Ireland understand that you may oppress them, but not laugh at them. That, sir, is my first objection. The second is the striking out all the Catholics from the jury-panel. There is no doubt of the fact. Eleven Catholics were upon the jury-panel, and every one of them was struck out."

It was a fact; nobody pretended to deny it, or publicly to excuse it. But this availed nothing: the *ultimatum* being that the Union must be maintained at all hazards.

On the 30th of May, the "conspirators" were called up for sentence; which sentence was, that they were to be imprisoned in Richmond Penitentiary for twelve months. And this was what the Repeal agitation led to, despite O'Connell's repeated assurances that a finger could not be laid upon him. Still, it was doubtful whether the British government had really gained much by their prosecution. Very considerable indignation had been excited even amongst Protestants by the means which

had been used to snatch this conviction. The agitation had rather gained than lost; and many gentlemen who had held back hitherto from joining the Repealers, sent in their names. O'Brien was a constant attendant at the Association, and gave it both impetus and steadiness, by his boldness and purity of character, combined with an extensive knowledge of public affairs.

A public meeting was at this time held in Down, to sympathise with O'Connell, and present him with an address, of which latter Mitchel was the bearer.

He thus describes the scene in the garden of the Penitentiary:—

“In an elegant tent, with a green flag flying over it, O'Connell, with his green Mullaghmast cap on, received the deputations, and made them gracious answers, not without a seasoning of merry jest. Through the trees, and amongst parterres of flowers, one might see the ‘martyrs’ and their friends sauntering about; the tall form of Tom Steele strode alone and apart, pretending to read Kane’s ‘Industrial Resources of Ireland.’ John O'Connell, with a smile ready for all comers, but an air somewhat pre-occupied, as if intent on weighty business, remained generally near to his father. He was then about thirty-two years of age, small of stature, but rather corpulent, and extremely unlike in every respect to the ‘Liberator.’ He was then Member of Parliament for Kilkenny. Duffy might have been seen on a rustic bench, surrounded by certain young poets, his pale face illuminated with a glow that

looked very like the light of enthusiasm, and almost of genius; and he seemed to be rather too nervously anxious that the '*Nation* party' should be forward and conspicuous at this crisis of the cause. Finding Davis in the garden, with whom I was well acquainted, I walked apart with him; being very solicitous to learn what he really thought of all this. He was still making the columns of the *Nation* flash with proud hope and defiance; but did not affect to conceal from me a certain despondency. 'No,' he said, in answer to my questions, 'O'Connell will run no more risks. Even when this judgment shall be set aside, and he will come out in triumph, he will content himself with "imposing demonstrations." He will *not* call the Clontarf meeting again—he will *not* summon the Council of Three Hundred; and from the day of his release the cause will be going back and going down. What care the government how many thousands of people meet peacefully and legally, or in what trappings they dress themselves, or to what tunes they march, or what banners they may flaunt—while there are fifty thousand bayonets in all our garrisons, besides the Orange yeomanry!"

In truth, the Repeal agitation, as a living and formidable power, was over from the day of O'Connell's imprisonment.

The judgment of the Irish Court of Queen's Bench was brought up to the British House of Peers on Writ of Error; and on the 2nd and 4th of September, the opinions of nine English judges were delivered, and the final decision pronounced; which final decision was, that the judgment

against the Repeal "conspirators" should be reversed. On the news reaching Dublin, there was a show of great rejoicing, and the prisoners were escorted through the city by a vast and orderly procession to O'Connell's house: and thus ended the State Trials.

All this time the writers of the *Nation* had continued to arouse in the minds of the people, by prose and poetry, a loftier and nobler sentiment. Being twitted by an English journal—the *Planet*—with being "young men," in fact, *men of twenty-five* who had placed in the rear ranks the men of fifty, and come forward with all the energies and all the courage of their grandfathers—the Volunteers of '82, they replied by the following spirited verses:—

"THE MEN OF TWENTY-FIVE." *

I.

" Rouse, Erin, rouse, and clap your wings,
 Look forth on coming joys ;
 Wake, Erin's muse, and sweep your strings,
 And cheer our ' Irish Boys ;'
 Those ' Boys ' who'll chase each Saxon drone
 From Ireland's reeking hive ;
 Our nation's marrow, blood, and bone,
 Our '*Men of Twenty Five.*'

II.

" Our fathers were a noble race,
 But mournful was their doom ;

* These verses were written by John Keegan.

They blenched before the cut-throat's face,
 They sleep in Slavery's tomb.
 'Unhonoured sleep'—but we, their sons,
 Our rusty chains will rive ;
 We little dread their whips and guns,
 We're '*Men of Twenty-Five.*'

III.

“ The Saxons say we thirst for blood,
 The villains base, they lie ;
 But if they're in a fighting mood
 Why—let them come and try.
 But Britain's lion *couchant* crawls,
 Exhausted, though alive,
 He wants, behind his 'Wooden Walls,'
 The '*Men of Twenty-Five.*'

IV.

“ Then, brothers, wake—you *are* awake—
 Then up—from vale and hill—
 For Liberty, for Ireland's sake,
 Sustain the 'green flag' still ;
 And ere your years are 'twenty-six,'
 As sure as God's alive,
 Bright victory's sun his beams will fix
 On th' '*Men of Twenty-Five.*'

V.

“ And when our gallant-hearted band
 Down life's calm noon-tide run,
 We'll smile upon that happy land
 Our youthful vigour won.
 And when our heads are old and grey,
 If, haply, we survive,
 'He was,' our sons shall proudly say,
 '*A Man of Twenty-Five.*' ”

The indefatigable Davis about this time contributed some of his most stirring songs and ballads to the *Nation*, and bestirred

himself to arouse the minds of his associates to the necessities of the times. The names of those who took immediate part in the proceedings of this circle, before the Trials, were, besides Davis, who was the head and heart of all, John Blake Dillon, Thomas MacNevin, Michael Joseph Barry, Charles Gavan Duffy, John O'Hagan, Denis Florence MacCarthy, Denny Lane, Richard Dalton Williams, and a few others. To these, were afterwards added, Thomas Francis Meagher, Richard O'Gorman, Thomas Devin Reilly, and John Mitchel.

With the section first named originated the idea of publishing the "Library of Ireland;" and it was proposed, discussed, and determined on one evening at the house of Thomas MacNevin. So diffident did its promoters feel, that they deemed it indispensable to engage the services of William Carleton, who promptly undertook his share of the task, and who contributed not a few volumes to the series. The publication was given to the enterprising publisher, James Duffy, who spared no pains to make the volumes as attractive as possible. Eagerly did Davis' friends respond to his suggestions; MacNevin wrote a History of the Volunteers of 1782; Duffy compiled a volume of National ballads; and Davis, himself, had undertaken to

write a Memoir of Theobald Wolf Tone; but his other multifarious labours delayed its preparation, and death cut short the task.

The rare literary ability displayed by Mitchel in his occasional articles in the *Nation*, was discovered by his friend Davis, who immediately pledged himself for his contributing a volume to the series in which he took such a deep interest, and selected his subject for him. Well and nobly did Mitchel redeem that pledge; but its fulfilment dawned on the early grave of him who made it.

CHAPTER III.

Death of Davis—His Aim and Labours—O'Connell at Derrynane—His letter to the Repeal Association—Fate of MacNevin—Famine—Lord Brougham on Irish Distress—O'Connell's Proposals—O'Brien repudiates English alms—Meeting of Parliament—Queen's Speech—Another Coercion Bill—The "Nation's" comment on the Queen's Speech—Total extermination of the Irish people—Mitchel becomes Editor of the "Nation"—A collision with the Government—Charles Gavan Duffy arrested—Jury refuse to convict—Triumph of the "Nation"—Publication of "Life of Hugh O'Neill."

DEEP and unfeigned grief was felt throughout Ireland when it was known that on the 16th of September, 1845, Thomas Osborne Davis died. How sincere and deep was this public grief no pen can ever tell: if ever sorrow was too deep for utterance, it was that which settled over the early grave of this peerless and gifted Irishman.

On the banks of the Blackwater, at Mallow, Thomas Davis was born on the 14th of October, 1814. He passed a distinguished college course, and flung himself with all the energies of his soul into the Repeal movement. He longed to see Ireland standing on her own feet, using her own resources for her own behoof, living

her own genial life, with her own flag flaunting above her—a free and sovereign State among the nations of Europe. Of all the band of friends and comrades who used to be called “Young Ireland,” Davis was the foremost and best, the gentlest and bravest, the most accomplished, and the most devoted. His unceasing labours brought on an attack of fever to which he succumbed almost immediately, being of a delicate constitution.

O’Connell was far away in the wilds of Kerry, in his house of Derrynane Abbey, when the news of his death fell upon him like a thunderbolt. In his large and loving heart he mourned for this proud and hopeful young man cut down in the prime of his manhood. In his weekly letter to the Association, he said:—

“As I stand alone in the solitude of my mountains, many a tear shall I shed in the memory of the noble youth. Oh! how vain are words or tears when such a national calamity afflicts the country.

“Put me down among the foremost contributors to whatever monument or tribute to his memory may be voted by the National Association. Never did they perform a more imperative, or, alas! so sad a duty.

“I can write no more—my tears blind me—and—after all, *Fungar inani munere.*”

The grief of the others was equally deep. The *Nation* party began to feel his loss:

they were like an army that had lost its chief. It seemed as if every survivor of that band had lost a part of himself, of his power, purpose, capacity. With MacNevin, in particular, this was the case. To him, Davis had been a guiding star; and when he finished a work—"A Narrative of the Plantation of Ulster"—which Davis had assigned him to write, his friends perceived that his tasks in this world were over. He was losing his reason. From the moment of his friend's death, he had been drifting like a ship without a helm; and now the end had come: he became hopelessly insane, and died in a lunatic asylum.

Immediately after the death of Davis, there began to spread over the country dreadful rumours of famine. In fact, the Irish people were at the beginning of the dreadful six years' famine.

Lord Brougham, in the English Parliament, described the horrors of this famine as "surpassing anything in the page of Thucydides, on the canvas of Poussin, in the dismal chant of Dante." And well might he thus describe it; for the horrors of that famine are such as baffle description.

On the 8th of December, O'Connell, in the Repeal Association, said:—

"If they ask me what are my propositions for relief of the distress, I answer, first, Tenant Right.

I would propose a law giving to every man his own. I would give the landlord his land and a fair rent for it : but I would give the tenant compensation for every shilling he might have laid out on the land in permanent improvements. And what next do I propose? *Repeal of the Union.*"

Previous to this, in November, O'Brien had used these words :—

"I congratulate you, that the universal sentiment hitherto exhibited upon this subject has been that we will accept no English charity. The resources of this country are still abundantly adequate to maintain our population, and until these resources shall have been utterly exhausted, I hope there is no man in Ireland who will so degrade himself as to ask the aid of a subscription from England."

And the sentiment was received with "loud cheers."

Notwithstanding these repudiations of alms, the English have had the audacity to tell the world that, immediately on the appearance of famine, the Irish were the first to send round the hat, and ask alms of every country, whereas all they asked was, *to be allowed to eat their own food.*

Late in January, Parliament assembled; and from the Queen's speech one thing only was clear—that Ireland was to have a new Coercion Bill. Extermination of tenantry had been of late more extensive than ever,

and, consequently, there had been a few landlords and bailiffs shot.

The Queen's speech said :—

“I have observed with deep regret the very frequent instances in which the crime of deliberate assassination has been of late committed in Ireland.

“It will be your duty to consider whether any measure can be devised calculated to give increased protection to life and property, and to bring to justice the perpetrators of so dreadful a crime.”

Whereupon the *Nation* commented as follows :—

“The only notice vouchsafed to this country is a hint that more gaols, more transportation, and more gibbets might be useful to us.

“Or, possibly, we wrong the Minister—perhaps when her Majesty says that ‘protection must be afforded to life,’ she means that the people are not to be allowed to die of hunger during the ensuing summer—or that the lives of tenants are to be protected against the extermination of clearing landlords—and that so ‘deliberate assassination’ may become less frequent. God knows what she means ; the use of royal language is to conceal ideas.”

On the dismal story I will not dwell. Suffice it to say, that, from beginning to end, the one only object the government had in view was *the total extermination of the Irish*.

The *Nation* still remained the most

widely circulated and influential Journal of Irish Nationalists, and represented the most anti-English party. After the death of Davis, the *Nation* party, feeling the necessity of a man competent to act as leader, invited Mitchel to accept the editorship of the paper, which he did in conjunction with Charles Gavan Duffy, Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee, and Thomas Devin Reilly. This necessitated his presence in Dublin, and he accordingly settled his affairs in the North, and removed thither with his wife and family.

He had not long filled the editorial post until the *Nation* came into collision with the authorities: it was in this manner. A London ministerial Journal (*The Standard*), advocating Coercion for Ireland, pointed out that the railroads, then in progress of construction, would soon bring every part of the island within six hours of the garrison of Dublin. Mitchel wrote an able article in the *Nation*, in which he showed how effectually railroads could be made impassable to troops—how easily troops could be destroyed upon them; and how useful the iron of them would be in making pikes.

On the 18th of June, Duffy—he being the ostensible editor—was placed at the bar on an indictment setting forth the entire of the obnoxious article. Mitchel

conducted his defence, retaining Robert Holmes for the speech to the Jury, knowing that he would repeat, improve, and redouble all the "sedition" which he was desirous of inculcating. He did so; and startled the Court and the public by a stern and passionate denunciation of the whole course of British government in Ireland, and a vindication of the truth of the startling propositions Mitchel had propounded. Men openly pronounced the doctrines pernicious and bloody; but the veteran Counsellor, speaking in the spirit of the more glorious times he remembered, denounced as a slave and a coward, any one who thought them too strong for the occasion on which they were used, and the provocation to which they applied.

There were three Repealers on the Jury and they, as a matter of course, refused to convict, notwithstanding that Chief-Justice Blackburne kept them confined without food or drink for twenty-six hours. This was the first State trial in Irish history in which the Crown had failed to pack the Jury strictly; and the first in which a conviction was missed. It gave the *Nation* more popularity and larger influence amongst the people than it had hitherto enjoyed; and thereafter it proceeded very diligently and inveterately exposing, from week to week, the plots of the English.

In this year was published the volume for the "Library of Ireland," which Mitchel had undertaken to write at the suggestion of Davis, and to whose memory he dedicated it. It was called "The Life and Times of Aodh (Hugh) O'Neill, Prince of Ulster." Apart from its historical value, this work deserves perusal for its literary merit, and the fascinating style in which it is written. In his Preface to this work, he says:—

"If any reader shall see a striking similarity in the dealings of England towards Ireland then and now—towards Ireland Milesian and Strong-bownian, and a later Irish Nation consisting of Milesians, Strongbownians, Scottish planters, and Cromwellian adventurers; and if such reader shall recognise the policy recommended by Bacon, directed by Cecil, and practised by Mountjoy and Carew, in the proceedings of certain later statesmen of England; and if (which is not impossible) he should arrive at the conclusion that the bitterest, deadliest foe of Ireland (however peopled) is the foul fiend of English imperialism; and, further, if he shall draw from this whole story the inevitable moral, that at any time it only needed Irishmen of all bloods to stand together—to be even *nearly* united—in order to exorcise that fiend for ever, and drive him irrevocably into the Red Sea—surely it will be no fault of the present writer."

Concluding the Preface occurs this remarkable and true passage:—

"When Irishmen consent to let the past be come indeed history, not party politics, and begin

to learn from it the lessons of mutual respect and tolerance, instead of endless bitterness and enmity, then, at last, this distracted land shall see the dawn of hope and peace, and begin to renew her youth and rear her head amongst the proudest of the nations."

He took up the narrative at the time of the reign of Con O'Neill, or Con the lame, and concluded at the self exile of Hugh and his family, merely chronicling his death, which he did in these words:—

"Who can describe, or imagine, with what bitterness of soul the aged Prince of Ulster heard of the miseries of his faithful people, and the manifold oppressions and robberies of those detested English; with what earnest passion he pleaded with Popes and princes, and besought them to think upon the wrongs of Ireland. Ha! if he had sped in that mission of vengeance—if he had persuaded Paul or Philip to give him some ten thousand Italians or Spaniards—how would it have fluttered those English in their dove-cots, to behold his ships standing up Lough Foyle, with the Bloody Hand displayed! Assuredly he would have disturbed their 'letters patent,' would have made very light of their 'statutes, their fines, their double-vouchers, their recoveries.' Spanish blades and Irish pikes would have made 'the fine of their fines, the recovery of their recoveries.' But not so was it written in the Book. No potentate in Europe was willing to risk such a force as was needed; and after wandering from court to court, eating his own heart for eight years, he became blind, and so, with darkened eyes and soul, died at Rome sometime in the year 1616."

It was peculiarly characteristic of Mitchel that his first literary work should be a record of the most cherished portion of Irish history; but so it was. He loved to think of the glorious days of Ireland's story, when her sons, flinging to the winds their mutual jealousies, united with one accord to hurl the hated Saxon from her shores. His warlike spirit bounded within him at the recollection of the valour and heroism of her chiefs, and of the glorious fields of Benburb and Blackwater, where English blood flowed like rain, and the flower of the English army went down before the conquering might of Ireland's right. And in the lives of O'Neill and O'Donnell there was abundance to rouse within him this warlike feeling, for were they not

“For valour, truth, and comely bloom;
For all that greatens and adorns
A peerless pair.”

CHAPTER IV.

Defeat of Sir Robert Peel—New Ministry—Imprisonment of Smith O'Brien—Discussion in the House of Commons—O'Connell's Speech—The Repeal Association endorses O'Brien's action—Meeting of the '82 Club—Address to O'Brien—His Reply—Scene in Conciliation Hall—O'Connell's Letter—Lord John Russell's Accusation—Mitchel's Speech in Conciliation Hall—He Secedes from the Repeal Association—O'Brien's Narrative—Practical End of the Repeal Association—Conviction of the Seceders that the destinies of Ireland were handed over to the Whigs—Proofs—Meeting in the Rotunda—Establishment of the "Irish Confederation"—Meeting of Dublin Citizens—O'Gorman's Speech—Mitchel's—Harvest of '47 abundant—Thanksgiving in England—Repudiation of Alms by the "Nation"—Meeting of the "Irish Confederation"—Mitchel's Speech.

ON the 25th of June, 1846, Sir Robert Peel was defeated on the second reading of a new Coercion Bill he had devised for Ireland; and on the 29th of the same month he resigned office, and was succeeded by Lord John Russell, who went on without dissolving Parliament.

One of the concluding acts of Peel's ministry was the imprisonment of Smith O'Brien for contempt in not serving on Railway committees, when his name was placed on them. When O'Connell and his

son went over to oppose the Coercion Bill their names were placed on Railway committees, and they served on them; but O'Brien steadily refused to occupy himself with any business save and except the business of his country, and was accordingly imprisoned for contempt. During the early part of his imprisonment, a motion was made questioning the authority of the House. In the course of the discussion, the then Attorney-General, Sir Thomas Wilde, dared any constitutional lawyer to impugn the jurisdiction assumed by the House. Every member felt that the challenge was offered to O'Connell, who replied as follows:—

“I am sure that the House will give credence to my assurance that I should not rise to advocate the cause of my honourable friend, if I thought he had had the slightest intention of being disrespectful towards the House. It has not been his intention to be guilty of any contempt towards it; he thought he was entitled to make the exception to which he adheres. He has acted from a strong sense of duty, and I am sorry to see it is a sense of duty he is not likely to give up.”

It will be perceived from this reply of O'Connell's that he considered O'Brien wrong in acting as he did, notwithstanding that the latter gentleman acted only as every Irishman should act, namely, to take

part in no transaction that did not immediately concern Irish interests. That the sympathies of the great mass of the Irish people were with O'Brien, may be gathered from the fact that the following resolution was passed in the Association :—

“Resolved: that having learned with deep regret that, by a resolution of the House of Commons, the country has been deprived of the eminent services of Mr. William Smith O'Brien, and that illustrious member of this Association himself committed to prison, we cannot allow this opportunity to pass without conveying to him the assurance of our undiminished confidence in his integrity, patriotism, and personal courage, and our admiration for the high sense of duty and purity of purpose which prompted him to risk his personal liberty in assertion of a principle which he believed to be inherent in the constitution of his country.”

In the '82 Club, of which O'Connell was president, and O'Brien vice-president, a meeting was called. The attendance was unusually large. Men who had never before, and have never since, appeared at its meetings, were present. The question proposed was, that an address be presented to Mr. O'Brien, in which his principles and conduct would be fully recognised, approved of, and adopted. This led to a discussion which lasted for two days, but the motion was, in the end, carried by a majority

of two to one. A committee was appointed to prepare the address and resolutions, which were written by Mitchel, and adopted by the committee without the change of a word. When the address was proposed, objection was taken to its principle, on the ground that it would commit the Club, and involve it in a hopeless conflict with the House of Commons, which, of itself, it was averred, would be a misdemeanour at common law. This proposition, however, was absurd both in common sense and law. After prolonged and useless discussion, the address was adopted by a greater majority than that which had confirmed the principle on the previous day; and a deputation was appointed to present it to O'Brien in his prison. Mitchel was made the bearer of this address, and there accompanied him on his mission, Richard O'Gorman, Thomas Francis Meagher, Michael Doheny, William Bryan, Terence Bellew MacManus, and John Pigot.

The address was as follows:—

“ TO WILLIAM SMITH O'BRIEN, Esq.

“ RESPECTED VICE-PRESIDENT AND BROTHER—
Heartily approving of the course you have taken in refusing to devote to the concerns of another people any of the time which your own constituents and countrymen feel to be of such value to them, we, your brethren of the '82 Club, take

this occasion of recording our increased confidence in, and esteem for you, personally and politically, and our determination to sustain and stand by you in asserting the right of Ireland to the undistracted labours of our own representatives in Parliament.

“We, sir, like yourself, have long since ‘abandoned for ever all hope of obtaining wise and beneficial legislation for Ireland from the Imperial Parliament;’ nor would such legislation, even if attainable, satisfy our aspirations. We are confederated together in the ’82 Club, upon the plain ground that no body of men ought to have power to make laws binding this kingdom, save the Monarch, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. From that principle we shall never depart, and, with God’s help, it shall soon find recognition by a Parliament of our own.

“Upon the mode in which the House of Commons has thought fit to exercise the privilege it asserts in the present instance—upon the personal discourtesy which has marked all the late proceedings in your regard, we shall make but one comment, that every insult to you is felt as an insult to us and to the people of Ireland.

“It would be idle and out of place to offer condolence to you, confined in an English prison for such an offence. We congratulate you that you have made yourself the champion of your country’s rights, and submitted to ignominy for a cause which you and we know shall one day triumph.

“*May, 9th, 1846.*”

Mr. O’Brien replied in the following words:—

“BROTHERS OF THE ’82 CLUB—I receive this address with pride and satisfaction

I recognise in the '82 Club a brotherhood of patriots, who have volunteered to take the foremost place in contending for the liberties of Ireland, and who may vie, in regard of ability, integrity, and sincerity of purpose, with any political association, consisting of equal numbers, which has ever been united in voluntary confederation.

“The unqualified approval accorded to my conduct by such a body justifies me in entertaining a sentiment of honourable pride, which I am not ashamed to avow.

“Nor shall I attempt to disguise the satisfaction with which I receive this address.

“If you had approached me with language of condolence, I could scarcely have dissembled my grief and disappointment; but you have justly felt that such language would be unsuited to the occasion, and unworthy both of yourselves and of me.

“On the contrary, you *congratulate* me on being subjected to reproach and indignity for having aspired to vindicate the rights of my native land; you deem, as I deem, that to suffer for Ireland is a privilege rather than a penalty.

“In acknowledging your address, I shall not dwell upon the many important considerations which are involved in my present contest with the House of Commons. I cannot but think, indeed, that the constitutional questions at issue are of the highest moment—not alone to the Irish people, but also to each member of the legislature, and to every parliamentary elector in the United Kingdom. Upon the present occasion, however, I am contented to waive all reference to collateral issues, and to justify my conduct upon the simple ground upon which it has received your approval—namely, that until

a domestic legislature shall be obtained for Ireland, my own country demands my undivided exertions.

“Be assured that those exertions will not be withheld so long as life and liberty remain to me, until Ireland shall again *fiat* the Declaration of 1782, ‘That no body of men is entitled to make laws to bind the Irish nation save the Monarch, the Lords, and the Commoners of Ireland.’”

Pending the circumstances which led to Peel's defeat, there was coquetting between the Whig and Irish leaders, which caused Meagher, in Conciliation Hall, to announce “that Irish Repealers would teach an honest lesson to the Whigs.” This was on the 15th of June. A short discussion followed, in which Mitchel, O’Gorman, and Barry took part, denouncing in the strongest language all idea of compromise with the Whigs. On the next day of meeting (the 22nd), a letter was read from O’Connell, in which he expressed “the bitterest regret at the efforts being made by some of their juvenile members to create dissension in the Association.” “To silence all unworthy cavilling,” he desired that the solemn pledge of the Rotunda be read after his letter, and copies thereof posted in the Hall. In the angry discussion which followed on this, Mitchel, Barry, O’Gorman, and Doheny repelled the charge urged against them by Lord John Russell, to the effect that they

were plotting not only to Repeal the "Union," but to sever the connexion with England (that "golden link of the Crown")—and that by *physical force*.

To prove that Mitchel did not seek to involve the Association in any expedient inconsistent with its fundamental rules, I quote the following speech delivered by him in the Association, and in the presence of O'Connell, on the 13th of July:—

"This is a legally organised and constitutional society, seeking to attain its object, as all the world knows, by peaceable means and none other. Constitutional agitation is the very basis of it; and nobody who contemplates any other mode of bringing about the independence of the country has a right to come here, or consider himself a fit member of our Association. I believe that the legislative independence of Ireland can be won by these peaceful means, if boldly, honestly, and steadily carried out; and with these convictions I should certainly feel it my duty, if I knew any member who, either in this Hall or out of it, either by speaking or writing, should attempt to incite the people to arms or violence as a method of obtaining their liberty while this Association lasts—to report that member to the Committee and move his expulsion. It is impossible to insist upon this too strongly, and perhaps it is the more necessary at this time to explain the fundamental rules of the Association clearly—as the present Prime Minister of England is reported to have stated in the House of Commons that there exists a party in this country who are looking not merely for national independence but

absolute separation, and who contemplate the employment not of legal agitation, but of outrage and bloodshed, to bring about that result. To refute the calumnies of the English Prime Minister, and of all our other enemies, it is well to lay before the public once more the real state of the matter—once more to disavow solemnly all intention of exciting our countrymen to insurrection—once more to declare our conviction that all the political and national rights we seek for can be obtained without shedding a drop of blood, and that we mean so to obtain them. In so far, then, as these resolutions purport to embody the rules and constitution of this body, and in so far as they disclaim on the part of the society all intention of resorting to force of arms, I cordially concur in them. And as for the abstract and universal principle which seems to be contained in them—the principle that no national or political rights ought at any time, or under any circumstances, or by any people, to be sought for with an armed hand—even upon that abstract principle, widely as I dissent from it, I do not hold it necessary to raise any question here. I content myself with saying I do not approve of the principle. I do not abhor, for instance, the Volunteers of 1782 (cheers), who took up arms to procure a political amelioration, and would have deemed it cheaply purchased by a river of blood. ‘Free Trade, or else——’ was the legend on their cannon, and indicates that they considered even commercial reform worth powder and shot. And, sir, I hope that even in these piping times no man will tell us that the Volunteers of ’82 were criminals and miscreants. America sought a political amelioration, and won it by a somewhat similar means. That was a noble deed, sir; and instead of abhorring those Americans, I envy

them. Even if we in this Hall passed a unanimous vote of abhorrence against George Washington, I apprehend that all mankind, while the world stands, will proclaim him a hero and a patriot. My father, sir, was a United Irishman. The men of '98 thought liberty worth some blood letting; and although they failed, it were hard that one of their sons should be thought unworthy to unite in a peaceful struggle for the independence of his country unless he will proclaim that he abhors the memory of his own father."

The secession which occurred shortly afterwards (27th of July) was precipitated by John O'Connell, who was the worst friend—or, rather, best enemy—Ireland had ever the misfortune to nourish in her bosom.

A very concise narrative of the secession is that given in O'Brien's letter to Dr. Miley, December, 1846. In this letter he says:—

"Negotiations were opened between Mr. O'Connell and the Whigs at Chesham Place. 'Young Ireland' protested in the strongest terms against an alliance with the Whigs. Mr. O'Connell took offence at the language used by Mr. Meagher and others. When I arrived in Dublin, after the defeat of Sir Robert Peel, I learned that he contemplated a rupture with the writers of the *Nation*. Before I went to the County of Clare, I communicated through Mr. Ray, a special message to Mr. O'Connell, who was then absent from Dublin, to the effect that though I was most anxious to preserve a neutral position, I could not silently acquiesce in any attempt to expel

the *Nation* or its party from the Association. Next came the Dungannon election, and the new 'moral force' resolutions. I felt it my duty to protest against both at the Kilrush dinner. Upon my return to Dublin, I found a public letter from Mr. O'Connell, formally denouncing the *Nation*; and no alternative was left me but to declare, that if that letter were acted upon, I could not co-operate any longer with the Repeal Association. The celebrated two-day debate then took place. Mr. John O'Connell opened an attack upon the *Nation* and upon its adherents. Mr. Mitchel and Mr. Meagher defended themselves in language which, it seems to me, did not transgress the bounds of decorum or of legal safety. Mr. John O'Connell interrupted Mr. Meagher in his speech, and declared that he could not allow him to proceed with the line of argument necessary to sustain the principles which had been arraigned. I protested against this interruption. Mr. John O'Connell then gave us to understand that unless Mr. Meagher desisted, he must leave the Hall. I could not acquiesce in this attempt to stifle a fair discussion, and sooner than witness the departure of Mr. John O'Connell from an association founded by his father, I preferred to leave the assembly."

O'Brien, on his departure, was accompanied by Mitchel, Meagher, Duffy, and a few others; and for all practical purposes there was an end of the Repeal Association.

Mitchel and the others who left the Hall became convinced that the destinies of the country were handed over to the Whigs; and they yielded to this conviction the more

readily when they considered the following facts :—

First: A statement which appeared in the *Evening Mail*, early in June, to the effect that O'Connell voluntarily promised to Lord John Russell to sink the cause of Repeal, provided measures of a very liberal character were carried into effect, which statement remained uncontradicted by O'Connell, while the *Nation*, which had pronounced the statement a lie, was visited by O'Connell with measureless wrath.

Second: An expression used by O'Connell in a speech in Conciliation Hall, to the effect that he would offer no "vexatious opposition" to the Whig nominee.

Third: A statement of O'Connell's in Dundalk, that "one experiment more was to be made, in which every honest man would join."

Fourth: The following passage, which occurred in O'Connell's letter, dated London, 27th June, 1846: "There is an opportunity to consider the Irish question as if on neutral grounds; there is a glorious opportunity" (the return of the Whigs to power) "of deciding if the Repealers be right in believing that no substantial relief can be given to Ireland in a British parliament, or that they are wrong to the demonstration

that would result from PRACTICAL JUSTICE being afforded by that Parliament."

Fifth : An assertion of Mr. Lawless, in a letter to O'Connell, dated 10th of July, which the latter published without comment or contradiction—namely, "and yet it was with difficulty you (O'Connell) prevented his (Mr. Sheil) being opposed in his election for Dungarvan."

Sixth : Sheil's election, without opposition, when, if opposed, his defeat was certain.

Seventh : O'Connell's eulogy on the O'Connor Don for "accepting an office which would enable him to serve his country." *

Eighth : O'Connell's assertion that "I did not begin this quarrel; in my absence in London, an attack was made on the Whig Ministry."

Finally : O'Connell's boasted acceptance of the distribution of Whig patronage, and the appointment of his personal friends to lucrative employment.

Calmly reviewing these facts, it is not to be wondered that Mitchel and his friends should decline to place confidence in the Association. That the "great tribune," the "leader of the people," should descend to pander with the Whigs, or any other British faction, seems incredible; but proofs

* Speech in Conciliation Hall, July 13th.

exist that such was the case; and, therefore, Mitchel was justified in separating himself from a body whose policy was no longer his, or that of the majority of the Irish people.

On the 3rd November, 1846, a largely attended meeting, convened by the seceders, was held in the Rotunda, for the purpose of remonstrating with the Association, and making preliminary arrangements for the establishment of a new body to be called the "Irish Confederation." Thomas D'Arcy McGee attended, and delivered a calm, forcible, and conclusive speech, condemnatory of the Repeal Association's action, and approving of the determination of the seceders to form themselves into a body in which freedom of discussion would be allowed. The success of this meeting induced them to hold another, which they did on the 2nd of December, with the main intention of replying to the calumnies that, for several months, had been urged against them from Conciliation Hall, and other places.

This meeting—one of the most important ever held in the metropolis—had a numerous and fashionable attendance. The entire ability of the seceders was put forth; and so great was the sensation created by the proceedings, that two publishers, one in Dublin and one in Belfast, brought out reports in pamphlet form, which were read all over

the country with the greatest avidity. It was casually stated that night by the seceders, that they would meet in January to announce to the country the course of political action they would recommend. At a meeting held by the seceders on the 13th of January, the promise made in December was redeemed, and the "Irish Confederation" fully established. They made no avowal of war, and gave no pledge of peace: their object was the Independence of the Irish people; and no means to attain that end were abjured, save such as were inconsistent with honour, morality, and reason.

Thus was the "Irish Confederation" established; and for twelve months it continued to promulgate what was the settled conviction of nine-tenths of the Irish people. They never ceased to repudiate the beggarly appeals the British continued to make for, and in the name of the Irish people; but at the same time they took care to express warm gratitude for the well-meant charity of foreign nations.

On the 16th March, a meeting of the citizens of Dublin was, by public requisition, held in the Music Hall, and presided over by the Lord Mayor. The object of the meeting was to consider the peril of the country, and suggest remedies in the shape

of the importation of grain in war ships; stopping distillation from grain, etc. Mitchel, O'Gorman, and other members of the Confederation attended, and propounded their views on the questions under consideration. O'Gorman, in the course of a speech in which he charged the government with being the "murderers of the people," said:—

"Mr. Fitzgibbon has suggested that the measures of government may have been adopted under an infatuation. I believe there is no infatuation. I hold a very different opinion on the subject. I think the British government are *doing what they intend to do.*"

He concluded by moving the following resolution:—

"That for purposes of temporary relief, as well as permanent improvement, the one great want and demand of Ireland is, that foreign legislators and foreign ministers shall no longer interfere in the management of her affairs."

This resolution was seconded by Mitchel, who, in the course of a powerful and indignant speech, said:—

"I have listened with pain and disappointment to the proceedings of a meeting purporting to be a meeting of the citizens of Dublin, called at such a crisis, and to deliberate on so grave a subject, yet at which the resolutions and speakers, as with one consent, have carefully avoided speaking out what nine-tenths of us feel to be the plain truth in this matter. But the truth, my lord, must be

told—and the truth is, that Ireland starves and perishes simply because the English have eaten us out of house and home. Moreover, that all the legislation of their parliament is, and will continue to be directed to this one end—to enable them hereafter to eat us out of house and home as heretofore. It is for that sole end they have laid their grasp upon Ireland, and it is for that, and that alone, they will try to keep her.”

O’Gorman’s resolution was carried with acclamation, to the surprise and consternation of the quiet and submissive gentlemen who had convened the meeting.

The Irish harvest of 1847 was, as it had been the year before, abundant and superabundant. The problem, therefore, was to get it peacefully and quietly over to England. This was done in the following manner: the Archbishop of Canterbury issued a form of thanksgiving for an “abundant harvest,” to be read in all churches on Sunday the 17th of October. A Treasury clerk, named Trevelyan, was sent to Ireland on pretence of business, and on his landing in Ireland he transmitted to England an humble entreaty that the Queen would issue a Royal “Letter” asking alms in all those churches on the day of “thanksgiving.” The *Nation*, which spoke for the people, thus treated the matter:—

“Cordially, eagerly, thankfully we agree with the English *Times* in this one respect—*there ought to be no alms for Ireland.*”

“It is an impudent proposal, and ought to be rejected with scorn and contumely. We are sick of this eternal begging. If but one voice in Ireland should be raised against it, that voice shall be ours. To-morrow, to-morrow, over broad England, Scotland, and Wales, the people who devour our substance from year to year, are to offer up their canting thanksgivings for our ‘abundant harvest,’ and to fling us certain crumbs and crusts of it for charity. Now if any Church-going Englishman will hearken to us; if we may be supposed in any degree to speak for our own countrymen, we put up our petition *thus*—Keep your alms, ye canting robbers—button your pockets upon the Irish plunder that is in them, and let the begging box pass on. Neither as *loans* nor as *alms* will we take that which is our own. We spit upon the benevolence that robs us of a pound, and flings back a penny in *charity*. Contribute now if you will—these will be your thanks!

“But who has craved this charity? Why, the Queen of England, and her Privy Council, and two officers of her government, named Trevelyan and Burgoyne! No Irishman that we know of has begged alms from England.

“But the English insist on our remaining beggars. Charitable souls that they are, they like better to give us charity than let us earn our bread. And consider the time this talk of almsgiving begins—our ‘abundant harvest,’ for which they are to thank God to-morrow, is still here, and there has been talk of keeping it here. So they say to one another—Go to; let us promise them charity and church subscriptions—they are a nation of beggars—they would rather have alms than honest earnings—let us talk of alms, and they will send us the bread from their tables, the cattle from their pastures, the coats from their backs.

“We charge the ‘government,’ we charge the Cabinet at Osborne House, with this base plot. We tell our countrymen that a man named Trevelyan, a Treasury clerk—the man who advised and administered the Labour Rate Act—that this Trevelyan has been sent to Ireland, that he, an Englishman, may send over from this side the Channel a petition to the charitable in England. We are to be made to beg, whether we will or no. The Queen begs for us; the Archbishop of Canterbury begs for us; and they actually send a man to Ireland that a veritable *Irish* begging petition may not be a-wanting.

“From Salt-hill Hotel, at Kingstown, this piteous cry goes forth to England. ‘In justice,’ Trevelyan says, ‘to those who have appointed a general collection in the Churches on the 17th, and still more in pity to the unhappy people in the western districts of Ireland,’ he implores his countrymen to have mercy; and gets his letter published in the London papers (along with another from Sir John Burgoyne) to stimulate the charity of those good and well-fed Christians who will enjoy the luxury of benevolence to-morrow.

“Once more, then, we scorn, we repulse, we curse all English alms; and only wish these sentiments of ours could reach before noon to-morrow every sanctimonious thanksgiver in England, Scotland, Wales, and Berwick-upon-Tweed.”

At a meeting of the Irish Confederation it was determined to pass a resolution thanking these foreign nations, especially the Americans, who had contributed for the relief of Irish misery. As many English people had also contributed largely, it was

thought right to thank them as well. To Mitchel the Committee assigned the duty of moving this resolution, a delicate task, which he discharged in these truly noble words:—

“I have to move, sir, another vote of thanks for alms. We have thanked the kind citizens of that friendly country beyond the Atlantic; we have now to thank, heartily and unfeignedly to thank, those benevolent individuals who have sent us relief from the hostile country of Great Britain. There is many a generous heart and open hand in England; and if you look into the list of contributors to our relief funds you will find large remittances, both from individuals and congregations of every sect in England, which may put to shame the exertions of Irishmen themselves. There are amongst these, you may be sure, innumerable kind-hearted people, charitable women, and hard-working tradesmen, who have contributed according to their means, and without a thought of self-interest, to feed the hungry and relieve the dying. Shall these people not be thanked? Shall we not discriminate between the rulers who have conspired to keep from us the use of our own resources, and those good people who have ministered to us out of theirs? In an assembly of Irishmen such questions need not be asked. Cordially, heartily, and unreservedly we thank them. Now, sir, I wish I could stop here—I wish our thanks could be disencumbered of all ungracious restrictions as in the case of America; but here is a very obvious distinction to be taken; and it is necessary there should be no mistake. Americans give us the produce of their own industry and energy. We have no claim upon them;—America never

wronged us, never robbed us ;—no American ever sought, save by fair competition, to ruin our trade that his might flourish ;—America has not the spending of our rents and revenues ;—Americans do not thrive by virtue of our beggary, and live by our death ;—Americans do not impose upon us laws that breed famine and pestilence, nor locust swarms of officials that exasperate famine and pestilence. In your thanks to the Americans let your whole hearts go with them. Let your acknowledgments be as ample and unconditional as their generosity. (Cheers.) They have laid us under an obligation, and if heaven be good to us it shall be discharged. (Loud cheers.) But Englishmen, sir, can well afford to give Ireland alms out of the spoils of Ireland. They are rich and may well be generous, because we have been such fools as to let them have our bread to eat and our money to spend for generations ;—because we have consented to use everything they make, and to make little or nothing for ourselves ;—because we have sacrificed our tradesmen's wages, and our peasants' lives to the insatiable spirit of the English—*commerce* let me call it—beggars must keep a civil tongue in their heads. Let me not be told that it is ungracious upon such an occasion to speak of the wrongs that England has done us. Sir, it is just upon such an occasion that it is needed most. Irishmen have been taught to look so long to England as the ruler and disposer and owner of all things Irish, that we absolutely scarce know our own plunder when the plunderers send a small pittance of it back to us in the form of alms. And let us be just ; if we, in the depths of our distress, in the warmth of our gratitude, are almost forced to forget out of what funds these English alms are drawn, can we wonder if Englishmen forget it too, or even if they never knew it ? Simple, exemplary

country clergymen, benevolent women, ever prompt to do good, honest industrious tradesmen, who have learned their own handicraft, and little else—can we believe that these people as much as know how their government cared for them in times long past at our expense—how provision was made to bring them over the rental of Ireland, to flow through the channels of English trade, enriching everybody as it passed—how Irish manufactures were broken down by English systematic laws, in order that Englishmen might weave our wool into cloth, might clothe us from head to foot, yes, to the very buttons, in fabrics of their making, and keep us raising food wherewithal to pay them? Do you imagine our kind benefactors knew, or thought of all this? No: let it not be supposed that I mean to derogate from their merits, or to limit our thanks, when I tell them that, whether they know it or not, they are living upon Irish plunder, that, although the loss of one crop be a visitation from heaven, Irish famine is a visitation from England—that the reason why we want relief, and they can give it, is just that our substance has been carried away, and that they have it. For every well paid tradesman of Birmingham and Leeds there is a broken tradesman pining in the garrets of Dublin, or begging his bread in the streets of Cork: The well-fed labourer who sits down to his dinner in England never thinks that he is devouring whole families in Ireland. Aye, the very charitable spinster, annuitant or fundholder, who hastens to send her mite to Ireland, little dreams, as she draws her quarter's dividend, that she is drawing the marrow from the bones of starving wretches in Donegal or Kerry. Hereafter, if Englishmen desire to benefit Ireland, let them know that the greatest charity they can do us is to make their government take its hands out of our

pockets—its harpy claws off our tables. Let them compel it to draw off its commissioners, and its tens of thousands of gentlemanly officials who swarm over the land, and eat up every green thing—finally, let them make it restore that protecting legislature out of which it foully and fraudulently swindled us for their advantage. Let them do that, and we shall not need their alms for the future. But, my friends, you cannot expect that Englishmen will do all that for us. We must ourselves rescue our industry, and redeem our lives from foreign oppression—we must banish the officials—we, *we* must Repeal the Union. We must repay their charity by raising ourselves above their charity—repay their charity by refusing them our food, and refusing them our custom—repay their charity by burning everything that comes from England, except coals—repay their charity by enabling ourselves to give them charity when they come to need it. (Loud cheers.)”

CHAPTER V.

Death of O'Connell—His Character—Mitchel's Remarks on his Oratory—Confidence of the Irish people removed from the O'Connells—Government "Administration of the Famine"—The "Times" and Mr. Murray on Emigration—Lord Clarendon, Viceroy—Parallel with Mountjoy—Agricultural Lecturers—Subterranean Agencies of Government—Birch—Secret Service Money—Monahan, Attorney-General—Galway Election—Confederate opposition—"Young Ireland"—Differences in the "Nation" party—Alarm of the moneyed classes—"S. G. O."—Mitchel exhorts the people to Arm—Summoning of Parliament—New Coercion Bill—Mitchel on a Whig in power and a Whig out—Break up in the "Nation" Office—Differences in the "Irish Confederation"—O'Brien—Mitchel leaves the Confederation—The "United Irishman" Newspaper.

IN the depth of the gloom and misery of the Famine of 1847, O'Connell, broken in heart, and crushed in spirit, left Ireland, never to see it more. London physicians recommended the air of the South of Europe, and O'Connell himself had a great desire to visit Rome before he died; but his wish was destined to be unfulfilled: for having reached as far as Genoa, by slow and painful stages, he, in a strange country, far from the land and home of his forefathers, breathed his last on the 15th of May, 1847. His death

was looked upon in Ireland as a national calamity; and friends and enemies united to do honour to the memory of one of Ireland's most illustrious sons.

In Irish history his name holds a distinguished place; and long will it be ere his memory is forgotten by that people who once rose and fell at the sounds of his voice, and whose passions he stirred as no man since has done.

His character was wide and varied—capable alike of great virtues and low vices—deep pathos, and the broadest humour—of the noblest generosity, yet capable of harbouring vindictive feelings. He was a great but unfinished orator—capable of moving the passions, or appealing to the reason, whichever he wished. He had his faults—who has not?—but of him, as well as of Goldsmith, are applicable those words of that great student of human nature: "Let not his frailties be remembered: he was a very great man."

Alluding to him as an orator, Mitchel says:—

"This orator was no maker of sentences; and when he attempted now and then to perorate, the thing was a failure. His power lay in his perfect knowledge of the people he addressed, their ways of life, wants, and aspirations; and his intensely human sympathy with all. Thus it needed but a

small joke from him to convulse a large meeting, because his lip and eye quivered with inexpressible fun. His pathos had no occasion for modulated periods, because when he told in simplest words some tale of sorrow and oppression (and many a sorrow and oppression was close at hand to point the moral)—and when the deep music of his voice grew husky, and clenched hands and swelling chest revealed the wrath and pity that burned and melted within him,—the passions of mighty multitudes rose and swayed and sunk again beneath his hand, as tides heave beneath the moon.”*

With the death of O’Connell, the confidence of the Irish people passed from his house; for never man had more unworthy sons: mean and arrogant, they sought to stifle discussion, as if they feared to allow any opinions to be expressed save and except such as they approved of. One of John O’Connell’s favourite threats, whenever anyone would not act in accordance with his wishes, was that he would raise his father’s bones, and carry them away to the land where his heart is treasured.

The government continued to make the administration of the Famine as destructive as possible. One of their favourite measures was that of holding out promises of “out-door relief”—to obtain which tenants must abandon their lands and leave them untilled.

* “Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps).”

The parish priest of Skibbereen (Rev. Mr. Fitzpatrick), writing to the *Freeman*, March 12th, said :—

“The ground continues unsown and uncultivated. There is a mutual distrust between the landlord and the tenant. The landlord would wish, if possible, to *get up his land*; and the unfortunate tenant is anxious to stick to it as long as he can. A good many, however, are giving it up, and preparing for America; and these are the substantial farmers who have still a little means left.”

This letter is an epitome of the state of the country during that dreadful year. Said the *Mayo Constitution* in this same month of March :—

“The land is one vast waste : a soul is not to be seen working on the holdings of the poor farmers throughout the country, and those who have had the prudence to plough or dig the ground *are in fear of throwing in the seed.*”

In addition to a new “out-door relief” Act, the government sought to hurry the extermination of the people by emigration; for though they were fast perishing of hunger, and fever generated by hunger, they were not perishing fast enough.

The British Press sought to inculcate that the temperament and disposition of the Irish people peculiarly fitted them for some re-

mote country in the East, or in the West,—in fact for any country but their own;—that it was some mistake their being born in Ireland. As a matter of course, the *Times* was the first to find out this singular freak! Said that paper (February 22nd, 1847):—

“Remove Irishmen to the banks of the Ganges, or the Indus—to Delhi, Benares, or Trincomalie,—and they would be far more in their element there than *in the country to which an inexorable fate has confined them.*”

The idea of a population being expressly trained to suit any country but their own did not seem in the least strange to a Mr. Murray, a Scotch banker, who, in a pamphlet on the proper measures for Ireland, used these words:—

“The surplus population of Ireland have been trained precisely for those pursuits which the unoccupied regions of North America require.”

In Parliament, a scheme was laid before Lord John Russell for the transportation of one million and a half of Irishmen to Canada, at a cost of nine millions, sterling, to be charged on “Irish property,” and to be paid by an income tax.

None of these vast public schemes of emigration was adopted by Parliament in

its full extent: though aid was, from time to time, given to minor projects for that end; and landlords continued very busy all this year and the next, shipping off their "surplus tenantry" by their own private resources, thinking it cheaper than to maintain them by rates.

The Irish landlords were perplexed: they would not consent to Tenant Right (which Lord Palmerstoun pronounced to be "landlord wrong"); and they dared not trust themselves in Ireland without a British army. A few landlords and others met and formed an "Irish Council;" but these were soon frightened into private life again by certain revolutionary proposals of some members, and especially by the very name of Tenant Right. Seeing, at the close of the year, that *another* season's famine was sure, and that the extreme section of the National party began to entertain violent ideas, they, in cowardly fear, called on Parliament for a new Coercion Act. This shattered any remaining hope that the landed gentry would stand on the side of Ireland against England; and also had the effect of bringing Irish affairs to a crisis,—breaking up the Confederation, and leading to an attempt at insurrection.

In the summer of this year, 1847, there arrived in Ireland, as Viceroy, the Earl of

Clarendon. This man was sent over to complete the conquest of Ireland for Queen Victoria, just as Lord Mountjoy had been to bring to an end the wars of Queen Elizabeth's reign. The means employed were substantially the same: corruption of the rich and starvation of the poor; but the form of procedure was somewhat different. Mountjoy burned and cut down the corn; but in Lord Clarendon's time the English preferred to carry it over to England and eat it.

Amongst other means devised by Lord Clarendon for the consummation of the conquest was that of sending agricultural lecturers through the country to tell the people of the "benevolent intentions" of his Excellency, and give them good advice. One of these lecturers—a Mr. Goode—lecturing in Connaught, informs us that—

"The poor people here appeared to be in a most desponding state: they always met me with the argument that there was no use in their working there, for they were going to be turned out in spring, and would have their houses pulled down over them. I used to tell them that I had *nothing to do with that*; that I was sent among them by some kind, intelligent gentleman, barely to tell them *what course to pursue*."

Another means directed to the same end was the support of the Press; but it redounds

to the honour of the Dublin Press that he found this a difficult undertaking—so difficult that he had to content himself with a disreputable paper called the *World*, edited by a person named Birch. This paper was of so low a species that it was never even alluded to by any of the city Journals; and, therefore, quite suited for the dirty work Lord Clarendon intended it should do, namely, the invention and publication of scandalous libels upon Mitchel, Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and every one else who was prominent in resisting and exposing the government measures and designs.

In order to ensure the circulation of this paper, public money was used to advertise it, and bring it under the notice of respectable persons who otherwise would never see it.

A third measure of the new Viceroy's was extreme liberality towards Catholic lawyers and gentlemen in the distribution of patronage, in order that they might be the more effectually bought off from all common interest and sympathy with the "lower orders," and might stand by and see them slain or banished. A Mr. Monahan, a successful Catholic barrister, was made Attorney-General for Ireland, from which the next step was to the bench.

Having been made Attorney-General, it

was necessary that Mr. Monahan should also be a Member of Parliament. Lord Clarendon, accordingly, looked round for a vacancy, and had him nominated for Galway. The Repealers resolved to contest it, and Mr. Anthony O'Flaherty, a gentleman of Galway county, addressed the electors. But, though nine-tenths of the people of Galway were Repealers, the enemy had great advantages in the struggle: in the first place, they had unlimited command of money for bribery, and secondly, the landlords were principally what is known as "Catholic gentry," and, consequently, supporters of the government.

The "Irish Confederation" sent down a number of its members to give gratuitous aid to Mr. O'Flaherty's law-agents and committee. These were Mitchel, Meagher, Dillon, O'Gorman, Doheny, Barry, O'Donoghue, and Martin. In the last two days of the contest Monahan was run very close, and his party spent vast quantities of money in bribery—a kind of contest into which Mr. O'Flaherty did not enter with him. All the Repealers' exertions, however, were fruitless; for the Attorney-General won the election by a majority of four votes—a small majority in so large a constituency. He received his reward by being made Chief-Justice of the Common

Pleas ; and had the satisfaction, a few months after, of hunting into exile, or prosecuting (with packed juries) to conviction, nearly every Irish Confederate who went down to hold out Galway against him.

“Young Ireland” became, at this time, fully convinced that, once for all, a firm stand should be made against the wholesale slaughter carried on under the name of “amelioration.” Alluding to them (“Young Ireland”), Mitchel said :—

“I desire to say, once for all, that I have never heard or read of, neither do I expect to hear or to read of, any political party so thoroughly pure and disinterested, with aspirations so lofty, and effort and endeavour so single-hearted, as this same ‘Young Ireland.’”*

The new Poor-Law had done its work of reducing the body of the people to a state of pauperism ; but because it had not been efficacious for relief, the government *pretended* to be surprised ; but it was only pretence : their one object being, as I have before observed, *the total extermination of the Irish people.*

Meanwhile, Mitchel had been, in the columns of the *Nation*, endeavouring to turn the minds of the people towards the only real remedy for all their evils,—that is,

* “Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps).”

a combined movement to prevent the export of provisions, and to resist process of ejection. This involved a denial of rent, and refusal of rates—involving, in other words, a root and branch revolution, socially and politically. Mr. Duffy, the proprietor of the *Nation*, was averse to these doctrines; and Mitchel and Devin Reilly, the advisers of these measures, began to perceive that they could not justly expect Mr. Duffy to run any risks for the promulgation of views which were, *in his opinion*, wrong.

The enemy began to be alarmed at these violent doctrines,—particularly as they found that the people were acting on the advice, and already in the County of Clare were stopping the transport of grain towards the seaports.

If rents ceased to be paid in Ireland, it was clear that not only would England lose her five millions, sterling, yearly, of absentee rents, but insurance companies and the like would lose dividends, interests, and profits. At least such was the opinion of a reverend gentleman in England, who, under the signature of S.G.O.,* ventilated himself in the *Times* in articles of which the following is a specimen :—

“ Lord John may safely believe me when I say that the prosperity, nay, almost the very existence

* Rev. Lord Sydney Godolphin Osborne.

of many insurance societies, the positive salvation from utter ruin of many, very many mortgagees, depends on some instant steps to make life ordinarily secure in Ireland ; of course, I only mean life in that class of it in which individuals effect insurances and give mortgages."

He alluded to high life ; for in no other class could people "effect insurances" or "give mortgages."

Large forces were concentrated at the points where the spirit of resistance showed itself. Said the *Tipperary Free Press* :—

"A large military force under the civil authority has seized upon the produce of such farms in Boytourath as owed rent and arrears to the late landlord, Mr. Roe, and the same will be removed to Dublin, and sold there, if not redeemed within fourteen days. There are two hundred soldiers and their officers garrisoned in the mansion house at Rockwell."

Whereupon, in the *Nation*, Mitchel urged the people to begin calculating whether ten times the whole British army would be enough to act as bailiffs and drivers everywhere at once. It was obvious to him that if the enemy should be forced to employ their forces to lift and carry the whole harvest of Ireland, and that over roads and bridges broken to obstruct them, and with the daily risk of meeting bands of peasants to dispute their passage—the service would

soon have been hopelessly demoralized; and after a few months of such employment, the remnant of the army could have been destroyed.

Parliament was hastily called together; and her Majesty told both Houses that there were atrocious crimes in Ireland,—“a spirit of insubordination and organised resistance to legal rights;” and that, as a matter of course, “additional powers” were required for the protection of life.

This meant a new Coercion Bill. It was carried without delay, and with an unusual unanimity. Mitchel, referring to this new Coercion Bill of Lord John Russell's, said:—

“It is instructive here to note the difference between a Whig in power and a Whig out. When Sir Robert Peel had proposed *his* Coercion Bill, *the year before*, it had been vehemently opposed by Lord John Russell and Lord Grey. It was time to have done with Coercion, they had said; Ireland had been ‘misgoverned;’ there had been too many Arms Acts and Curfew Acts; it was ‘justice’ that was wanted now, and they, the Whigs, were the men to dispense it. Earl Grey, speaking of the last Coercion Bill (it was brought in by the other party), said, emphatically, that ‘measures of severity had been tried long enough;’ and repeated, with abhorrence, the list of coercive measures passed since 1800, all without effect; how, in 1800, the *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, the Act for the suppression of the rebellion being still in force; how they were continued in 1801; continued again in 1804; how the In-

surrection Act was passed in 1807, which gave the Lord Lieutenant full and legal powers to place any district under Martial law, to suspend trial by Jury, and make it a transportable offence to be out of doors from sunset to sunrise ;—how this Act remained in force till 1810 ;—how it was renewed in 1814—continued in '15, '16, '17—revised in '22, and continued through '23, '24, and '25 ;—how another Insurrection Act was needed in 1833, was renewed in 1834, and expired but five years ago. 'And again,' continued this Whig, 'again in 1846, we are called upon to renew it !' Horrible !—revolting to a Liberal out of place ! 'We must look further,' continued Earl Grey—vociferating from the opposition bench—'we must look to the root of the evil ; the state of law and the habits of the people, *in respect to the occupation of land*, are almost at the root of the disorder ;—it was undeniable that the *clearance system* prevailed to a great extent in Ireland ; and that such things could take place, he cared not how large a population might be suffered to grow up in a particular district, was a *disgrace to a civilized country*.' And Lord John Russell, on the same occasion, in the Commons, said, 'If they were to deal with the question of the crimes, they were bound to consider also if there were not measures that might be introduced which would reach *the causes of these crimes*'—and he horrified the House by an account he gave them of 'a whole village, containing 270 persons, being razed to the ground, and the entire of that large number of individuals sent adrift on the high road, to sleep under the hedges, without even being permitted the privilege of boiling their potatoes, or obtaining shelter among the walls of the houses.' Disgusting !—to a Whig statesman in opposition !

"Now these very same men had had the entire

control and government of Ireland for a year and a half. Not a single measure had been proposed by them in that time to reach 'the causes of these crimes;' not a single security had been given 'in respect to the occupation of land;' not one check to that terrible 'clearance system,' which was 'a disgrace to a civilized country.' On the contrary, every measure, as I have shown, was carefully calculated to accelerate the clearance system; and the government had helped that system ruthlessly by the employment of their troops and police. They had literally swept the people off the land by myriads upon myriads; and now, when their Relief Acts were admittedly *a failure*, and when multitudes of homeless peasants, transformed into paupers, were at length making the landed men, and mortgagees, and Jews, and insurance officers tremble for their gains,—the Liberal Whig Ministry had nothing to propose but more gaols, more handcuffs, more transportation."*

This was, and is, the way in which English Ministers, whether Whig or Tory, alleviate Irish wrongs and Irish sufferings; and until Ireland wrests her independence by force from the English robbers she never will be treated in any other way—never!

Division—that curse of Irishmen—now began to show itself among the *Nation* party. Mr. Duffy did not coincide with Mitchel in his opinion of the necessity of extreme measures; and, therefore Mitchel could not endanger the personal

* "Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)." Page 221.

safety of that gentleman by promulgating, in the *Nation*, views which were in advance of his own. Consequently, early in December, he informed Mr. Duffy that he would no longer write in the *Nation*. In this determination he was joined by Devin Reilly, who also abandoned the *Nation* on the same day.

There was thus lost to the *Nation* party, two of its best and ablest writers; for Mitchel's brilliant, trenchant, picturesque style, had contributed largely to the influence of the *Nation* newspaper, and its popularity among the upper classes—a popularity which sensibly diminished when his terse and vigorous writings no longer brightened its pages.

The separation from the *Nation* party was followed very soon after by a rupture in the "Irish Confederation."

The early differences between Mitchel and Duffy, suggested to the latter gentleman, and to some others, to draw up a programme for the guidance of the Confederation. A committee was appointed consisting of several members, including the leading advocates of both the policy of Mitchel and of Duffy. The report of the committee, which was principally the production of Mr. Duffy, was partly modified by others, but Mitchel both objected to

its principle, and refused to take any part in its modification. It was afterwards submitted to the Council of the Confederation, and there gave rise to a long and earnest discussion, the result of which was the adoption of the report by no very considerable majority. Smith O'Brien drafted a resolution embodying the rules of the Confederation, which rules, it was contended, had been violated by the publication of two letters, one written by Mitchel, the other by Devin Reilly. The question of adopting this resolution gave rise to a three days' debate, which concluded by adopting the resolution and rules, which were as follows:—

“Resolved : That inasmuch as letters published by two members of this Council have brought into question the principles of the Irish Confederation, and have given rise to an imputation that we are desirous to produce a general disorganisation of society in this country, and to overthrow social order, we deem it right to place before the public the following fundamental rules, which constitute the basis of action proposed to our fellow-countrymen by the Irish Confederation :—

“I. That a society be now formed under the title of the ‘Irish Confederation,’ for the purpose of protecting our national interests, and obtaining the legislative independence of Ireland, by the force of opinion, by the combination of all classes of Irishmen, and the exercise of all the political, social, and moral influences within our reach.

“II. That (under the present circumstances) the only hope of the liberation of this country lies in a movement in which all classes and all creeds of Irishmen shall be fairly represented, and by which the interests of none shall be endangered.

“III. That inasmuch as English legislation threatens all Irishmen with a common ruin, we entertain a confident hope their common necessities will speedily unite Irishmen in an effort to get rid of it.

“IV. That we earnestly deprecate the expression of any sentiments in the Confederation calculated to repel or alarm any section of our fellow-countrymen.

“V. That we disclaim, as we have disclaimed, any intention of involving our country in civil war, or of invading the just rights of any portion of its people.

“VI. That the Confederation has not recommended, nor does it recommend, resistance to the payment of rates and rents, but, on the contrary, unequivocally condemns such recommendations.

“VII. That, in protesting against the disarmament of the Irish people, under the Coercion Bill lately enacted, and in maintaining that the right to bear arms, and to use them for legitimate purposes, is one of the primary attributes of liberty, we have had no intention or desire to encourage any portion of the population of this country in the perpetration of crimes, such as those which have recently brought disgrace upon the Irish people, and which have tended in no trifling degree to retard the success of our efforts in the cause of national freedom.

“VIII. That to hold out to the Irish the hope that, in this present broken and divided

condition, they can liberate their country by an appeal to arms, and consequently to divert them from constitutional action, would be, in our opinion, a fatal misdirection of the public mind.

“IX. That this Confederation was established to obtain an Irish Parliament by the combination of classes, and by the force of opinion, exercised in constitutional operations; and that no means of a contrary character can be recommended or promoted through its organisation, while its present fundamental rules remain unaltered.

“X. That while we deem it right thus emphatically to disavow the principles propounded in the publications referred to in the resolutions, we at the same time equally distinctly repudiate all right to control *the private opinions* of any member of our body, provided they do not affect the legal or moral responsibility of the Irish Confederation.”

In moving the adoption of these resolutions, O'Brien referred at length to the letters of Mitchel and Reilly, the sentiments contained in which he characterized as “dangerous, immoral, fatal to the interests of the country, tending to justify assassination, and, further, as being a breach of the fundamental rules of the Confederation.”

Mitchel, in an able and eloquent speech, defended himself; and contended that there was nothing in his letter violating the fundamental rules; and described the resolutions as “peace resolutions, intended to exclude

him and those who agreed with him from the Society ;” and concluded by moving the following amendment :—

“That this Confederation does not feel called upon to pronounce either condemnation or approval of any doctrine promulgated by any of its members in letters, speeches, or otherwise ; because the seventh fundamental rule of the Confederation expressly provides ‘ that, inasmuch as the essential bond of union amongst us is the assertion of Ireland’s right to an independent legislature, no member of the Irish Confederation shall be bound to the adoption of any principle involved in any resolution or promulgated by any speaker in the society or any Journal advocating its policy, to which he has not given his special consent, save only the foregoing fundamental principle of the society.’ ”

His friend Thomas Devin Reilly seconded the amendment, and in an able speech, on the following evening, said :—

“He was not opposed to the combination of the classes, but he would not wait in the useless hope of conciliating the landlord class, which had aided to throw the people into prisons and poor-houses. If the people had been taught the use of arms, they would not have been decimated by the famine of 1847 ; but that famine came, and found them unarmed, and they lay down and died like cowards. The people should maintain their right to learn the use of arms,—they should keep the food in the country, and not lie down to perish.”

The resolutions having been defended by successive speakers, Mitchel rose to reply, and in the course of his speech said:—

“Mr. M'Gee says, beware of exasperating class against class ; once disturb the ethereal calm, the sweet confidence and affection that reigns between classes in Ireland, and you know where it may end. I answer, Skibbereen ! Bantry ! Skull ! Westport ! I point to the exterminations, the murders, the hangings, the Coercion Act. But, sir, with this part of the argument I have done. Mr. Dillon has, however, put it to me what I ought to withdraw my amendment, in order to put what he considered the true issue before you—namely, an insurrectionary policy or a parliamentary one. I will tell you why I do not ; because I deny the competency of this meeting to settle upon either the one or the other without full notice to all the Confederates in Ireland. And now I will complain of our Council in this matter. There has been for weeks in preparation a report, purporting to fix an exclusive policy for the Confederation, a copy of which I insisted should be sent to all town and country clubs in England and Ireland, and to all Confederates with whom the secretary corresponds ; and I was led to believe this would have been done before attempting to get the vote of a public meeting on so important a measure. But after weeks spent in the discussion of that document, at the very last hour, it is withdrawn, and the very same thing is attempted to be done by another document—namely, by these resolutions. My reason, then, for putting my amendment in this simply negative form is, that I do not desire to thrust my opinions on the Confederation at present. I deny the right of either party to do so,

and I only want to preserve that freedom of speech and action within our rules which we have hitherto enjoyed. And now, I say, adopt these resolutions and you seal the fate of the Confederation; you make it merely one of the long series of moral force agitating associations that have plagued Ireland for forty years. Adopt these and all the world will see that you have thrown the people overboard to conciliate the gentry."

The question having been put, and the amendment declared lost, a poll was demanded, when the numbers were—

For the amendment	188
Against it	317

Thus was lost an amendment, on the passing of which depended freedom of speech and action; and thus was Mitchel cut off from the Confederation, as he had been before from the Repeal Association; and on the same question—physical force. Mitchel took immediate steps to separate himself from the Confederation, and on the following Monday, the 7th February 1848, addressed the following letter of resignation to the Irish Confederation:—

“TO THE ACTING SECRETARY,
IRISH CONFEDERATION.

“8 Ontario Terrace,
Rathmines.

7th February, 1848.

“DEAR SIR,—The resolutions adopted by the meeting of Dublin Confederates on Friday last,

virtually exclude me from all participation in the working of the Irish Confederation. I, therefore, resign my place on the Council, and my office as Inspector of Clubs for the province of Ulster.

“The first of those resolutions recites our fundamental rule, pledging us to use, for the liberation of Ireland, all political, social, and moral influences within our reach; the second announces ‘that the *only* hope of the liberation of this country lies in a movement in which all classes of Irishmen shall be fairly represented, and by which the interests of none shall be endangered’—which I believe pledges you now to use only those political and social influences which are *not* within your reach.

“The third declares that the Irish Confederation ‘entertains a confident hope’ of a combination of classes in Ireland against English dominion:—but I do not entertain a confident hope, or any hope at all, of that result.

“The fourth forbids the expression of sentiments ‘calculated to repel or alarm any section of our fellow-countrymen’—but I will belong to no society where I cannot express sentiments in favour of absolute Tenant-Right, and where I cannot recommend the only known method of establishing that right, namely, *armed opinion*; and this always ‘repels and alarms’ that section of our fellow-countrymen called the ‘gentry.’

“The fifth disclaims all intention of involving the country in civil war, or of ‘invading the just rights of any section of its people’ (by which I understand the rights called by landlords ‘rights of property’); but I desire to free the country, although in that process it should be involved in civil war, and although the said ‘rights of property’ should be invaded or even

destroyed—a thing which I consider highly probable.

“The sixth condemns resistance to the payment of rents and rates in all cases ; but I mean to recommend such resistance in certain cases, as one of the ‘political, moral, and social influences’ whereby this island is to be freed from British rule, from slavery and debasement of mind and body, and from ultimate extinction as a nation.

“The seventh, referring to the Coercion Act, asserts the right to use arms ‘for legitimate purposes,’ and at the same time condemns the ‘perpetration of crimes ;’ thus implying that the Act in question is intended and calculated for the prevention of crime, and, consequently, acknowledging, on the part of the Confederation, that the Act is a *bona fide* measure for the good government of this country ; but I hold that Act to be the result of a conspiracy between the enemies of the people, in order to thin the population by famine and slaughter ; I hold the ostensible object of it, namely, the ‘prevention of crime and outrage,’ to be a false pretext, and its real object to be the same for which robbers have always disarmed their victims.

“The eighth declares it to be a fatal misdirection of the public mind to divert it from constitutional action ; but I hold that we have no constitution in Ireland ; that it is a fatal misdirection of the public mind to assert we have ; and that ‘constitutional action’ is a worn-out humbug.

“The ninth asserts, for the first time, that the ‘force of opinion’ mentioned in our fundamental rules, means the force of opinion *exercised in constitutional operations* (which is not true), and

‘that no means of a contrary character can be recommended or promoted through the Confederation,’ which would debar the Confederation from all those means which I think applicable or adequate, and render its whole organisation worse than useless.

“The tenth, while it ‘*emphatically disavows*’ all the principles which I hold, repudiates any right to control *private opinions* ; but as I do not mean to keep my opinions private, I shall not be able to avail myself of that liberal proviso.

“Until these resolutions, therefore, shall be all set aside, and the act of Friday evening entirely undone, I can take no part in the conduct of the Confederation. I deny, indeed, as I denied in the public meeting, the competency of the Dublin members to modify or alter the constitution of the whole body, or to put an arbitrary interpretation upon its rules, and that without even giving notice to any of the Clubs or country members of their intention so to do. But I do not insist upon this point. I shall not demand a repetition of our late discussion in the Clubs, nor seek to keep the people any longer engaged in a bye-battle about ‘policy ;’ still less do I wish to lead a secession, and set up another fragment of a party pretending to point out the people’s path to liberty.

“On the other hand, I do not choose to attend your meetings in order to thwart, or neutralize, or bring into contempt, all your legal and constitutional proceedings. I find myself in a minority, and am content to assume that the exposition of policy, solemnly adopted after three days’ discussion in Dublin, will be ratified by the Confederates at large. But I believe it is a miserable mistake. I believe the original free constitution of the Confederation still remains in force, and that public opinion will soon compel the council to

reverse the act of imbecile despotism, which they consummated on Friday night.

“Relying upon this confident expectation, upon the thorough honesty and worth of most of my late political associates, and, more than all, upon the manly spirit of independence and fair play, which gave life to our Confederacy at first, and is the life and soul of it still, I am unwilling to renounce connexion for ever with the only genuine National organisation in the country. Paralysed as the Irish Confederation is at present, mesmerised by landlord influence, and bewildered by constitutional law, it is still the only body in Ireland that is making, or thinks it is making, any single honest effort to rid the Island of English dominion. I, therefore, only withdraw from active interference in the proceedings of the Confederation ; and so soon as it shall be once more open to all repealers of the Union (be they physical-force revolutionists, aristocrats, democrats, Chartists, Orangemen, Whigs, or Thugs), I will be found in your ranks again.

“ I have the honour to remain, etc.,

“ JOHN MITCHEL.”

Although debarred from taking part in the proceedings of the Confederation, Mitchel resolved to spread his views amongst his countrymen, no matter to what risk it exposed himself, and proceeded to establish a newspaper solely for that purpose. This paper he called the *United Irishman* ; and so great was his zeal in the cause, that he issued the first number

on the following Saturday, February the 12th. The prospectus was sufficient to startle all lovers of law and order—that is, English law and order: it was as follows:—

“The projectors of the *United Irishman* believe that the world is weary of Old Ireland, and also of Young Ireland—that the day for both these noisy factions is past and gone—that Old and Young alike have grown superannuated and obsolete together. They believe that the public ear is thirsting to hear some Voice, bolder, more intelligible, more independent of parties, policies, and cliques, than any it has heard for a long while. They believe that Ireland really and truly *wants* to be freed from English dominion. They know not how many or how few will listen to their voice. They have no party prepared to halloo at their backs; and have no trust save in the power of Truth and the immortal beauty of Freedom. He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

“The principles on which the *United Irishman* will be conducted are shortly these:—

“1st. That the Irish people have a just and indefeasible right to this Island, and to all the moral and material wealth and resources thereof, to possess and govern the same for their own use, maintenance, comfort, and honour, as a distinct Sovereign State.

“2nd. That it is in their power, and it is also their manifest duty to make good and exercise that right.

“3rd. That the life of one peasant is as precious as the life of one nobleman or gentleman.

“4th. That the property of the farmers and labourers of Ireland is as sacred as the property

of all the noblemen and gentlemen in Ireland, and is also immeasurably more valuable.

“5th. That the custom called ‘Tenant Right,’ which prevails partially in the North of Ireland, is a just and salutary custom both for North and South :—that it ought to be extended and secured in Ulster, and adopted and enforced, by common consent, in the other three provinces of the Island.

“6th. That every man in Ireland who shall hereafter pay taxes for the support of the State, shall have a just right to an equal voice with every other man in the government of that State, and the outlay of those taxes.

“7th. That no man at present has any ‘legal’ rights, or claim to the protection of any law, and that all ‘legal and constitutional agitation’ in Ireland is a delusion.

“8th. That every free man, and every man who desires to become free, ought to have arms, and to practise the use of them.

“9th. That no combination of classes in Ireland is desirable, just, or possible, save on the terms of the rights of the industrious classes being acknowledged and secured.

“10th. That no good thing can come from the English Parliament, or the English Government.

“To enforce and apply these principles—to make Irishmen thoroughly understand them, lay them up in their hearts, and practise them in their lives—will be the sole and constant study of the conductors of the *United Irishman*.”

It was thus, and under the most flattering auspices, that the *United Irishman* made its appearance, having for its motto those words of Theobald Wolf Tone: “Our inde-

penance must be had at all hazards. If the men of property will not support us, they must fall: we can support ourselves by the aid of that numerous and respectable class of the community, *the men of no property.*"

CHAPTER VI.

Mitchel's Letter to Lord Clarendon, 12th February 1848—Nature of the Enterprise—John Martin's Letter—Father Kenyon's—The "Boyle Gazette" on the Famine—"Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Bill"—"For Land and Life"—Waterford Election—Meagher, Costelloe—Mitchel opposes Meagher's Election—His reasons—News of the French Revolution—Mitchel returns to the Confederation—O'Brien in the Confederation—Meagher, Reilly—Moral Force in Paris—John O'Connell—The "Morning Post" on "Irish Sedition"—The "Dublin University Magazine"—Lord Stanley and the "United Irishman"—Letter to Lord Clarendon—Government Meanness—Address to the French people—Mitchel's Speech in the Swift Club—Effect of vicious teaching on the Irish people—Mitchel recalls the memory of the Men of '98—The Morality of War.

THE appearance of the first number of the *United Irishman* marked quite a new era in the History of Ireland. Never before had there been such a Journal seen in Ireland; and well might men wonder when they read its articles brimful of "sedition," and that couched in language of the most refined delicacy of finish, yet with a strength and power of the most biting sarcasm and sweeping invective, that bore the stamp of genius. They were read as an intellectual luxury by men who ranked among his enemies

—and of enemies he had his share—and were looked upon by the Government from the first as the most formidable opponent they had met for a long time.

His first utterance in his new Journal was a letter addressed to Lord Clarendon, the Lord Lieutenant. It was as follows:—

“TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF CLARENDON,
ENGLISHMAN; CALLING HIMSELF HER MAJESTY’S
LORD LIEUTENANT GENERAL AND GENERAL
GOVERNOR OF IRELAND.

“MY LORD,—To you, as the official representative of Foreign dominion in our enslaved Island, I mean to address a few plain words upon the aim and design of this new Journal, the UNITED IRISHMAN; with which your Lordship and your Lordship’s masters are to have more to do than may be agreeable either to you or to me.

“Those words shall be so very plain, that even if your Lordship vouchsafe to read them, I count upon your being unable (because you are a Whig and a diplomatist) to understand them in their simple meaning. I am going to mystify ‘the Government’ and the lawyers by telling the naked truth, whereof they are all hereby to take notice.

“Simply, then, the UNITED IRISHMAN newspaper has been undertaken by men who see that the sway of your nation here is drawing near its latter day—who know that all its splendid apparatus of glittering soldiers and conciliating statesmen, all its obscure and obscene lower world of placemen, place-beggars, place-jobbers, spies, special Jurors, informers, and suborners—that it is *all* a weak imposture, an ugly night-

mare lying on the breast of our sick state—that it is made up of *prestige*, and maintained by ‘striking terror,’ and needs but a charm of Truth, a few true words spoken, a few bold deeds done—and the whole hideous brood will vanish like foul fiends at cock-crow. Yes, indeed; these men believe full surely that they, even they, young men, undistinguished men, without arms in their hands, money in their purse, or a party at their back, are more than a match for the British Government in Ireland; can abolish that *prestige*, and that preternatural terror (shadows which shake men’s souls more than the substance of ten thousand soldiers); and can then, almost without an effort, grasp the monster by the throat, and drag him, strangled, forth from his enchanted ‘castle.’

“I am now, in order the better to confound your politics, going to give you a true account of the means we intend to use, and of the rules, signs, and pass-words of our new United Irish Society Lodge, A 1.—They are so simple that you will never believe them.

“An exact half-century has passed away since the last Holy War waged in this Island, to sweep it clear of the English name and nation. And we differ from the illustrious conspirators of Ninety-Eight, not in principle—no, not an iota—but as I shall presently show you, materially as to the mode of action.

“Theirs was a secret conspiracy,—ours is a public one. *They* had not learned the charm of open, honest, outspoken resistance to oppression: and through their secret organisation you wrought their ruin; *we* defy you, and all the informers and detectives that British corruption ever bred. No espionage can tell you more than we will proclaim once a week upon the house-tops.

If you desire to have a Castle detective employed about the UNITED IRISHMAN office in Trinity Street I shall make no objection, provided the man be sober and honest. If SIR GEORGE GREY or SIR WILLIAM SOMERVILLE would like to read our correspondence, we make him welcome for the present,—only let the letters be forwarded without losing a post. So that you see we get rid of the whole crew of informers at once.

“ Now as to our positive action—your Lordship, I believe, has read the Prospectus of our Journal—in fact I know you have :—well, we count upon a great circulation for this weekly sheet of ours amongst the industrious classes both in town and country all Ireland over ; and we do really intend to preach and enforce the various principles there set down, to follow the same to *all* their consequences, and to point out in plain language the directest means of putting them into practice. Just take our third axiom, *that the life of a peasant is as sacred as the life of a nobleman*—why it seems a truism, and yet it is denied and set at naught by all your ‘ laws,’ as you call them. But consider what follows from this truth : consider all its practical bearings, and how, if once apprehended and laid to heart by the people, it is likely to be realized ; think of the collateral questions involved—‘ if there be a *surplus*, who are the surplus ?’—‘ the hard-working or the idle ?’—‘ surplus once ascertained, how to be got rid of ?’—and the like ; and then imagine how these questions are likely to find solution amongst ‘ an excitable peasantry.’ Yet they are fair and legitimate questions, nay, pressing, life-or-death questions ; and we mean in the columns of this UNITED IRISHMAN to argue, discuss, illustrate, and, if possible, determine them.

“ We will do the like by the other maxims in our Prospectus :—

“ ‘ That legal and constitutional agitation in Ireland is a delusion :

“ ‘ That every man (except a born slave, who aspires only to beget slaves, and to die a slave), ought to have ARMS and to practise the use of them :

“ ‘ That no good thing can come from the English Parliament.’

“ I shall not insult your Lordship’s excellent understanding by pointing out to *you* all the manifest consequences that follow from those plain truths. But the people are not so acute—they need to have every one of these matters elucidated for them one by one, and set in all possible points of view ; for indeed they are a simple and credulous people, and have had much base teaching. They have been taught, for instance, that ‘ patience and perseverance ’ in rags and starvation is a virtue—that to eat the food they sow and reap is a crime, and that ‘ the man who commits a crime [this sort of crime] gives strength to the enemy.’ They were not taught by those bad teachers to avoid real crimes, lying, boasting, cringing, rearing up their children as beggars, taking their children’s bread and giving it unto dogs. None of all this have they learned yet ; but please God they shall.

“ It is against the ‘ law,’ it seems, to preach all this ; and your Lordship and the ‘ law-officers,’ I have heard say, will overwhelm me with an indictment—and indeed I am told the worthy Chief Justice, at Clonmel lately (where he was ‘ striking terror ’ into Tipperary), on seeing the programme of this paper, did roll his eyes like a carnivorous ogre, and then and there christened it the *Queen’s Bench Gazette* ; never doubting that

he would make a meal of it one day in his den at Inns' Quay.

“ Yes, of course you will prosecute before long ; in self-defence, I hope, you must ;—and then I have only one request to make,—that you will bid the sheriff to bid MR. PONDER (that, I think, is the gentleman's name) *not* to pack the jury. A high-minded English nobleman, a conciliatory and ameliorative nobleman, so gracious at Lord Mayor's feasts, so condescending at Antient Concerts, so blandly benignant at *reunions* of literary persons, —surely such a nobleman as this will not play with loaded dice, or with marked cards, to juggle away an accused man's liberty or life. No, I feel that I have only to mention the circumstance in order to make you hasten to arrange this point with the worthy sheriff.

“ But lest there should be any mistake, I will tell you what I shall do—there shall be no secrets from you. I intend, then, to pay special regard to the jury lists, to excite public attention continually to the jury arrangements of this city ; and, above all, to publish a series of interesting lectures on ‘ the office and duty of jurors,’ more especially in cases of sedition, where the ‘ law ’ is at one side, and the liberty of their country at the other.

“ I need say no more. You must now perceive that this same anticipated prosecution is one of the chief weapons wherewith we mean to storm and sack the enchanted Castle. For be it known unto you, that in such a case, you shall either publicly, boldly, notoriously, *pack a jury*, or else see the accused rebel walk a free man out of the Court of Queen's Bench—which will be a victory only less than the rout of your Lordship's redcoats in the open field. And think you that in case of such a victory, I will not repeat the blow ? and again

repeat it,—until all the world shall see that England's law does not govern this nation?

“But you will pack? You will bravely defy threats and bullying, and insolent public opinion, and *do your duty*? You will have up the UNITED IRISHMAN before twelve of your Lordship's *lion-and-unicorn* tradesmen who are privileged to supply some minor matters for the viceregal establishment? Will you do this, and carry your conviction with a high hand? I think you will, nay, I think you must, if you and your nation mean to go on making even a *show* of governing here. Well, then, I will have other men ready to take up my testimony—ready and willing, Oh, Porsena CLARENDON! to thrust their hands into the blazing fire *until it be extinguished*. But you will ask for additional ‘powers?’ You will resort to courts-martial, and triangles, and free quarters? Well, *that*, at last, will be the end of ‘constitutional agitation,’ and Irishmen will then find themselves front to front with their enemies, and feel that there is no help in franchises, in votings, in spoutings, in shoutings, and toasts drank with enthusiasm—nor in anything in this world save the *extensor* and *contractor* muscles of their right arms, in these and in the goodness of God above. To that issue the ‘condition of Ireland question’ must be brought.

“I trust you are now aware of all our open secret.

“In plain English, my Lord Earl, the deep and irreconcilable disaffection of this people to all British laws, law-givers, and law-administrators shall find a voice. That holy hatred of foreign dominion which nerved our noble predecessors fifty years ago, for the dungeon, the field, or the gallows, (though of late years it has worn a vile nisi-prius gown and snivelled somewhat in courts of law and on spouting platforms), still lives, thank

God! and glows as fierce and hot as ever. To educate that holy hatred, to make it know itself, and avow itself, and at last fill itself full, I hereby devote the columns of the UNITED IRISHMAN,

“And I have the honour to be, etc., etc.,

“JOHN MITCHEL.

“12 Trinity-street, 12th February, 1848.”

Mitchel's enterprise was indeed hazardous and beset with perils; but this he knew, and, notwithstanding, flung himself with all his energy into the battle—for battle it was—resolved to fight it, if need were, to the death. “To rouse to armed resistance a poor and carefully disarmed people, whose country was occupied at every point by a numerous army, and whose ‘upper classes’ were generally altogether devoted to British rule,—not for love of British rule indeed, but for fear of their own countrymen,—and to attempt this in open day, and in defiance of the well understood principle and practice of Irish law-courts, all in the full power and possession of the enemy,—was an undertaking which could only end in one way. But what then? Ireland was our country. The Irish race was our flesh and blood. The alternative was, either to see a foreign enemy scourge our people from the face of their own land by famine and pestilence, ‘law,’ political economy, and red tape, or to

set our backs to the wall and fight to the death."*

In addition to the letter to Lord Clarendon, quoted above, the first number of the *United Irishman* contained a letter from John Martin, of Loughorn, and the Rev. John Kenyon, of Templeberry, vice-president of the Confederation Club there. After stating his opinion on the late proceedings in the Confederation, and justifying Mitchel's action in the matter, John Martin concluded his lengthy letter thus:—

“Never did our native land so wildly, so despairingly, call upon the aid of her patriots as now. For want of our National independence, famine and plague have been slaughtering our countrymen and our friends by hundreds of thousands. Scenes of havoc have been enacted in Ireland this last year more horrible and more criminal, nationally considered, than the September massacres of the French Revolution. Famine and plague are still raging among our people, and are like to be permanent institutions in our society. Pauperism has made the interests of two-thirds of us irreconcilable with the interests of the remaining third, and has placed the different classes of our people, the landlords and the peasantry—the men of property and the men of no property—in such horrible relation to each other, that the death of a whole class would favour the benefit of the remaining classes. It is an internecine civil war under the forms of ‘law.’ If we would save our country, we

* “Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps).” Page 234.

must not content ourselves with shrieking out our horror at assassinations, and crying shame at landlord evictions, and lamenting the destruction of industry and the waste of property. So long as there are circumstances in our political condition placing the vital interests of our different classes in violent antagonism, so long will the deadly strife of our classes continue, and every year it will prove more deadly—that is, our shame, and sin, and misery will grow the deeper, the more deadly, the more horrible, so long as our *Union* shall last.”

The Rev. Mr. Kenyon in his letter, touching the matter of arms, said :—

“ I could wish, in the first place, that all Irishmen were armed, and able to use their arms. I do not believe that the possession of arms leads to the perpetration of crime. And though it did, in particular instances, yet as the possession of hands, and eyes, and noses, and ears, and mouths—in short, of bodies and of souls—leads also occasionally to crime, without being therefore an evil, so it may be with arms. I indulge that wish because, in opposition to all Quakers and quakerly-disposed persons, I believe firmly in the lawfulness of war ; because I have no faith in the perfectibility of human nature, or in the advent of the millennium ; and because I count it amongst the duties of all freemen and of all men aspiring to be free, to be prepared more or less, according to the varying circumstances of their condition, to wage war in defence of their hearths and altars, or for the maintenance of their properties, their liberties, and their lives.”

And alluding to the "combination of the classes," he said:—

"I do despair of a union of classes in Ireland, as a result of moral-force agitation. It is not in nature, nor in history, that bodies of men will yield up their interests on mere speculative considerations of propriety, no matter how iniquitously these interests have been acquired, or how iniquitously they continue to be supported. Well, moral-force agitation in Ireland is universally understood to be a mere speculation. It is ethical. It is balmy. It starts and snorts at the smell of blood, like a horse at a tanyard. Our hierarchy, such of them as write in newspapers, encourage this opinion. Long lists of obsequious clergymen, of the second order, strengthen it. It is firmly believed by the corporation of landed proprietors; and, accordingly, they laugh at moral-force agitation, and assert all their rights at the point of the law. With all possible respect for individuals of this order, I could heartily wish that the order were humbled; nay, even at the expense of individual hardship, if necessary, for the public welfare. I do believe that a soul, and not a programme, is the one thing needful for our freedom; and that for the creation of this soul within the death-ribs of our country, *your* [Mitchel's] method, in the main, is more hopeful and to the purpose."

Famine was still ravaging whole provinces. The *Boyle Gazette* stated that more than one-half of the population of Roscommon was in a state of destitution. But, notwithstanding this alarming state of the country, when Mr. Scully, from his place in Parlia-

ment, asked the government if they had any measure ready for the providing of relief by means of food or employment, he was told by Sir George Grey that the government did not intend to submit to Parliament any proposition for the renewal of public works or of out-door relief. In fact the government was only glad to hear that the people were dying by thousands, and were not going to upset their plans for their extermination by giving them their own food.

Mr. Scrope was enabled to declare that, although a rate of £13,868 was declared necessary for the Union of Ballina, only £868 had been collected, and amongst the defaulters were some of the highest rank of Mayo County.

All this while evictions were being carried on to a most alarming extent; and from the evidence of a Mr. Tuite it appeared that "on every land might be seen the agents, driving the poor people from their miserable dwellings, pulling down the houses as soon as they left, and then refusing the wretched people admittance into the workhouse—a right which was given them by the Act of last year."

On the 15th of February Sir William Somerville, in the House of Commons, introduced a Bill called Law of Landlord

and Tenant (Ireland) Bill, purporting to be of benefit to the tenants, but, in reality, like all their other bills on the same subject, solely for the landlords. Mitchel, in order to undeceive the people, and let them understand what was the real object the government had in view in introducing the Bill, addressed to the farmers three letters which for clearness of diction and forcibleness of style, stand unrivalled. They were as follows:—

“FOR LAND AND LIFE!

“Land in Ireland is life. Just in the proportion that our people contrive to keep or to gain some foot-hold on the soil, in that proportion exactly they will live and not die.

“All social, all industrial, all National questions resolve themselves now into *this*—how many Irish cultivators can keep root in the earth during the present year—that so the storm and blight, the famine, and the black flood of pauperism may not sweep them off, away into destruction and outer darkness?

“Not to the individual farmer only is this a life-and-death question, but to society and to the nation. With the ruin of the tillers of the soil, *all* is ruined:—in vain shall you adopt manufacture pledges—hold meetings to develop resources—form companies—make speeches—insist upon National rights, a National legislature, a National flag;—once let the farmers be swept off this Irish soil, and there is an utter end of us and of our cause. ‘*Ireland for the Irish*’ means primarily and mainly, *not* ‘Irishmen for Irish offices,’ not ‘political ameliorations,’ not ‘assimila-

tion to English franchises'—patient Heaven! no;—it means, *first*, Irishmen fixed upon Irish ground, and growing there, occupying the Island like trees in a living forest with roots stretching as far towards Tartarus as their heads lift themselves towards the clouds. In such a nation as this, industry, energy, virtue, become possible; manufactures would grow up without ever a pledge, or a speech, or a waistcoat-pattern agitation; a National senate would meet and sit, and rule the land, of its own native energy and by the necessities of the case, without ever a foreign statute empowering it so to do; a National army would arise from the earth like the sons of the dragon's teeth of old; and a National flag would plant itself without hands, and wave in the dawn of freedom, defying all the ends of the earth to pluck it down.

“But let the tillers of the soil be once uprooted, —let the forest be *cleared*, and the prostrate, withered nation is fit for railway sleepers; the living forest is dead and gone;—the living nation is undone for ever, and the peace that knew it shall know it no more.

“In one word, land is life: and for the possession of land there is now a deadly struggle going on in every part of Ireland. The farmers of Ulster are in utter dismay, seeing their ancient tenant-right slipping away from them day by day, and the monster pauperism coming nearer and nearer to the door. The farmers of the other three provinces, without a shred of law or custom on their side, are, it is true, here and there making out a law for themselves; but, on the whole, they are yielding, sinking, withering off the earth. From north, south, east, and west, comes a terrible cry of terror and of agony—Spare us, spare us our lives and lands!

“In this crisis comes in the ‘Government’ with a ‘Bill to ameliorate the relations of landlord and tenant.’ A fine phrase! a liberal and conciliatory phrase! But the bill, the bill! Surely it legalizes tenant-right at last? Surely it makes some first step, at least, to extend it to the South? Surely it interposes to stop this cruel warfare at last, and to give the hard-hunted peasants some respite, some hope?

“Now as Heaven is above us, it is a Bill deliberately framed to destroy tenant-right where it is,—to cut off all hope of it where it is not,—to rob the north,—to exterminate the south,—to take care that ‘property’ in Ireland shall support poverty, not by dividing the property, but by slaying the surplus poverty. It does indeed interpose in the agrarian war, but for the purpose of finishing it in the utter conquest of the people. It is the brother and ally of the Coercion Act. It is the remainder of the bargain between England and the landlords, fulfilled to the letter on England’s part.

“The bargain is this—keep for *us*, ye landlords, our Irish province, and we shall set your heel on the necks of all your enemies.

“The Government Bill is a complicated system of *compensations* for improvements,—and only *future* improvements, which shall have been effected hereafter according to certain notices, specifications, docketts, awards, certificates, and final decrees,—improvements to which the tenant shall at last be lucky enough to make good his claim, after being coursed through four or five courts of law and equity, after employing attorneys and providing witnesses, at least three times *for each improvement*, covering quires of paper with elaborate schedules and statements, and dancing attendance on the clerk of the peace, the assistant

barrister, the agent, the bailiff, the under-bailiff, and all the agents, bailiffs, and under-bailiffs of all persons who have any claim as landlords on the estate, which persons the tenant is to find out by his learning.

“The chief point is the arbitration : and we will tell you how the arbitrators are to be appointed—the tenant to name one,—the landlord another,—and these two to name an umpire :—but if they cannot agree upon an umpire (*and they never will*), why then an umpire is to be named by the Petty Sessions Court, that is *by landlords* : so that *in every case* the landlord is to have two to one on the arbitration.

“If the farmer, by any miracle or mistake, get an award for his improvements, the yearly value of them is to be allowed him in his rent *for twenty-one years*, and no more !

“But what of past improvements, made without specification ? What of the tenant-right farms purchased with money in Ulster, or held by the farmer and his ancestors time out of mind ? Is it not to be legalised, then ? No : this Bill is intended for the gradual abolition of that tenant-right property, according to the recommendation of Lord DEVON’S Commission. SIR WILLIAM SOMERVILLE says plainly the Bill is framed according to the report of that Commission ; and MR. SHARMAN CRAWFORD says the certain effect of this Bill in Ulster will be to ‘afford a pretence to landlords to abrogate the custom. ‘They would say that a law had been passed for the relief of the tenants in Ireland ; and the landlord would take advantage of that law to deprive the tenant of those rights who had hitherto enjoyed them.’ Of course he would : such is the intention.

“But we forgot : the Bill is to be retrospective, as to tenants holding at a rent under ten pounds.

These tenants, if they have effected substantial improvements, *within five years*, and have kept a record of the same, and can produce witnesses to prove it, are to be allowed, on ejection, some compensation ; but it is not in any case to exceed three years' rent. If they cannot point out these improvements, and prove them in due form (even though they should have bought their little farms at twenty pounds an acre but last year), why they must tramp ; and if the ' Union ' be a solvent one they may get out-door relief.

"As to the southern farmers, if they have capital ; and can employ lawyers ; and ejection do not overtake them in the meantime,—they are expected to lay down their guns and proceed quietly to get estimates and specifications prepared, put themselves in communication with the Clerk of the Peace, and begin at once to invest the capital they have gathered through the three famines in thorough-draining according to the Deauston system, and building *cottages ornees* with mitred eaves and Tudor gables !

"Yes, let northern and southern farmers lay down their arms, and cease their 'seditious projects,' as landlord HERBERT calls them. They must see that 'Government' is caring for them ; in 'Government' let their trust be reposed, and let them lie down to sleep in peace under the shadow of its wings.

"Indeed, we are glad to learn from landlord CASTLEREAGH, in the course of this debate, '*that the farmers of the North of Ireland have nothing to complain of!*' Is this true, farmers of the North of Ireland ?

"But enough for one week ; we shall return in our next number to this measure of wholesale and atrocious robbery and slaughter ; and consider how it is to be met and defeated : for defeated it must be."

"TO THE SMALL FARMERS OF IRELAND.

"LETTER I.

"You are now, I hope, in high delight with your situation and prospects, your 'Tenant-Leagues' and your 'Tenant-Right' meetings; your legal and constitutional resolutions at Kilmacthomas and Kilkenny, at Derry and Monaghan;—your petitions to 'Parliament' for what you called 'Bills,' and the hustings harangues of candidates on the 'Tenant-Right' speculation, —have brought you so far. Here you have your 'Bill' at last.

"Surely you have reason to be thankful that you did not listen to the advice of '*sedition persons*,' who declared that you should look no longer to the legal petitioning 'patience and perseverance' method of establishing your rights. You must now feel grateful to the worthy SHARMAN CRAWFORD, who, in his speech at Coleraine, lately, so earnestly cautioned you against those seditious persons, and more especially against *me*, by name! You see, too, how that worthy gentleman is borne out in the House of Commons by MR. HERBERT, a great Kerry squire, who quotes his Coleraine speech with approbation, as proving 'that the interests of the tenants are jeopardized by those who make extravagant demands on their behalf, in connexion with seditious and dangerous projects,'—meaning *my* projects. You see now what a danger you have escaped! And the same landlord HERBERT, in order to show the atrocious nature of these projects, tells of a certain 'member of the Irish Council,' meaning *me*, 'who not only defined what Tenant-Right was, but told them what the effect of it would be:—the effect, it was said, would be the transfer of property from the owner to the occupier'—Oh, horrible! The

House was scandalized, as well it might be, at such an idea ; and you are expected to congratulate yourselves that you gave no quarter to so sacrilegious a thought, but trustfully committed yourselves to the peaceful ways of the constitution, and the legislation of ameliorating landlords. Whereof I most heartily wish you joy.

“ But enough of this mocking vein. You are probably in a serious mood ; and I have some serious words to address to you. First, however, let me confess that I am quite as ‘ seditious ’ a person as the old lady who represents Rochdale describes me ;—that my projects are no less ‘ dangerous ’ than landlord HERBERT fears ;—that I do actually hold the life and property of a working man as sacred as the life and property of any squire in Ireland (than which no sedition can be blacker) ;—and that I did indeed propose to certain landlords in the Irish Council that they should once for all acknowledge in the tenant-class a right of perpetual ownership in the soil, subject to a fair rent ; and as landlord HERBERT vouches that my speech on that occasion was a speech of ‘ considerable ability,’ I will just, before going further, quote a few passages of it for you as I find it in the newspapers :—

“ The very best devised scheme of compensation for future improvements, whereby farmers may possibly create a property to themselves hereafter, and a substantial Yeomanry may arise in future ages, will not save the present occupying tenant-farmers from eviction and destruction—will not save the property and industry of Ireland from being swallowed up by the ever-deepening and widening vortex of national pauperism. It would not prevent, or even check that frightful operation described here on Thursday, by the hon. member for Clare, the operation of ‘ passing paupers

through the workhouse'—that is, walking farmers off their lands, locking up their doors, quenching their fires, driving them in shoals into the throat of this insatiable poor-law, and flinging them out from thence landless, homeless, desperate beggars—a terror and scandal to society, and a burden to the very earth. Thus, every scheme for what is called the amelioration of this country, seems based on the assumption that the first thing to be done, is to weed the Irish population out of the Irish soil. Pauper labour, pauper farms, pauper schools of industry, pauper life, and pauper spirit—these are the basis on which our law-makers would have us re-construct society in this island. It is tenant-right alone that can stay this plague. There is no doubt that the acknowledgment of such a right in the tenants would virtually give them a joint proprietorship in the fee-simple of the land, and might therefore be called, to some extent, *a transfer of property*. But if, at the same time, it stimulated industry, greatly increased production, and added immensely to the national wealth, then it can be easily conceived how it would add to the substantial wealth of the landlord, as well as of the tenant, making the latter an independent man, without taking a farthing from the rent of the former. In fact, all this does take place in Ulster; and there, where the tenant's possession will sell for half the fee-simple value, or more, the landlord has, on an average, quite as high a rent as in other provinces, and infinitely better secured. In tenant-right is security against universal national pauperism and confiscation. And what a blessed exchange this would be! I hold it to be the most signal and fundamental mistake ever committed in legislation since the beginning of the world, that of acknowledging a right to relief in an able-bodied

pauper—an able-bodied idler. I maintain that a man has a right to live by the sweat of his brow, and not otherwise; and that it is the duty of society—that is, of the State—to secure him fair play, a fair field for his honest labour, and no more. And in Ireland the only available field is the land. Set that free—disenchant the soil—enfranchise industry, and let it loose upon its natural element, and you abolish able-bodied pauperism and out-door relief at once.’

“These are the ‘seditious projects’ which disgust squire HERBERT. It is further quite true that I did afterwards write a letter wherein I said the only method of establishing ‘Tenant-Right’ is by ‘the determined public opinion of *armed men*.’ And, lastly, it is true that I have habitually made light of all constitutional agitation and parliamentary palaver on the subjects of Tenant-Right, and more especially of the eternal ‘Bills.’ So that in the matter of ‘sedition’ I am fully as bad as I have been described, if not a good deal worse. Yet I have some hope that you will listen a little to me *now*. There stands your legal and constitutional Bill, a Bill brought in by a most ‘liberal’ Government, introduced by a most conciliatory statesman. You see now what the ‘law’ is going to do for you; and you are probably aware, at last, that your alternative is, Sedition, or Starvation.

“Yes, the truth must be told, you are to be slain, one million of you—and these ‘laws’ are the weapons wherewith execution is even now going on: Those of you who have property are to render it up, and die—those who have none are simply to die. *Will* you give up your properties and your lives? Or if not, how will you save them?

“Now, friends, I think I hear some genteel

patriot saying to you, meet, agitate, make your voice be constitutionally heard in the parliament! Organize, educate, conciliate. Place yourself in the hands of SHARMAN CRAWFORD, and he will contrive you another dreary Bill; and after he has bored the house with it for half a dozen Sessions, the survivors of you will see what will come of it; but take care, the genteel patriot will say, that you do nothing to repel or *alarm* the better classes; after a while they will be flocking to your ranks for nationality; remember that without them you are but a vile 'mob;' and, above all, beware, beware of sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion!

"A genteel slave!—who ought to be brained with his lady's fan.

"There will not much longer, I think, be toleration for drivelling of this sort; you are by this time aware, I trust, that all 'laws,' law-givers, constituted authorities, thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, and powers in this land are *against* you, and *will be against* you; but the question comes back—if agitating and petitioning a foreign parliament be useless, then what are you to do?

"First, there is a simple calculation to be made;—you, the men doomed to destruction, are a million and more;—they, the landlords of Ireland, who find you to be surplus, and declare that you and they cannot live together on this soil, are, we will say, eight thousand—that is, one well-born idler to one hundred and twenty-five working drudges, nearly. And to keep this well-born idler in the position he 'has a right to expect,' the hundred and twenty-five workers are to perish. Here is strictly an economic question (*Political Economy for the million*); and it may be stated thus—are the eight thousand idlers worth keeping

at this expense?—do they pay?—or is there any cheaper mode of keeping them?

“In the meantime, it appears plain, from all authorities, that there is a ‘surplus’ either of the one class or the other;—you, the million, seem pitted in deadly struggle against them, the eight thousand; and either you or they, it is feared, *must die*.”

“But it is a great truth, ‘that the Life of *one* peasant is as precious as the Life of *one* nobleman or gentleman.’”

LETTER II.

“In my last letter I proved to you that, in the opinion of your rulers, there are at least one million of your class *too many* now alive upon this island, including women and children. That is a full million *still*, after all that the Famine, the Typhus, and the Law have already killed. I have explained to you the calculation by which the ‘better classes’ and the English, between them, have determined, or very nearly, the exact numbers necessary to be slain; showed you how their laws, their commissions, their *boons* and *good measures* have been working systematically to that end; and especially pointed out how the new Landlord and Tenant Bill is the most deadly weapon yet contrived for your plunder first, and slaughter afterwards; insomuch that where the Famine slew thousands, the Bill will slay tens of thousands.

“Their intention is to rob you, and to murder you, and to divide the spoil between the Irish landlords and the English Government. *This* is their intention; and you may as well look it steadily in the face at once.

“What you *have* to do, we are now to consider ; and the very nature of the peril itself suggests the method of resistance. For *why* are you surplus ? *Why* must a million or more of you be slain ? *Why* ? It is not that Ireland does not produce enough to sustain all her people ; it is *not* that *you* do not raise, with your own hands, far more than enough to support you and your families. It is because—and only because—out of your harvests and haggards the English claim a *tribute*, the state claims *taxes*, and the landlords claim *rent*—all enormous in amount, and all prior to your claim for subsistence. You must pay them *all* before you touch a grain ; they have ‘law’ for it. . . .

“The plain remedy for all this,—the only way you can save yourselves alive,—is *to reverse the order of payment* ; to take and keep, out of the crops you raise, your own subsistence, and that of your families and labourers, *first* ; to part with none until you are sure of your own living,—to combine with your neighbours that they may do the like, and back you in your determination,—and to *resist*, in whatever way may be needful, all claims whatever, legal or illegal, till your own claims are satisfied. *If* it needs *all* your crop to keep you alive, you will be justified in refusing and resisting payment of any rent, tribute, rates, or taxes whatsoever.

“This is the true doctrine of Political Economy. All economists write that the *rent of land*, for instance, is the *overplus*, remaining after the cost of labour and the reasonable profit of the farmer.

“The learned Malthus (no friend of yours, I can tell you,) defines it thus (*Principles of Political Economy*) : ‘That portion of the value of the whole produce, which remains to the owner of the land, *after* all the outgoings belonging

to its cultivation, of whatever kind, have been paid.'

"The chief outgoing belonging to cultivation is the subsistence of the cultivators,—and if anything be sought in the name of rent before *that* is provided for, it is not rent, but plunder, and ought to be resisted. . . .

In one word, *whatever* is needful to be done in order to enable you to consume, in security, as much of your own produce as will keep soul and body together, that you must *do*. . . .

"But I am told it is vain to speak thus to *you*; that the 'peace policy' of O'Connell is dearer to you than life and honour—that many of your clergy, too, exhort you rather to die than violate what the English call 'law,'—and that you are resolved to take their bidding. Then *die*—die in your patience and perseverance; but be well assured of this, that the priest who bids you perish, patiently amidst your own golden harvests, preaches the gospel of England, insults manhood and common sense, bears false witness against religion, and blasphemes the providence of God.

"I will not believe that Irishmen are so degraded and utterly lost as this. The earth is awakening from sleep: a flash of electric fire is passing through the dumb millions. Democracy is girding himself once more like a strong man to run a race; and slumbering nations are arising in their might, and 'shaking their invincible locks.' Oh! my countrymen, look up, look up! Arise from the death-dust where you have been lying, and let this light visit your eyes also, and touch your souls. Let your ears drink in the blessed words, '*Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!*' which are soon to ring from pole to pole.

"Pray for that day: and preserve life and health, that you may worthily meet it. Above

all, let the man amongst you who has no gun, *sell his garment, and buy one.*

“JOHN MITCHEL.”

An event of great interest for Ireland occurred about this time; it was the approach of an election for Waterford City. Thomas Francis Meagher was put forward in opposition to a man named Costelloe; but Mitchel was not in favour of Meagher being elected, and gave his reasons in the *United Irishman* as follows:—

“If Ireland had one single chance in contending with her ancient enemy upon his own chosen ground;—if Ireland had any right to send representatives to a British Parliament;—if Irishmen, there, were indeed members of an Imperial Senate, and not captives dragged at the chariot wheels of an Imperial ovation in the enemy’s capital City;—if that Parliament were not a lie, an imposture, an outrage, a game in which our part and lot must be disgrace and defeat for ever,—a shield and strong tower for its masters, but against us a two-edged sword;—if it were anything to Ireland but a conduit of corruption, a workshop of Coercion, a storehouse of starvation, a machinery of cheating, and a perpetual memento of slavery,—then we should congratulate the ‘electors’ of Waterford on this opportunity of doing honour to themselves, and conferring a trust on their most distinguished citizen.”

A number of the principal Confederates went down to Waterford to conduct Meagher’s

election, as they had gone to Galway to oppose Monahan's, and again they were defeated more signally than in Galway. It was in vain the candidate appealed, in vehement and impassioned language, to the national spirit and patriotism of *the people*. The people ardently responded to his appeal. But the electoral body of Waterford was very limited, was in fact small enough to be reached and penetrated by the touch and the savour of official gold; and Meagher was defeated by a large majority. This occurrence and the news of the February Revolution in Paris, and the flight of King Louis Phillipe, made the Confederation accept the only policy thereafter possible, and acknowledge the meaning of the European Revolutions. Mitchel and Reilly returned to the Confederation, convinced that their opinion and those of the Confederation were in harmony, and that "moral force" and "combination of classes" were now blown to the winds.

On the 15th of March, O'Brien moved an address of congratulation to the victorious French people; and concluded his speech with these words:—

"It would be recollected that a short time ago he thought it his duty to deprecate all attempts to turn the attention of the people to military affairs, because it seemed to him that, in the then condi-

tion of the country, the only effect of leading the people's mind to what was called 'a guerilla warfare' would be to encourage some of the misguided peasantry to the commission of murder. Therefore it was that he declared he should not be a party to giving such a recommendation ; but the state of affairs was totally different now, and he had no hesitation in declaring that he thought the minds of intelligent young men should be turned to the consideration of such questions as : how strong places can be captured, and weak ones defended, —how supplies of food and ammunition can be cut off from an enemy,—and how they can be secured to a friendly force. The time was also come when every lover of his country should come forward openly, and proclaim his willingness to be enrolled as a member of a national guard. No man, however should tender his name as a member of that national guard unless he was prepared to do two things—one, to preserve the state from anarchy ; the other, to be ready to die for the defence of his country."

Meagher, in a brilliant and characteristic speech seconded the motion, and concluded his speech in these words :—

"The storm that dashed the crown of Orleans against the column of July, has rocked the foundations of the Castle. They have no longer a safe bedding in the Irish soil. To the first breeze that shakes the banners of the European rivals they must give way. Be you upon the watch to catch that breeze ! When the world is in arms—when the silence which, for two-and-thirty years, has reigned upon the plain of Waterloo, at last is broken—then be prepared to grasp your freedom with an armed hand, and hold it with the same."

Mitchel was unable through illness to be present at this meeting; but his friend, Devin Reilly, apologised for his absence, and then proceeded to say:—

“To-night I have not heard a word about ‘parliamentary policy’—no, not a single remote allusion to the great weapon of ‘constitutional operations.’ On the contrary, I have heard Mr. O’Brien speak of guerilla warfare, and arming the people in a national guard. I have heard Mr. Meagher flinging ‘combination of classes’ to the winds, and getting at once into the barricades. These are my principles, and while you adhere to them, I will hold my former place among you. I am sure there is not a man in Ireland who does not now see that the rule of the English here is the rule of arms, and that the time is fast coming when by arms we must expel them. On the day of our meeting let us remember that our cause is that of an enslaved nation. Remember the public order is the special guard of each and every one of you—remember to conduct yourselves with the dignity, and mien, and bearing of men in the presence of their enemies. Give them no opportunity, by riot or disturbance, to terrify the timid and the weak. Let them, if they must, break, openly, the laws they pretend to respect, and fire upon unarmed, unoffending, but resolute men. The blood shed by them, in that case, will begin a revolution. It will be the blood of martyrs rising up to heaven for vengeance, as the first glorious offering for the freedom of this land.”

Alluding to John O’Connell’s advice to the Irish people, from France, in which he took

occasion to reiterate the doctrine of "moral force," Mitchel wrote thus in the *United Irishman*:—

"From amidst the sacred graves where the soldiers of liberty sleep gloriously in their bloody shrouds,—aye, mingling, with the bodeful *Tremblez tyrans!* and the hymns of victory chanted by a liberated nation,—what craven, canting drivel is this borne to our ears? Of all places on earth the city of Paris, and of all times this very hour, the 'moral force' 'leader of the Irish people' chooses to pen an address to his fellow-countrymen, on the way nations win liberty. Harken to the caitiff:—'Two hundred lives have been lost—two hundred families are weeping and wailing over fathers, husbands, brothers, who have fallen in this struggle. Liberty has been baptized in blood, where, had the people been rightly taught and led [as in Ireland? Slave!], and had the insolence of power been less mad in its encroachments, that liberty might have been ushered into glorious and enduring existence without a blow struck, without a life lost, amid peace, and joy, and the approving blessings of heaven.

"'Will it endure, now that it has been won by blood?'

"Ah! by all rules of ethical agitation it *ought not* to endure. We have been told in Ireland, for forty years back; that a single drop—But hear the vile proposal this 'leader' makes, to barter our blood, to England, *for boons!*—

"'Raise your voices in your peaceful moral might. Tell England new dangers have arisen to her from what has happened here in the last few days. Amongst the leaders of the French people are those who have advocated war. War may threaten; and, if it come, how happy for England

to have Ireland contented, grateful, and devoted—to fight to the last by her side.’

“Let no man in all France dream for one instant that this dastard, this born slave and beggar, represents Ireland, or is in any manner authorised to offer Ireland’s arm in war to any nation—least of all to *England*. In the name of our country, we disavow the scandalous negotiator:—it was not in Ireland’s name that two weeks ago he sent round amongst these Parisians a dead man’s hat, a posthumous begging-box, to crave alms for his country:—it is not in Ireland’s name, he now dares to blaspheme the sacrificial blood poured out for Freedom and Right. Ireland spurns him, and will yet curse the very name he bears.

“But he presumes, in this same letter, to take the names of Freedom and Right into his unworthy lips:—

“‘We must have our *rights*. We deserve them! We are fit for them.’

“No, sir,—*you* do not deserve them, seeing you would make so base a bargain for them. But he goes on:—

“‘We have shown ourselves fit to have and enjoy them by our *indomitable patience*, our *illustrious fortitude*, our *glorious perseverance*!’

“Now, here is a fellow to rebuke Young France, armed and triumphant!—to preach to old Ireland, grovelling and perishing in her dismal patience and perseverance! Fit to enjoy Freedom! He is not fit to untie the latchet from the shoe of the meanest citizen-soldier in Paris.”

“We want,” wrote Mitchel, “one sewerage—one common drain for this whole land, one cloaca, deep and broad as Tartarus, and stern and implacable as Styx, to sweep away from us for evermore the corruption, the currish fawning, the

slavish envy of even English foulness, the avarice, the jobbing, the ignorance the besotted brutish insensibility in which we are steeped to the neck!"

The British Press, and British public opinion began again to grow savage on the subject of Irish "sedition." The following extract is from the *Morning Post*:—

"If any foreigner were made acquainted with the actual state of the British dominions, what astonishment would he not express at the phlegm of the British Government, and the cool unconcern of the British public, in regard to the condition of Ireland. The most virulent sedition is openly spoken there; the grossest hatred of the Government is inculcated by those who are known to have an influence almost absolute over the populace; but we heed it not.

'A humming bee—a little tinkling rill—
A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing,
In clamorous agitation round the crest
Of a tall rock, their airy citadel'—

would excite just as much attention as the deep undergrowl of Irish menace, or the loud roar of undisguised sedition. . . . We refer particularly to an article in the *Dublin University Magazine* for the present month, on what is called 'Seditious Literature in Ireland.' It is written with great force and ability, and well deserves the attention of those who desire to know what sort of materials are now supplied for the political mind of Ireland to work upon. Hatred and scorn of England, and English laws are not now confined to the furious declamation of the drunken vulgar, but are continually pressed upon the popular attention by writers and speakers of extremely good education,

and of a peculiarly impassioned spirit. The rulers of the country, says the *Dublin University Magazine*, seem utterly unconscious of the materials of sedition that are accumulating around us, or of the efforts of the sanguinary enthusiasts of Repeal to stir up bad blood, and to keep alive national discord.

“The article ‘written with great force and ability’ goes on to say:—

“‘But what is to be said of the Government which can tolerate such seditious ravings?—which can leave a credulous and excitable people exposed to such moral and political agitation?’

“We deliberately say, that they are beneath the scorn of the fabricators of a sedition with which they do not dare to grapple.”

But Lord Stanley was determined that it would be no fault of his if the Government did not grapple with the sedition; and accordingly, on the 24th of February, when he had a notice “to call the attention of the House to the first number of a paper entitled the *United Irishman*,” he said:—

“My Lords, with the permission of the noble lord on the woolsack, whose notice of motion stands before mine upon the paper, I now rise for the purpose of calling your attention to the publication of a paper in Ireland, of which I gave notice a few evenings ago; and in doing so, I shall trouble your lordships with a very few observations of my own, because the whole of my case depends on the extracts from the paper itself, and on the result of the questions which I shall have to put to her Majesty’s Government in connection with them. It is only necessary to remind your lordships, that in consequence of differences of opinion—not,

indeed, as to the end aimed at, or the objects to be gained, but as to the mode of carrying them out—among the members composing the Repeal Association, that body has been split into two sections, agreeing in their ultimate object, but entirely opposed as to the manner of effecting it. Of these two sections, the more prudent and cautious, acting on the principles of the policy which were pursued by Mr. O'Connell in his lifetime, and by his immediate followers since, have adhered to the original body which meets in the miscalled Conciliation Hall. The more violent, anxious to take steps for the speedier attainment of their aims, have established a body which they term the Irish Confederation. In the Irish Confederation, again, there has been some collision of opinion, of various degrees of incaution and imprudence, with respect to the proper course to be pursued by them for the attainment of their views. Shortly after an early meeting of the Confederation, two letters were published, one from Mr. Mitchel, and the other from Mr. Devin Reilly, which appeared, even to this body, to be of such a dangerous and seditious tendency, that they were the subject of discussion; and in order to show the spirit by which the Confederation was animated, I may add that a division took place, and by a majority of 317 to 188 this publication of the letters was condemned as being imprudent and incautious. Mr. Mitchel then withdrew from the Confederation, and on his own account established a paper, which appeared for the first time on the 12th of this month, under the title of the *United Irishman*, to which I now call your attention.

“Before I quote any of the articles which it contains, permit me at the outset to show your lordships the language of the moderate part of

the Irish Confederation, reported in the speech which is stated to have been delivered by the gentleman who condemned the letters as imprudent. I shall read to your lordships a portion of the speech of Mr. Meagher in objecting to the course suggested by Mr. Mitchel :—

“‘Is an insurrection probable? If probable, is it practicable? Prove to me that it is, and I, for one, will vote for it this very night (tremendous cheers). You know well, my friends, that I am not one of those tame moralists who say that liberty is not worth a drop of blood (hear, hear). Men who subscribe to such a maxim are fit for out-door relief, and for nothing better (cheers and laughter). Against this miserable maxim, the noblest virtue that has served and sanctified humanity appears in judgment.

“‘I support this constitutional policy, not from choice, but from necessity. My strongest feelings are in favour of the policy advised by Mr. Mitchel (hear, hear). I wish to God that I could defend that policy. It is a policy which calls forth the noblest passions,—it kindles genius, generosity, heroism,—it is far removed from the tricks and crimes of politics—for the young, the gallant, and the good, it has the most powerful attractions (cheers).’

“Now, my lords, in the last sentence of the speaker there is just so much truth as renders it necessary for me, in my judgment, to call your attention to it. It is true these tales of oppression and tyranny are without ceasing inculcated in the minds of the people, and that the National resentment is stimulated. I say, then, it is time for your lordships, and I say it is our duty to the State, to interfere and prevent this poison being poured into their ears (cheers). The first article in this paper I shall now direct

your attention to. I am not seeking to call the attention of Government to a casual article, or to bring these gentlemen within the scope of the law for a hasty or ill-considered expression. No, my lords, this is a different case. These facts are contained in the programme of the course to be pursued, and of the object intended to be carried out, and for the purpose of exciting sedition and rebellion among her Majesty's subjects in Ireland (hear, hear). This article is in the shape of a letter, which is directed as follows [here his lordship read the letter to Lord Clarendon, already quoted]. Now, my lords, I think that whatever may be your opinions as to the expediency of language of this kind, you will see it is language used in no common way, and for this reason I have called the attention of her Majesty's Government to it. This is not a mere casual article in a newspaper—it is the declaration of the aim and object for which it is established, and of the design with which its promoters have set out; that object being to do everything possible to drive the people of Ireland to sedition, to urge them into open rebellion, and to promote civil war for the purpose of exterminating every Englishman in Ireland (hear, hear). I hope, my lords, her Majesty's Government will not say that this is a matter quite in theory—that it is below contempt, and that we should allow it to pass by in silence. If such a publication had appeared in England, I should have been very much inclined to think the good sense and sound judgment of the people would have rejected the article at once as a seditious invective, whose very violence, like an overdose of poison, prevented its effect. But this language is addressed, not to the sober-minded and calm-thinking people of England, but to a people, hasty, excitable, enthusiastic, and

easily stimulated, smarting under great manifold distresses, and who have been for years excited to the utmost pitch to which they could go consistently with their own safety, by the harangues of democrats and revolutionists (hear, hear). This paper was published at five pence, but, as I am informed, when the first number appeared, so much was it sought after, that, on its first appearance, it was eagerly bought in the streets of Dublin at one shilling and sixpence and two shillings a number. With the people of Ireland, my lords, this language will tell (hear, hear); and I say it is not safe for you to disregard it. These men are honest; they are not the kind of men who make their patriotism the means of barter for place or pension. They are not to be bought off by the Government of the day for a colonial place, or by a snug situation in the customs or excise (hear, hear). No; they honestly repudiate this course; they are rebels at heart, and they are rebels avowed, who are in earnest in what they say and propose to do. My lords, this is not a fit subject, at all events, for contempt. My belief is, that these men are dangerous—my belief is, that they are traitors in intent already, and if occasion offers, they will be traitors in fact. You may prosecute them—you may convict them; but depend upon it, my lords, it is neither just to them, nor safe for yourselves, to allow such language to be indulged in. I believe, because I have this strong persuasion of the earnestness and honesty of these men, that it is my duty to call your lordships' attention to the first number of this paper, called the *United Irishman*, which is intended to produce an excitement leading to rebellion, for the purpose of showing you the language held forth, and the object avowed by these men, to whom a large portion of the people of Ireland

look up with confidence, and for the purpose of asking her Majesty's Government if this paper has come under their consideration, and if so, whether the Law Officers in Ireland have been consulted, and if it is the intention of the Government to take any notice of it ? (hear, hear)."

It will be seen from his lordship's speech that he at least gave Mitchel and his party credit for honesty, and expressed his conviction that they were not made of the stuff that is bought off by a good government situation, or that used the cloak of patriotism to cover place-hunting. And in this his lordship was right. "They are rebels at heart," said he, "and are in earnest in what they say and propose to do." Yes: never were men more in earnest or more thoroughly honest. And, when Lord Lansdowne, in replying to Lord Stanley, "concurred with Lord Stanley, that there was no extent of sedition, of *falsehood*, and of exaggeration, to which these young gentlemen of no property would not resort," he was guilty of an official falsehood, for Lord Stanley had said nothing of the kind; on the contrary, he attributed *honesty*, *earnestness*, and *incorruptibility* to the writers of the *United Irishman*.

"The reason," wrote Mitchel, in his letter to Lord Clarendon, "why you do not try to punish my sedition is—because you know you would be

defeated ; it is because you are conscious that you and your colleagues, and your red-tape officials, are not a government at all, but a crew of conspirators, holding our country by force, fraud, corruption, and espionage : and you are afraid to take issue with me in your own law-courts, simply because you know that your law-courts are a sham, just as your bayonets are a chimera, and that it only needs one bold effort to trample on them both.

“ I know as well as you do that your Attorney-General would probably obtain a conviction against me, and that your Chief-Justice would certainly sentence me to two years’ imprisonment at least. But though convicted and imprisoned, *I will not be defeated* ; and you know it. And then, if I am *not* convicted, you also know that you may forthwith pack up your portmanteau, and go to England (if you are allowed to escape so easily), and you may as well in that case roll up the Union Flag that flies in the Upper Castle-yard, and take it along with you (if it remain untorn).”

A proof of the unparalleled meanness of the action of the Government in this matter is the fact that they sought to intimidate a news-vendor in Enniskillen for exposing the paper for sale, and dared not beard the lion in his den, as a *government* would and should have done.

Addresses of recognition and congratulation to the victorious French people were being fast prepared in Ireland, in the various clubs of the Confederation. On the occasion

of the adoption of one by the Swift Club, Mitchel, who was the vice-president, said:—

“He had come there by invitation. They were aware that for some time back he had refrained from attending any of the Confederation or Club meetings. He had done this in consequence of the decision come to by a majority of the Confederation, repudiating and condemning formally certain opinions of his which he had promulgated, and which he had seen no reason to change. In fact, he regarded the French Revolution as an event which completely surprised and annulled their proceedings; and he thought it likely that for the future he would not be disavowed or condemned by the Confederation if he declared, first, that parliamentary or constitutional agitation is a delusion; second, that all Irishmen ought forthwith to arm; and third, that the hope of this country lay in the democracy alone.

“He would add a fourth declaration of opinion, and would take chance for its being acceptable to his brother-Confederates—he was a republican (loud cheers.)”

The address, which was printed on green satin, concluded in these words:—

“Citizens of Paris—Men of France, accept our congratulation—accept our friendship. Let no man, no matter who he is, or what his pretensions are, lead you to believe that Irishmen are ready, for even the bribe of Repeal, to fight England’s battles again, or shed their blood to prop up her hellish power. No; Men of France, no. We will let the British Lion show his toothless jaws, erect his mane, and roar in impotent rage, until the

blood-stained monster expires—cursed by the world, execrated by mankind—ere we stain ourselves by again fighting under the murderous Union Jack against any nation, much less against you, who have generously led the van in uprooting tyranny, and restoring man to his original elevation, by publishing the glorious principles of ‘Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,’ and showing an example to all nations, that no power can resist a determined people.

“Men of France—In us you shall find friends, not foes—for we hail your republic as the saviour of Europe,—we hail it as the morning star of liberty, the hope of the oppressed—the terror of tyrants—the avenger of mankind.”

Who shall say that, when preparing this address, those stirring lines of Davis were not running through its author’s mind:—

“From Carrick streets to Shannon shore—
From Slievenamon to Ballindeary—
From Longford Pass to Galtymore—
Come, hear the vow of Tipperary.

“Too long we fought for Britain’s cause,
And of our blood were never chary;
She paid us back with tyrant laws,
And thinned the Homes of Tipperary.

“But never more, we’ll win such thanks—
Hear us, O God, and Virgin Mary,
Never to list in British ranks;
And *that’s* The Vow of Tipperary.”

Noble words these—words that Mitchel would like to see engraven on the heart of every Irishman; not Tipperary men alone.

He would have liked to be able to say to every Irishman without distinction—

“ From pole to pole the deep electric tone
Of Liberty is out. Wilt thou not share ?”

But, alas! the question *required to be asked*. Years of vicious teaching had made men so debased that, with freedom within their grasp, they hesitated to fight for it, to shed a drop of blood for it; having been told repeatedly that liberty was not worth the shedding one drop of blood. False teaching this. Fitzgerald, Tone, Emmet fought, and laid down their lives for freedom, and thought it worthy of sacrifice so great. And shall it be said that men who would only talk for freedom—would not put themselves to any inconvenience for it—prized it more? Spurn the thought. The freedom consecrated by the blood of heroes is infinitely more to be prized than that which would be tamely extorted by the force of words, “moral force.” From time immemorial, freedom, to be won, had to be fought for. And in the case of Ireland is it to be different? Assuredly not. England is too strong a tyrant to surrender her grasp on Ireland without a hard battle. For proof of this we have the words of one of her latest historians: “England will never consent either to Home Rule, or to any altered arrangement which

might put Ireland into the way of being able to extort Home Rule—never, until England is beaten to her knees: never! never!”

This fact was quite apparent to Mitchel and his party, when they advocated a resort to arms, having witnessed the utter downfall of the “moral force” principles. “The British Empire must utterly perish, that is, be dismembered as an Empire—or Ireland must die a daily death, and suffer an endless martyrdom.” So wrote and spoke John Mitchel; and that conviction never left his mind.

“Before foreign rule,” wrote Mitchel, “had finally clenched its grip upon the land, our predecessors stood up to die, and died. And now half a century is dead and gone, and from their holy graves we take their principles again. Yes! fifty long years ago, ‘Right, freedom, and our swords,’ were the only words of truth in Ireland; and fifty years of lying and cowardice, and traitor’s leading, and of traitor’s rule, have not changed their truth a little. The force of heroism is beyond the power of cant. The false teaching of knaves, the egotistic maligning of brave men by cowards, of martyrs by the selfish, of men who fought for freedom by men who talk for pay—may hide truth, denounce devotion, repudiate self-sacrifice, and bring virtue and manhood into contempt for a little—but yet a little, and the maligners, and the cowards, and the self-seekers, will be gathered off the earth, with the truthful, the brave, and the devoted, and the unerring soul of man will see, lying side by side, the judges and the judged. From the grave of the

one come the memories of heroic acts, the big heart of love, the principles of truth, as truthful as when they lived—and, in the other, lie silent bombast, quite chop-fallen, and trick stale and flat, and mere unmeaning, unliving death kept there under hundred tons of talk and stone.

“What think you of the Slave, who, within hearing of the graves in Cracow, or standing on the Vistula’s bank, repudiates the memory of Kosciusko? or of the Tyrolean who denounces the principles of Hofer? or of the Roman, who, to a people thirsting for freedom, holds up Rienzi’s memory to derision? Nay, what think you, if these went further—if the Slave, say Poland, was partitioned *because* Kosciusko fought for her—the Tyrol subdued *because* the Sandwirth stood up to die? But, worst infamy of all! what think you of the people, of the nation, of the millions, who would tamely listen to and believe such execrable slander—who would love and trust the man who lived in the insult of their dead. So, for half a century, have we listened, and believed, and trusted. So have ‘patriots’ for fifty years maligned those who gave for *our* freedom, lives, wives, brothers, mothers, all things dear to man. So have we listened to the maligners, and trusted them. Let us wipe away this deep ignominy at last. Now, if we do mean to make Ireland too hot for English rule, let us recognize the labours and sacrifices of those who were the last that really meant the same. Let us covet their devotion, assume their virtue, if we have it not, and, whether we fail or conquer, be worthy of the land *where their memories shall yet reign triumphant*.

“Above all, let no man henceforth dare to utter or listen to a calumny against them. Blush for the coward shame which held you silent so long; but be silent, or hypocritical, or cowardly no more.

You *do* love these glorious predecessors of ours ; your heart does warm to their memories ; you do admire their acts. Avow it, without shame, or fear, in the morn, or even, or midnight ; in the street or the closet. America has raised over some of them columns of stone ; France has given others mausoleums ;—the names of hundreds decorate the battle-fields of Europe ; even in distant Venezuela a young Republic tends the graves of the United Irish ;—shall home be the only spot on earth ungrateful ? Let us trust only to the weapons they used, whet them sharp upon the few slabs that cover them ; and so trusting in God, in Right, Freedom, and our Swords, meet, once more, their enemy and ours.”

Until Irishmen act thus, fling aside the trammels of slavery, and strike the one blow necessary for freedom, they will remain slaves, despised by the world, scorned by their enemies, and a disgrace to their country and their forefathers.

And a war to deliver Ireland from English oppression would be a strictly just and moral war : would be a duty incumbent upon every Irishman without distinction. For this we have, amongst others, the authority of Thomas Davis :—“ War, the exposure of ourselves to wounds, toil, and death, is as much our duty in a just cause, as any other mode of sustaining justice. We are as surely bound to encounter the march, the watch, the breach, and the battle-field, for country, altars, friends, rights, and freedom, as we are to

sustain our parents, defend our wives and children, and adhere to our religion and virtue, by any other less hazardous means."

Let no Irishman, then, imagine that by fighting for his country he commits a crime. He commits a crime, on the contrary, by not doing so; by tamely standing by and seeing his fellow-countrymen foully oppressed and plundered. This is the side on which the crime is, and on the other, the honour and the glory—for glory it is,—to nobly risk home, friends, nay, life itself, in the effort to crush the power of the hated English tyrant. "May fortune smile on that man's arms, may victory charge by his side, may wealth, strength, and honour, wait on him and his, if he survive his conquest; and, if he fall in achieving it, may glory sit upon his tomb, and may a grateful country cherish those he loved!"*

* Davis's Essay on the Morality of War.

CHAPTER VII.

Proposed Meeting in Dublin—Mitchel's Letter to the Irish people—To Lord Clarendon—John O'Connell an English Ally—Holding of the adjourned Meeting—Mitchel's Speech—Thomas Devin Reilly and the Torn Franchise—Prosecution—Increased "Sedition"—Letter to Lord Clarendon—Conciliation Hall—Lord Milltown—"Justice to Ireland"—Patriotism not to be found in Conciliation Hall.

THE 17th of March, the Feast of Ireland's Patron Saint, St. Patrick, was fixed upon by the Irish Confederates for the holding of a meeting to adopt an address to the victorious French people. But a desire for the union of all Repealers in the demonstration, caused them to defer it to the following Monday. Lord Clarendon thought this would be a good opportunity to terrify the people by a display of his military forces. So, under the pretence of fearing that St. Patrick's day would be the occasion of the erection of barricades in the streets of Dublin, he had the troops kept under arms—the cavalry with horses ready saddled in all the barracks, waiting for the word to crush the first movement in the blood of the assembled citizens.

Addressing the people of Ireland, in the columns of his Journal, Mitchel said:—

"The Government of Cork-hill has called

to its aid all the British forces which can be spared from clearing estates, lifting taxes, and inspecting public hangings, to prevent, by intimidation, their meeting, or punish their most Republican effrontery by one more 'salutary lesson,' and if it can, get an opportunity to inflict death on any Irishman who will dare publicly to admire France.

"Between the citizens of Dublin and Lord Clarendon there is, therefore, open and unmistakable war—we are glad of it.

"Not an eye in Ireland that is not fixed on this city now. Not a mail quits the capital, north, south, or westward, that will not carry, cut and dry, criticisms on our bearing and our spirit. We stand now in the van of the quarrel, the nearest to the enemy. From Cork to Galway, and round to the extreme North, men, brave men, enslaved men, ready to die rather than endure one year of slavery more—hungry men, evicted men, enwrathed men, wait intently on *our* work, ready to curse us if we fail—to imitate our courage, or avenge our defeat.

"Yes! with our fellow-citizens rests now the fate of Ireland. If they quail, or shrink, vacillate, pause, postpone, or exhibit the slightest weakness—if they balk the hope of a single Irishman, or give our enemy another cause to scoff, 'twere better they had remained slaves, contented in their slavery, or, being discontented, had hanged themselves.

"All our struggles, boasting, agitating, threatening, is now compressed into a nutshell. For long years we have been shouting for 'Repeal'—invoking liberty—telling everybody what we could do if we were put to it—warning this hated 'Government' that its hour would come—and ours.

“Once before it came—in ’43. Then that ‘Government’ rose in arms against us, and dared us to meet within two miles of our own city. It cowed us,—and cowed us with impunity. The hour for the weakness of leaders passed away; upon the betrayed people came years of famine; upon Ireland the scorn and neglect of nations.

“Again the hour has sounded. Again we stand face to face with the mortal enemies of our race and of our nation. They have pointed their cannon on a city in quiet—they have drawn the sword unprovoked—they vauntingly challenge insurrection, and taunt, by intimidation, slaves who have been too enduring.

“Let all our acts, every word and gesture, exhibit, therefore, that we are the citizens of this land. Orderly, silently, remembering the wrongs of ages, and nursing in our hearts the black hate we owe our foes—let us assemble. Standing on the natural rights of even slaves, to think and utter;—unarmed, but with our arms cleaned and ready at home, we await attack. If the English Viceroy, or his agents, should order a single volley unprovoked, that ends English rule in Ireland. Its echo will waken men the Island over, and tens on tens of thousands will take it as a signal to march upon the capital. It will be heard in Scotland, in Lancashire, in London, and woe to the task-masters and the grinders of the poor. It will be heard in India among mutinous armies—in America among enraged exiles. It will be heard in France.

“We await attack. We shall not provoke the shedding of blood; but if blood be shed, we will see the end of it.”

From this letter it will be seen that he treasured up a remembrance of the insult

offered to the Irish people in 1843 by prohibiting the Clontarf meeting. That insult he never forgave the English. And, now, when they prepared to drown a great public demonstration in the blood of the citizens, his just hatred burst forth in all its bitterness: the sting of that insult was only to be healed by the Irish people resenting at the sword's point any attempt to trample upon their just and indefeasible right as citizens to meet and sympathise with any nation or people they thought worth of their sympathy or congratulation. When the English Chartists met to demand their rights, no attempt was made to prevent them; on the contrary, their demands were respectfully listened to. But when Ireland makes a demand she is met by Coercion Acts, Arms Bills, and various other apparatus for the utter subjection and debasement of a people. Is this just? is this right? Who shall say it is. What is just for one is just for another. And when the English pretend to govern Ireland they should give to Ireland's demands a just and impartial hearing, which is all she ever asked. But English rule in Ireland has long since been discovered to be the very reverse of just; to be a sham, "a mockery, a delusion, a snare." And Mitchel took care to impress on Lord

Clarendon his knowledge of the fact. Said he:—

“The butchering plan of Government has long been the only one at bottom relied on for Ireland. The show of governing by ‘law,’ that was sometimes resorted to, has become too transparent; the trick of packing castle-juries by means of jugglers for sheriffs, and retired wizards for clerks of the crown, has really grown too stale; and it was too well watched, and in fact blown. Happily, that imposture is given up, and anybody who has heretofore deluded himself with the idea that there is a ‘constitution’ in Ireland—even your friends and allies, the Messrs. O’Connell, who would be satisfied with the smallest shred, thread, patch, or tatter, of constitution—must now at last see the terms on which we stand with respect to you and your Government—terms, namely, of mortal hate and defiance.

“The events of last week prove this. The people of Dublin intimated their wish to hold a peaceful public meeting on St. Patrick’s day, to *congratulate* the people of France, and express their *sympathy* with the French Republic. Nobody had advised, or suggested, or hinted, that the citizens should attend that meeting armed, or should, either in going to it or returning; excite any tumult, assault any passenger, or break any window—far less, storm your Excellency’s castle, and then and there extinguish Foreign rule in Ireland—which, however desirable, is evidently not to be done by an unarmed multitude in the face of a powerful and prepared garrison, under arms day and night, with cannon pointed and matches burning, distributed through the city in such positions as to enfilade every street: and

especially while there is bright moonlight, and the measure of cutting the gas-pipes would not avail. In short, there was not, as you well know, the slightest danger or expectation of the meeting ending in an insurrection ; but, inasmuch as you, and the Government you serve, hate and *fear* the French Republic, and the French people, and can ill endure that those who abhor the Union Jack should publicly hail and bless the Tri-colour—for this reason it suited you to devise a panic, and pretend to believe that what was announced as a peaceful meeting was really intended as a rebellion.

“ But you will say there was danger ; there *was* alarm ; and there *were* instigators to insurrection. Well, then, it was your duty, if you were a legal governor, and *not* a butcher, to use the resources of the ‘ law,’ if there were law in this land, to punish the instigators of rebellion, and to crush the public preachers of ‘ treason ;’ but with that ferocious cruelty that ever belongs to a government of fraud and force, you have deliberately relinquished the law-courts, where you would meet the advisers, the originators, the head and front of all this Jacobin ‘ treason,’ and chosen the streets and fields, where you can easily provoke or suborn a riot, and then mow down the innocent people with your grape and canister. This might be the thought, not of a butcher, but of a demon.

“ Ireland is, in short, governed, not by ‘ law,’ but by the sword ; and you, my Lord Clarendon, are not a Lord Lieutenant, but a *butcher*.”

Mitchel’s assertion, that the O’Connells were the allies of English power in Ireland, was well borne out by facts : for at a meet-

ing presided over by the Lord Mayor, John O'Connell "preferred to deprive himself of the *pleasure* of joining in any demonstration held for the purpose of expressing sympathy with France." The enemy of the French people then would be the enemy of liberty, and the enemy of liberty would be the friend and supporter of tyranny; therefore the O'Connells were the friends and allies of the English, who are, and always were, the very essence of tyranny.

Commenting on this action of John O'Connell's, Mitchel said:—

"Lord Clarendon should raise to this agent of his a statue of gold—what Irishmen should do with him we forbear to suggest."

The adjourned meeting was held on Monday, the 20th of March, and was attended by upwards of twelve thousand persons. The chair was taken by Richard O'Gorman, Esq.; and the first to address that large assembly was John Mitchel.

As this speech was delivered on an occasion which was dear to Mitchel's heart, it is worth giving *in extenso*:—

"It has been entrusted to me to bring up an address to the citizens of the French Republic. I hope, sir, we have all assembled here to-day in a spirit of due humility. Nobody here, I trust imagines that in offering our congratulations as

the sovereign citizens of France, we are addressing our equals, or that the triumph of liberty, equality, fraternity in Paris, is any triumph to us in Dublin. This is no gala day, indeed, for us.—We, natives of Ireland—inhabitants of Dublin—not citizens of any place (hear, hear)—strangers at home, and surplus sojourners in the land that bore us—come together under the guns of a foreign garrison, and by permission of the military governor who holds our Island for the English, to felicitate another people on the achievement of their freedom. And that is not all: our own neighbours and fellow-slaves and brother surplus have many of them shunned even this timid and cautious demonstration of sympathy, lest some too-presumptuous young man—some enthusiastic and unconstitutional pauper, forgetting that he is an Irishman—should, in the excitement of the moment, touch a note somewhat too proud and defiant, that might provoke our masters to scourge us back with ignominy to our homes (hear, hear). These are the conditions under which we find ourselves assembled this day in our own city; and so humiliating are they that I for one should take shame to attend this meeting at all if I did not feel within me the assurance that our day is coming (tremendous cheering). We congratulate the French to-day with bated breath and whispering humbleness; but if there be faith in man—if there be truth and manhood upon earth; or justice in Heaven—the day is near at hand when France shall, in her turn, congratulate us on freedom won (cheers); and when Ireland will have no need to hold down her head or muffle her voice, as she joins in the jubilant chorus of liberated nations (hear, hear, and cheers). On this subject, sir, I wish to restrain myself here to-day. There may be men present who hold a

hundred different views as to forms of government and systems of National policy, and also as to our immediate duties, arising out of this grand event in Paris. On all these points I have, indeed, strong opinions, and in proper times and places have not failed, and shall not fail, to promulgate and enforce them ; but in moving this address, no word shall escape my lips that might for a moment jar the harmony of our meeting, or lessen the cordiality wherewith I am sure every man here desires to greet the great and gallant French nation (hear, hear). On one point, too, we are sure of unanimity. We have all exulted together in the downfall of the false and greedy tyrant of the barricades. Who amongst us did not feel his heart bound stronger and his blood run quicker, when he heard of that mighty and generous nation arising in her majesty, and, at a single effort, flinging off the strongest tyranny in Europe, with its endless chains of fortresses, barracks, and batteries, like dew-drops from the lion's mane (cheers)? Why, here is a new charter and muniment of title to the earth, proving at last that the man of the nineteenth century, with all his ignorant enlightenment and sleek civilization, has not yet lost his manhood. And truly it needed proof. The nations had lain in a trance too long, and the virtue seemed to have gone out of them, insomuch that men thought the world was waxing old. Parchment treaties, devised by certain crowned conspirators at Vienna three-and-thirty years ago, seemed to lie like a spell upon their hearts and arms. France, the old pioneer of freedom, seemed enslaved for ever by her own hired servant. She who was wont to make and unmake dynasties with a blast of her cannon—who was wont to bind kings in chains, and nobles with fetters of iron—had become, it was thought,

a mere appanage at last to a royal gambler and his brood (hear, hear). Poland had risen to protest against the parchment blasphemy, and had sunk once more in her blood. Italy was fast bound, like Prometheus, by strength and force, to her rock; the two-headed black vulture of Austria was gnawing her liver undisturbed, and the blood of her Bandieras, done to death by an English right hon. detective (hear, hear), seemed to have sunk into the earth without even a cry for vengeance. Spain had become a mere stake for the royal gamesters of Paris and St. James's; and Ireland! Ireland! Over Ireland had settled a deeper and darker pall than ever. Black hate, and strife, and suspicion, had shattered her power, and baffled every effort for freedom; and her children lay dying by myriads round her coasts, mourned only by the hoarse Atlantic. On all sides the horizon of the world was gloomy and hopeless enough, when suddenly on a signal from gallant Sicily the right noble and right royal workmen of Paris broke the accursed spell, and sounded in thunder the *reveillez* of sleeping Europe (cheers)—and with a certain blazing throne hard by the Column of July, they have reared a pillar of fire to guide the nations through the darkness (cheers). I call those workmen royal, sir, because labour is the only king in France now, and in his clemency, gentleness, and wisdom, as well as in his prowess, he is every inch a king (much cheering). And I say that the burning throne of the sceptred stock-jobber is a pillar of fire to guide mankind—not on account of the establishment thereby of any peculiar form of government, but because with the dynasty of Orleans has sunk the more terrible and fatal tyranny of capital over industry (cheers). Yes, as that rotten old throne burned and crackled, far

more mounted skyward than the smoke and sparks of its embers. It was found to be stuffed with the political economy of Adam Smith; its supporters were fair competition, able-bodied pauperism, free trade, and starvation. To pinch the vitals of the working men, in order to swell the money-bags of the millionaire—to take a full twelve hours of toil, and give half a day's food in return—and to do all this by the mere operation of free trade, and the liberal doctrine of supply and demand; such were the maxims, principles, creeds, and gospels of the Orleans throne; and as it sunk in red ashes on that day of glory, they, too, as recognised principles, disappeared from French social life, we may hope for ever (hear, hear). It is well that we should all fix in our minds the actual gain, the real substantial thing done by each of the three French Revolutions. For, after all, the change of outward symbols of government, the setting up or the burning down of thrones and sceptres, is a small thing. A *fleur-de-lis* is, in itself, as good as a tri-colour; and a tri-colour, with the blue next the flagstaff, is every bit as good as the one with the red. But, what was done?—what was won? I will tell you what was won:—the first Revolution destroyed landlordism, and gave the soil of France, in small lots, to its own tillage farmers, to have and to hold to them and their heirs for ever (cries of hear, hear, and cheers). That was the first Revolution, sixty years ago. The second, in 1830, abolished the outrageous claim of *legitimacy*, and affirmed the right of France to choose her own rulers in spite of the holy allies, and all the world. And the third has established the rights of labour, and specifically its right to combine in order to secure to itself fair remuneration and Christian usage (hear, hear, and cheers). Hereafter, in

France, the men who weave the cloth will get some of it to wear; those who raise the food will eat their share of it; those who build houses will have a roof over their heads; and those who maintain the State will rule the State (hear, hear, and loud cheers). These, sir, have been the three trials, the three labours of France; and as they have all three to be gone through here, and there can be no rest for Irishmen until they are accomplished, I will only add, that I am for beginning without delay (loud and continued cheering). I will now read the address:—

“TO THE CITIZENS OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

“THE ADDRESS.

“As slaves should address freemen—as a land which has yet its independence to assert, and its social freedom to attain, should address a sovereign State and a Republic, we address you, citizens!

“Had we a National government, a recognised centre willing and competent to act and speak for us, it would have long since boldly declared the admiration of your heroism, the sympathy with your cause, the delight in your victory which we feel, but are, from our condition, incapable of uttering. Foreign dominion and distraction among ourselves choke the best and noblest feelings of our hearts, and turn into empty wind the voice of millions.

“Receive from us, citizens, all the congratulations we can offer; and be assured that beneath them there is much that cannot be uttered—behind them the longings and passions of suffering and enslaved men. You who have only but yesterday broken through even a mild despotism, and yet who were compelled to hide in your hearts for eighteen years the hate of that despotism

which now you have so nobly vindicated—you, citizens, you can understand us.

“We recognise in the French Republic the work of working men. We see in its every act justice to the rights of labour; and in its victories, its glories, its success, and enduring justice, we, working men, participate.

“But, enslaved as we are, we can only offer you our individual sympathy and friendship; and we ask, in return, that you will look upon the sufferings of the eldest and most persecuted sister of our common Celtic race with commiseration and sorrow. We ask you not to blush for our shame and our slavery, but to retain for us reciprocal friendship and sympathy till our liberated country can deserve it.

“RICHARD O’GORMAN, Chairman.

“P. BARRY,
“BARTHW. REDMOND, } Secretaries.’

“I have the honour to move that this address be adopted by the meeting, and presented in Paris by a deputation.”

[Mr. Mitchel resumed his seat amidst great applause].

The adoption of the address having been seconded, Mr. Richard O’Gorman, jun., proposed a resolution condemning the “Union” as a nullity, and declaring that resistance to British rule was a duty. In the course of his speech he said:—

“Fellow citizens, I do believe there is but one obstacle standing in the way of the attainment of your liberty, for it is folly to suppose that there is any force sufficient to deprive you of your rights,

if you are only determined to vindicate them. I, for one, repudiate factions. I care not what man associates for the recovery of our rights—whether he be Chartist or Orangeman, Protestant or Catholic—whether he comes from Conciliation Hall or the Confederation—if I see him truly labouring to eradicate English misrule, raising the minds of our people to the tone which the emergency demands—if I see him the foe of corruption, I claim to be of his party, and give him my aid. . . . What sort of people are we at all? Look at France, she groaned under despotism a fortnight ago—she is a Republic to-day. Look at Sicily. She was a province a month ago—now she is a nation. And we are talking of ourselves as having courage, and manliness, and independence. Sir, I say Europe is shaming us into action. In '82 an opportunity arose for Ireland. She had long slept in apathy. The genius of Swift and Molyneux lit the gloom for a moment, but the gleam was transient and ineffectual. What woke her then to freedom? The example of a colony flinging aside her chains. The ring of the American rifle was heard across the Atlantic, and startled our fathers to energy and hope. Our shores were threatened by invasion. Ireland sprung to arms to defend her soil; *from arms she arose to independence.*"

Thomas Devin Reilly also spoke out the true doctrine. Said he:—

“It is the duty and the highest virtue of every citizen to risk his life, when required, for the defence of liberty and the freedom of his native land. It is his duty and his highest virtue for those ends to die; and that he may die with honour and effect, it is further his duty to practise the use of

arms; and not only is it a duty to the state, not only is it the highest virtue in a citizen to possess arms, and know the use of them, but this is his best protection against social tyranny and domestic aggression. I had rather see a single peasant well armed, than twenty peasants with a vote. I have heard men talk of parliamentary franchise, and municipal franchise, and other franchises; but I know no franchise like that of a gun. The right to bear arms, the power to use them, is *the* franchise. Look to the revolutions in Italy, look to that revolution by which Sicily repealed her union with Naples, and established an independent legislature of her own. By what franchises were they gained? By the franchise of arms."

Thus ended the meeting which Lord Clarendon calculated to drown in blood. No blood was shed, but Lord Clarendon, determined not be foiled, caused each of the three principal offenders, Mitchel, Meagher, and O'Brien, to be waited on the next morning by Mr. Frank Porter, a police magistrate, and required to appear with bail the next day at the head police office. This was sharp practice of Lord Clarendon, but he was no weak fool, and was resolved to precipitate an issue somehow or other.

The charge preferred against Mitchel was, that he, being proprietor, printer, and publisher of the *United Irishman*, did, on the 19th of February, the 4th of March, and the 10th of March, "unlawfully print and publish certain seditious libels, entitled, 'Striking

Terror,' 'The French Fashion,' and a letter addressed to Lord Clarendon, in which that gentleman was addressed as 'Her Majesty's Executioner-General and General Butcher of Ireland.' Mitchel had no difficulty in finding bail, for there were several gentlemen most anxious to express their abhorrence of the course pursued by the English Government, by tendering themselves as bail for their latest victim.

Accordingly, on the morning of the 21st, he was accompanied to the police court by Arthur O'Hagan, Esq., and James M'Donnell, Esq., the former a professional gentleman, and the latter an extensive merchant of the city; both proud of the honour of being of service to him. In the case of Smith O'Brien, and Thomas Francis Meagher, the Messrs. O'Connell took occasion in the public court, to tender their services as bail, but their offer was declined, "And," wrote Mr. Doheny, "they must have left the police office that day, oppressed with the conviction that the confidence of the Irish people had passed for ever from their house." *

The prosecutions, coming so suddenly, almost paralysed the people, and all Dublin was startled as if by a spell. Every one knew that an organ of defiance like the *United*

Irishman could not continue unmolested to defy the British Government and expose their petty plots and intrigues, and call on the people to arm *en masse*; but the suddenness of the shock stunned them; and their first resolve was that if the government put them in prison they would do so only after they had drowned insurrection in the blood of the people.

If the government thought that by a show of vigour they would put an end to sedition they were mistaken; for the first action of the Conspirators on leaving the police office was to proceed to the Council Rooms of the Irish Confederation and address from the window an assembled multitude of between eight and nine thousand persons. And the agents of Lord Clarendon, if any were present, must have been somewhat startled to hear Mitchel and the others repeat, with aggravations, the sedition for which they were soon to stand their trial. "If," said Mitchel, "you see us shrink or blench one hair's-breadth, if we do not take care continually to repeat our offence—brand us as cowards and traitors. I am charged with writing seditious articles, having a tendency to inflame the minds of the people, and excite discontent. I *did* write seditious articles, and I *will* write seditious articles. I will incite the people to discontent and disaffec-

tion. I know no reason why they should be content—why they should be well affected towards the Government of England. On the day this Confederation was established, I, as you may remember, came forward and declared myself a disaffected subject, and promised to devote myself continually to excite disaffection in others. I think I have kept that promise; and, come what may, I will continue to do so. I say further, my friends, that instead of Government being able, by criminal proceedings, to put down determined men in this country—if you, if the country, will stand by us, and sustain us, you and we will overthrow this Government.” This speech afterwards formed part of the indictment against him. And that Lord Clarendon might know that he was not in the least cowed by the prosecution, he addressed a letter to him, styling him “Her Majesty’s Executioner-General and General Butcher of Ireland.” In this letter he said:—

“My Lord,—Being disappointed in a premature street insurrection, which you hoped to drown in the blood of Dublin citizens, you have been at length shamed into an attempt at vindicating the ‘law’ in the courts of law. This is much better and more manly. It was a shame to let seditious writers and speakers go on so long with impunity exciting disaffection—up to the very point, as you thought, of revolution—and then, instead of citing

them to the courts, which stood open all the while upon Inns'-Quay, to lie in wait at the corners of all streets with your well-whetted slaughter knives, to mangle the people. Indeed it was a shame: keep those butchering tools for *the French*, in case they should come to propagate Equality and Fraternity here; and for the future, my dear Lord, govern your province by 'law,' according to those humane and never-to-be-enough admired methods provided by the British Constitution; and with that mixture of firmness and conciliation which is admitted on all hands to distinguish your Lordship above all other statesmen. . . . I assert and maintain that in Ireland there is no government or law—that what passes for 'government' is a foul and fraudulent usurpation, based on corruption and falsehood, supported by force, and battenning on blood. I hold that the meaning and sole object of that government is to make sure of a constant supply of Irish food for British tables, Irish wool for British backs, Irish blood and bone for British armies; to make sure, in one word, of Ireland for the English, and to keep down, scourge, and dragoon the Irish into submission and patient starvation. This being the case, I hold that the Irish nation is, and has long been, and ought to be, in a state of *war* with 'government,' albeit the said government has heretofore had clear victory, and is at this moment in full possession of the island, its inhabitants, and all that is theirs. But your lordship, on the other hand, maintains, I presume, that the thing called a government is not a foreign usurpation, but one of the institutions of the country—that the persons composing it are *not* robbers and butchers, but statesmen—that their object is not the plunder and starvation of the people, but the good order and peace of society,

the amelioration of social relations, and the dispensation of justice between man and man.

“Here are two very distinct propositions; and it is impossible they can both be true. Either there is a government or there is none, Law or no Law; either the Confederation and the *United Irishman* are a nuisance, or else you are nuisance. You ought not to have suffered our existence so long, or else we ought to have extinguished yours. You and we are mortal enemies, and now that issue has been happily joined, I fervently hope it will result in the utter destruction of one or other of the parties.”

Meanwhile, in Conciliation Hall, Lord Milltown had discovered that the Irish people had a queen. Said he:—

“If a foreign foe were to invade Ireland, we would be all of one mind. Much has been said on this topic of foreign invasion. It has been said that if there was danger of foreign invasion, the people of England would be brought to their senses, and they would be obliged to do justice to Ireland. Even to further a just cause, I would not make use of an argument that was *not founded on fact*. But, my decided opinion is, that if a foreign foe put his foot on our own green isle, Irishmen would lay aside their differences, for the time forget their grievances, and rally as one man for the defence of *our Queen*. I rest that opinion,” continued he, “upon the well-known loyalty that has ever distinguished the Irish heart—that loyalty that was displayed in the worst of times, even towards rulers who do not deem it—towards bigots and tyrants, and that loyalty will not fail to be shown towards the *lovely being who now occupies the throne*. Let us cry, ‘God bless the

Queen !' and if it will render it more racy let us add, ' Hurrah for old Ireland !' ”

When Irishmen listen to, and cheer such stuff as this, they deserve to be down-trodden, and to have the finger of scorn pointed at them. And not satisfied with thus leading the minds of the people astray, he proceeded to designate the few *honest* men at that time to be found in Ireland as “ rabid and insane preachers of sedition.” When men want to do the work of the English Government they ought to do so openly, at least, and not pretend to have the interest of the Irish people at heart, when they are making tools of them, for their own elevation, to place and power.

In the latter part of O'Connell's life, Conciliation Hall had fallen low, but the man who would have predicted that it would have come to this, would scarcely have been believed. The idea of a man, calling himself an Irishman, standing up and telling an assembly that if France came to Ireland's relief, Irishmen would fight for *their Queen*, as if they had one, against their deliverer, is inconceivable. Yet this is the sentiment that the Messrs. O'Connell always and in all places sought to propagat. The man who looked for genuine patriotism in Conciliation Hall looked in vain. Every word uttered there was uttered with a purpose ; and that

purpose was to ingratiate themselves into English favour by keeping the Irish people talking when they ought to be fighting for their liberty and their lives.

Thinking upon what they had been, and what they were now come to, the lines of the poet occur to the mind:—

—“ ’Tis vain to curse,
 ’Tis weakness to upbraid thee;
 Hate cannot wish thee worse
 Than guilt and shame have made thee.”

And they *were* guilty; deeply guilty. They were guilty of the betrayal of the trust reposed in them by the Irish people. They had robbed the starving peasant of his mite, and in return told him that in case of foreign invasion he would, like a truly loyal man, be found fighting for *his Queen*.

No wonder that Irishmen are slaves to-day: when the time was ripe for winning of freedom, a body of men told them not to pay any heed to those who said that freedom to be won must be fought for; not to believe it; but to “raise their voices in their peaceful, moral might.” Let Irishmen continue to “raise their voices in their peaceful, moral might,” and they will be no nearer to freedom when they are done than when they began. It was the knowledge of this fact that caused Mitchel and his party to separate themselves from Conciliation Hall and

establish a body, having for its object the direction of the people's attention to the procuring of arms and the practice of the use of them. But the contrary influence of Conciliation Hall well-nigh defeated their noble efforts; for after all, where there is the influence of people of property, landed gentry and the like, more or less of reliance is placed on what they say; and thus, when one body told the people to arm, and another for them to "raise their voices in their peaceful, moral might," the people, not knowing what to do, stood still, and the golden opportunity was lost.

The curse of Ireland is to be leader-ridden. If the people had only *acted* in '48, when they were advised, they would be free to-day. Indecision never yet won anything; and assuredly freedom is not to be attained by idly standing by and seeing other people fight for it. Let the tide of insurrection be taken at the flood, and it will be found to lead on to freedom.

The English press, in particular, delighted to jeer Mitchel and his party with being "young gentlemen of no property," and therefore with no interest in the continuance of the grinding of the poor. But their being "of no property" redounded to their credit; for, with very few exceptions, the "men of property" lived and thrived by the

poverty and the miseries of the peasantry; and the removal of that poverty, and that misery—which was Mitchel's object—would have lessened the gains of the greedy and exacting landlord. But Conciliation Hall was principally made up of landlords, whose interest it was, as a matter of course, to keep the poor and the wretched still more poor and wretched, in order that they might live and enjoy life.

But the day may yet come, when, the eyes of the Irish people being opened, and the villainy of their so-called leaders unmasked, they will rise in their might, and with a bold effort throw off the hideous nightmare that has so long lain upon them, and shake to atoms the hideous fabric of landlordism that has been the curse of Ireland for so many years. When that day comes—and let it be hoped it is not far distant—and the Irish peasantry, with Right on their side, go forth to wage the holy war against the bane of landlordism—let them remember the words of the poet, and cry:—

“Onward!—the green banner rearing,
Go, flesh every sword to the hilt;
On *our* side is Virtue and Erin,
On *theirs* is the Saxon and guilt.”

CHAPTER VIII.

Paper Coronets versus gold ones—"Justice to Ireland" a fraud—Milltown exposed—Meeting of Irish Confederates—Mitchel's speech—The Constitution of '82—"A song for the Future"—Preparation for Mitchel's Prosecution—Jury Packing—The *Spectator* on the approaching Prosecution—Mitchel's motives above reproach—French aid clap-trap—Parliament; Treason Felony Bill—O'Brien in Parliament—A Whig in Office and a Whig out—"The Union must be maintained."

IN his next issue, Mitchel took occasion to address a letter to the Earl of Milltown on his proceeding in Conciliation Hall. Having made a few preliminary remarks, he said:—

"You, my Lord, join an association formed to achieve the independence of Ireland, and deeply sworn to rest satisfied with nothing short of that independence; and you coolly propose that for the future it shall be accounted 'factious' to stand out for Repeal; that 'justice to Ireland' shall be the sole aim and object of that association for the future. 'Justice to Ireland' you say is an excellent phrase—'it leaves open a very large margin;' and you, therefore, adopt it in preference to 'our favourite word *Repeal*.' Again, you say, 'I am for *perfect equality* with England;' and the Irish representatives, you are of opinion, ought to be called on, if Ministers accept the 'phrase' justice

to Ireland (with its very large margin), to 'remove the embargo'—that is, to support the said Ministers through thick and thin. It is true, your 'justice to Ireland' certainly includes the transformation of an Irish Peer's paper coronet into that golden circle which would entitle you, sir, to sit amongst the peers of England in your own right:—no wonder you are enraptured with 'the beautiful theory of the British Constitution,' when you think of such a noble piece of justice! No wonder you hate the cry, 'Vive la Republique!' when you remember what a sovereign people always does with coronets, be they gold or paper,—and sometimes with the heads that wear them. Your lordship, indeed, holds the coronets of peers to be not less essential to the social system than the planets are to the solar one; and you declare the beautiful Constitution, with its paupers, thrones, taxes, janissaries, and poor-houses, to be 'a living copy of the great works of the Divine Architect of the world.' My Lord, I deliberately prefer the works of God. In the first place, they cost nothing; but your 'Constitution,' however beautiful, is found to come very high. In fact, amongst the industrious classes the impression very generally prevails that we cannot much longer afford it. Even in England, they begin to grudge the expense; but in Ireland, where the thing has cost upwards of a million of human lives within the year, be assured that there are many hundreds of thousands of men burning for the hour (near now, I hope,) when your 'beautiful theory' will be swept out of Ireland, at the pike's point, for ever. And when it is *gone*, believe me the works of the Divine Architect will remain to us still. The sun will shine, the corn will grow, and the waters will run to the sea, just as if crowns and coronets were here yet

“I am not surprised that you, my Lord, should feel it necessary, in times like these, to combat revolutionary ideas. Your presence in Conciliation Hall, the tone of your speeches there, your treacherous motion about Repeal, and your exuberant loyalty to the Queen, are all very intelligible. Truly, they are perilous times. When King’s crowns are getting knocked down so cheap, coronets are a drug in the market,—even gold ones : and paper ones are not quoted at all. Do what you can, my Lord, to stem the tide of Republicanism—you never had more need.

“The Queen of England, you inform us, is ‘a lovely being.’ Very likely ; but Irishmen have never been favoured with a sight of that Royal Lady here, and cannot judge of her beauty. *We* only know her Majesty by the large sums she and her ministers, and her palaces, and her children, mother, husband, uncles and aunts, with *their* children, mother, and husbands, cost us every day we rise : the loveliness of a Lady, who resides four hundred miles off, appears to me hardly worth the price we are charged for it.

“But I think I have said enough, my Lord, to prove that you are a notorious, tried, and convicted humbug ; that you have connected yourself with the Association to stifle the popular voice and damage the popular strength ; and that you have declared yourself a Repealer in order, if you can, *to sell Repeal to the English minister for an English coronet.*”

In saying this, Mitchel only stated what was the plain truth. The motive of Lord Milltown was too palpable not to be detected ; and the shame to the Irish people is that they did not resent the insult offered to

their intelligence in believing that they were to be so easily deceived ; but Mitchel conceived it to be his duty to undeceive the people, to open their eyes to the vile trickery practised by those who professed to be their friends. And it was his duty—it is the duty of every conscientious Irishman when he sees his fellow-countrymen led away by the artifices of place-hunters to check them, to expose the fraud attempted to be practised upon them, and to hold up to public obloquy the man so base as to use the credulity of a too credulous people for his own sordid ends.

The summoning of Mitchel to give bail for his future appearance, took place on Tuesday, the 21st March, and on Thursday, the 23rd, two days after, a great meeting was held in the Irish Confederation rooms. Mr. P. J. Barry, on being called to the chair, said :—

“ Brother-Confederates, let us prepare for the worst, let our organization continue. Whilst the storm sweeps over the face of Europe, levelling thrones, and tearing up from the roots old systems of tyranny, shall Ireland stand listlessly by, gazing on the astounding events, without making an effort for their own liberation? Shall the whole world be free, and our own dear land a slave? No! The bayonets of tyrants have no terrors for other men, and we shall not be deterred by what is called law. Courage, Brothers! the dark clouds that hung over this land are being

dispelled at last ; the sun of liberty already peeps over the horizon—soon it shall shine in meridian splendour on our liberated country, and on a free, happy and contented people.”

When Mitchel came forward to address the meeting, he was received with such a storm of enthusiastic applause that he had to pause for a few minutes to make himself heard. He said :—

“That shout is *my* answer to Lord Clarendon. It is with unmingled pleasure I appear here to-night, to second a resolution for the arming of the Irish Confederation. I think we have been making speeches long enough. The King of France has fled from Paris. The King of Prussia is hiding, they say, at Potsdam. The Austrian Emperor is packing up his portmanteau by this time to leave Vienna. The tyrant of Naples has vanished from Palermo. But, my friends, Lord Clarendon still sits undisturbed in Dublin Castle. There is no need to name the day now—but on an early day, or night—smash through that Castle, and tear down the Union flag that insults our city. I will now, before I sit down, make one profession of politics. A gentleman has told you, that he, for his part, would be content with the ‘constitution of ’82, and that he imagines that most of the Confederates would be the same.’ Now I would not be satisfied with the constitution of ’82. I think that constitution was a humbug. It vanished in eighteen years, and I hope we may never see it again. It is not necessary for us yet to settle our future form of Government ; but I must confess this one would be far from satisfactory to me. Indeed, the only point on which I

differ from Mr. Meagher, is, where he suggests our final address to the Queen of England. I never will address the Queen of England. I will have nothing to do with Kings or Queens, or anything pertaining to them, except the Court of Queen's Bench ; and whatever may be the opinions of my brother-Confederates, there shall be no rest for me, until I see Ireland a free Republic."

Never were father and son so widely different as in the case of Daniel O'Connell and his eldest son ; but in Mitchel's case this was not so, as may be evidenced from the fact that the following verses were written by his son, John, when only nine years of age :—

“A SONG FOR THE FUTURE.

“This land of ours shall soon be free,
From the river Foyle to the river Lee,
And the suffering Irish then shall see
The joys of a free Republic.

“Then we can walk in a fearless band,
And hold our own fair sunny land—
Yea ! down to the smallest grain of sand,
'Neath the sway of a free Republic.

“Then Irishmen may claim their right
By the force of her Great Mens soul and might,
And soar to a grand and skyey height,
'Neath the sway of a free Republic.

This glorious vision never gladdened the eyes of either father or son. May it be hoped that the present generation shall not have sunk into their graves with Ireland still in chains ; with the fetters of slavery

still tightly clasped around her; and the hopes and aspirations of her sons still unfulfilled.

Meanwhile the government was busy preparing for the prosecution. Informations were duly sworn by Mr. Kemmis, the Crown Solicitor, to the effect that he attended at the Stamp Office of the Dublin Custom House, and there read in the *United Irishman* newspaper certain articles which he believed to be seditious. He might well believe them to be seditious; for was it not the aim of Mitchel's life to preach to, and rouse amongst the people, seditious feelings against the usurpers who called themselves the Government? Was he not desirous to force the Government to prosecute him, and in him nine-tenths of the people, for proclaiming the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and thereby try conclusions with the English? Because, a conviction against Mitchel could only be obtained through a packed jury; and if the jury was packed, no greater proof could be given of the truth of Mitchel's assertion, that there was no law in the country.

If justice and right are upon the side of an authority they will not require to be sustained by such a deliberate fraud as a packed jury; but when they are not—and in Mitchel's case they were not—then a

packed jury becomes easily understood. In that case it means that a conviction is to be had at all hazards, and at any sacrifice : so as the victim of their hate is removed, no matter the means used to accomplish that—to them—desirable end. . Anent the matter of juries, and jury-packing, Mitchel thus delivered himself in a letter to Lord Clarendon :—

“ You have undertaken to vindicate the law, in the Court of Queen’s Bench, ‘before the Queen herself,’ and by the help of the worthy Chief Justice. Truly, it was high time. I am no advocate for ‘liberty of the Press ;’ I think no man can commit a much graver crime than exciting discontent against government and laws, *wherever there are government and laws.* I hold that in any well-ordered State—in any State, indeed, that has a pretence of government at all, such a society as the Irish Confederation—such a Journal as the UNITED IRISHMAN—ought not to be suffered for one week to pollute the social atmosphere with its poison : it is a nuisance, a scandal, and ought to be abated quickly, and put out of sight, if not by the indignation of the community, then, surely, by the strong arm of the law.

“ But the case is this :—I assert and maintain that in the Island of Ireland there is no government or law—that what passes for ‘Government’ is a foul and fraudulent usurpation, based on corruption and falsehood, supported by force, and battenning on blood.

“ But your lordship, on the other hand, maintains,

I presume, that the thing called a Government is not a Foreign usurpation, but one of the 'institutions of the country'—that the persons composing it are *not* robbers and butchers, but statesmen—that their object is not the plunder and starvation of the people, but the good order and peace of society, the amelioration of social relations, and the dispensation of justice between man and man.

“Here are two very distinct propositions: and it is impossible they can both be true. Either there is a Government or there is none; law or no law:—either the Confederation and the UNITED IRISHMAN are a nuisance, or else *you* are a nuisance. You ought not to have suffered our existence so long, or else we ought to have extinguished yours. You and we are mortal enemies; and now that issue has been happily joined, I fervently hope it will result in the utter destruction of one or other of the parties.

“When I speak of *your* destruction, my lord, I mean only official extinction; the abolition of that Government of which you are agent;—when I speak of *ours*, I mean our death on field or scaffold, by your weapon of 'law,' or your weapon of steel. I mean, simply, that we will overthrow your Government, or die. This trifling prosecution for 'sedition' is but a beginning: you have invited us to fight you on the battle-ground of 'law'—depend upon it you shall have enough of it: the resources of this 'law' of yours will be taxed to their very uttermost; I already hear your courts ringing with 'sedition,' boiling over with high treason, pouring forth manifestoes of rebellion from the very temple of Justice (as the Chief Justice's den is called), to fly by myriads and millions over the land, until every cabin in the Island shall echo with curses upon Foreign law and Foreign governors.

“If the cause do come to be tried before a jury, there is one stipulation I would make:—your lordship already guesses it; need I repeat it? *Why should you pack a jury* against us? Remember, my lord, you belong to that liberal and truly enlightened party called ‘Whigs;’ it is only a ‘Tory,’ you know, who packs;—and remember, also, that although I deny the lawfulness of your ‘law’ and your law-courts altogether, and hold a trial for sedition before a packed jury in Ireland quite as constitutional a proceeding as a trial before an unpacked one, yet your lordship cannot take this view of the matter. *Your case* is that there *is* law in the land—that we have broken that law, and are to be tried by that law. Remember, therefore, all the fine things that your jurists and statesmen have said and written about the great *palladium* of British liberty and so forth: remember how the learned Sir William Blackstone hath delivered himself on this point;—how that ‘the founders of the English laws have with excellent forecast contrived that the truth of every accusation, whether preferred in the shape of indictment, information, or appeal, should be confirmed by the unanimous suffrage of twelve of his (the accused person’s) equals and neighbours, indifferently chosen, and superior to all suspicion.’ A trial for ‘sedition’ here is a mere political *voting*, and as your faction (that is, the English faction,) have held the sole appointment of all the officers and clerks employed in that business, they have always been able, by stealing lists, or juggling and falsifying cards, and numbers, to secure twelve men who will vote for the Castle, and find anyone guilty whom the Castle does not love.

“This method of applying the British *palladium* to Irish affairs is as old as the introduction of the

said *palladium* into our Island. [See Edmund Spenser; *Eudoxus and Irencæus*]. Of late years the requisite management cannot be resorted to so openly. But your lordship knows how the trick is done. You know that when the trial of the seven Repeal conspirators was approaching, *somebody* stole one of the lists containing the names of the special jurors, so that those names never went into the ballot-box at all; you are aware also that the operations of the ballot itself are mysterious; and that, in short, by one contrivance or another, your juries are always well and truly *packed*. I suppose your lordship was never actually present in the Crown-office while the balloting was going on. I will describe it to you. First, then, you are to suppose that the list of names has been delivered safely by the Recorder to the Sheriff, and been by him duly numbered, and the number of each name written on a separate card—that the list, in fact, the whole list, and nothing but the list, is now actually in the ballot-box, faithfully numbered to correspond with the Sheriff's book;—you must *suppose* all this, albeit I know a rather violent supposition;—and then, in presence of the attorneys for the Crown and for the accused criminal, forty-eight cards are to be taken out of the box. On one side of a table stands a grave-looking elderly gentleman with the ballot-box before him; on the other side sits a second still more grave, with an open book; in the book is written, each several number, on the margin, and opposite the number the name of the juror thereby denoted. The first grave gentleman shakes the box, puts in his hand, and takes out a card, from which he reads the number—then the other grave gentleman turns to that number in the book, and pronounces the name of the juror so numbered, whose name and address are then taken down

as one of the forty-eight; and this process is repeated forty-eight times.

“Now it is painful to harbour any suspicions of such grave-looking elderly gentlemen: but you know *juries are packed*; that is an absolute truth; and somebody must be the villain. Well, then, it is said—I say nothing, but it *is* said—that those two gentlemen know each juror just as well by his *number* as by his *name*: and so, when the first takes out a card and finds 253, for example, written on it—if he knows that 253 would vote for the people, and against the Crown, it is said he gives out (as solemn as he looks), *not* 253, but, say, 255, or some loyal number; and thus a safe man is put on the list. Or, if anyone is standing by, and has an opportunity of seeing the card, he cries 253, and *winks*, or otherwise telegraphs to the other grave gentleman. Then the *onus* is upon the man with the book, who has nothing to do but call out a loyal man for the disloyal number, and so you have safe voters still. They never make the mistake, these elderly gentlemen, of turning out the whole forty-eight all of the right sort: there is no need: there is a margin to the extent of *twelve*: and so they generally leave about nine or ten dubious names amongst the forty-eight. The Crown has afterwards the right to strike off twelve peremptorily, without reason assigned, and always gets rid of the men who would vote for the people.

“Thus, my lord, your jury is safely packed, and your verdict, or rather vote, is sure. They poll to a man for the Crown.”

If further proofs were needed of the fraud that was soon to be enacted under the name and form of law, the following extract from

the *Freeman's Journal* serves to "make assurance double sure:"—

"The bar has been absolutely gutted of all its professional worth, and every popular man has been tempted with the bribe—and all this before a single information was sworn! All the distinguished men who defended the State prisoners in '43 have been gained over to the side of the Crown. Even the junior men were sought to be drawn off from the accused, which proves the malicious littleness of the entire transaction."

The *Spectator* (an English Journal), referring to the approaching prosecutions, thus wrote:—

"Ministers were bound to take that course. We see its inconvenience and risks,—the additional inflation of the notoriety-hunting men in buckram; *the chances of an adverse verdict from an Irish Jury*; the possible tarnish on Whig popularity."

In its burning hatred against the Irish the grave *Spectator* let out its fears of an acquittal, its fears that the jury might not be sufficiently well packed; but it might depend on Lord Clarendon that this latter all-important point would not be forgotten. The sneer about the "notoriety-hunting men" was also in English good taste; so accustomed are they to the like that they imagine

everyone as base as themselves. But they were mistaken. Never in all Irish history was there a purer, a more disinterested, self-sacrificing, noble-minded man, than John Mitchel. And his enemies knew this, but affected to be ignorant. They knew that he was prepared to go any length, consistent with honour, to drive them and their hated laws out of the country, and consequently they strained everything to secure his conviction and transportation. Meeting, in anticipation, this cowardly calumny, Mitchel wrote :—

“No man proudly mounts the scaffold, or coolly faces a felon’s death, or walks with his head high and defiance on his tongue into the cell of a convict hulk, *for nothing*. No man, let him be as ‘young’ and as ‘vain’ as you will, can do this in the wantonness of youth or the intoxication of vanity.”

No! it needs something more; it needs a pure and unselfish patriotism; the patriotism of a Fitzgerald, a Tone, or an Emmet. And unquestionably this patriotism flowed through Mitchel’s veins; for he sacrificed home, friends, life with its pleasures, in fact everything, to benefit his countrymen, to rescue them from everlasting bondage, and to fling to the breeze the glorious banner of freedom so long furled for Ireland.

“Then our National emblems aloft shall be seen,
The shamrock and harp on a banner of green ;
And when free to the breezes that banner shall fly,
The wide world to enslave it again we defy.

“Let us pray for that day—let us manfully strive,
Nor cease while one true Irish heart is alive ;
And shame on the sceptic who dreams we can fail,
Or the dastard whose heart for a moment could
quail.”

To the attainment of this end he was most desirous to see Irishmen of all creeds and all classes unite with one accord ; but alas ! Irishmen will never do this : they seem to prefer nurturing their petty jealousies and rivalries to an extent that renders all hope of union fruitless. If they would only remember, and bear in mind, that “when Irishmen consent to let the past become indeed history, not party politics, and begin to learn from it the lessons of mutual respect and tolerance, instead of endless bitterness and enmity, then, at last, this distracted land shall see the dawn of hope and peace, and begin to renew her youth and rear her head amongst the proudest of the nations.”*

“I wish, indeed,” said Mitchel, in his speech at the Confederation, on Wednesday, the 5th of April, “I wish, indeed, that we could effect a combination with our fellow-countrymen, the Protestant farmers of the

* Preface to “Life of Hugh O’Neill.”

North. I have lived amongst those people, and know them well; and indeed it seems strange to me that I, a native of Derry County, with none but northern Protestants for my kindred, should be supposed to be ranged in this National struggle with Munster, Connaught, and Leinster, and against my own province. And I tell you this, my friends,—if Ireland were now united as in '82, and had her citizen army arrayed, each battalion under its own banners and emblems,—my place in that army should be where the orange and purple were waving, but until those Protestants declare for Ireland, and against England—until their colours are seen on the right side, the Green is the colour for me. . . .

“I would far rather see five thousand northern Protestants joining this Confederation, than hear of fifty thousand Frenchmen whom somebody surmises to be ready to come here at our bidding. Indeed, I was sorry to see the enthusiasm with which you hailed the vague promise of possible aid from France—as if Irishmen were well content to let Frenchmen, or Americans, or anybody else, do for them what they ought to be doing for themselves. You will never, believe me, never see fifty thousand Frenchmen, or one Frenchman, on your side, until we have shown ourselves not only willing,

but able and ready to achieve our own freedom. I, therefore, do entreat you to organise in sections, to continue steadily, openly providing arms; and then, when Irishmen are ready to turn out—then, and not till then, will we be entitled so much as to negotiate a foreign alliance.”

This was the true doctrine, spoken fearlessly in the midst of danger, which, if practised, would eventually lead to freedom. It was the doctrine of self-reliance, and union:—

“The work that should to-day be wrought
Defer not till to-morrow;
The help that should within be sought,
Scorn from without to borrow.
Old maxims these—yet stout and true—
They speak in trumpet tone,
To do at once what is to do,
And trust ourselves alone.”

If anything were needed to strengthen this it only requires to read the speech of M. Lamartine in reply to the address of the Irish Confederates. In this speech he insults the Irish people by alluding to them as “a part of Great Britain,” telling them that the English are their “fellow countrymen,” and that they have been, and are advancing “in the path of constitutional equality with the other parts of the United Kingdom.”

Frenchmen have a right thus to insult Irishmen so long as they are foolish enough to ask for assistance without *first* working for themselves.

“They who would be free, themselves must strike the blow” is a great truth; and this self-reliance is the one great stride towards freedom. Everything comes easy to a determined people, and the tyrant’s power will not be able to resist their just demands.

“Stand together, brothers all !
Stand together, stand together !
To live or die, to rise or fall.
Stand together, stand together !”

As if determined to leave no stone unturned to secure a conviction against Mitchel, Sir George Grey introduced in Parliament a Bill for “the better security of the Crown and Government of the United Kingdom.” In doing so, he alluded at considerable length to the “seditious and treasonable designs” openly avowed by certain persons in Ireland; and to the failure of State prosecutions in restraining those parties. He then proceeded to read several extracts from speeches delivered by Mitchel and other members of the Confederation, and articles in the *United Irishman* newspaper. Having recapitulated the

existing law, he proceeded to say that the measure he proposed would make what was formerly sedition treason, and consequently punishable by transportation for a period of fourteen years—in some cases for life—or more or less as might be deemed desirable. The Bill received some opposition, but was on the whole well supported, as may be seen by comparing the numbers for and against: the numbers for were 283, and against 24. Lord John Russell, in defending the Bill, said:—

“Now, I admit there is danger in extending penalties of this kind to words spoken; but, at the same time, we have to consider that formerly the penalties of high treason were frequently awarded to words spoken, and that often for a very few words which were supposed to express a treasonable sentiment; and that at the present time it has become the fashion, more particularly of late, as a sort of means of compassing their ends, that instead of secret conspiracy, and instead of councils in the dark, by which the monarchy is to be overthrown—the habit with those who hope to compass the destruction of the monarchy, and the deposition of the Sovereign, is to speak to the large masses of the people—to use words inciting to civil war—inciting to the levying of war, and to the use of arms, for the purpose of overawing the legitimate authority of the country, and the better to compass their mischievous and dangerous ends. I say, that when the mode of warfare, the mode of overturning a Government, is changed, it is necessary to take

other precautions than those which have hitherto been taken."

Smith O'Brien delivered a very able speech on the occasion of the second reading of the new Bill, stating his reasons for opposing it, he said:—

"I see in this measure a new attempt to meet the claims of Ireland by coercion rather than by conciliation; and it is in that view rather than upon any technical form, that I oppose it. I can assure the house, in all solemnity, that I do believe this attempt which you are now making to coerce the people of Ireland will be utterly futile. The people will laugh at your attempts to indict a nation."

Mitchel, remarking on the Bill in a letter to Lord John Russell, wrote as follows:—

"MY LORD,—The Crown and Government of your Gracious Sovereign Lady are, it seems, in danger, and want 'further security.' Security against her own beloved, highly-favoured, too-indulgently used, but ungrateful subjects! What is more wonderful, the danger arises not in the administration of those wicked Tories—wretches obstructive of 'human progress,' enemies of the human race—but while you, even *you*, rule her Majesty's Councils; *you*, the very high-priest of Liberality and Concession; *you*, who were to have ruled by justice, not coercion—opinion, not bayonets; whose thoughts were for ever intent on commercial reform, or municipal reform, or sanitary reform. What could a conciliatory Premier do (or promise) that you have not done (or promised)?

Yet the very Crown and Constitution are in danger. May God be between us and harm !

“And, what is strangest than all, it seems to be from the Irish that you fear this danger most ; the people whom you have been nourishing, cherishing and spoon-feeding, by means of so many kind and well-paid British nurses, for two years—on whom you have lavished so many tons of printed paper, so many millions of cooked rations—these are the people who plot ‘treason,’ and eagerly flock to hear ‘open and advised speaking,’ eagerly devour ‘published, printed, and written’ language all urging them to arm for the overthrow of British rule in Ireland ! It is a bad world !

“But you, the ‘Government’ will not endure this ! You will check it at all hazards—if it cannot be stopped as a misdemeanor, you will make it ‘felony.’

“And indeed, my lord, this ‘vigorous’ policy will prove an effectual check upon us Irish ‘revolutionists’ provided the men with whom you have to deal are fools, braggarts, traitors, and cowards. If we have undertaken the trade of patriotism for profit—if we have played the game of patriotism for notoriety—if we have been merely aspirants to the cheap martyrdom of two years’ imprisonment, with *fetes*, and *levees*, and *couchees*—why, in that case, the thing is at an end—you have tamed us—sedition is crushed—and the Queen’s ‘Crown and Government’ are safe for this time.

“Those issues will soon be tried, and I am glad of it. For twelve long months we have desired to see this day. Twelve months ago, on the Easter Monday of last year [’47], Dublin saw one of the most ignominious Easter festivals—one of the ghastliest galas ever exhibited under the sun—the solemn inauguration, namely, of the Irish nation in its new career of national pauperism. There, in

the esplanade before the 'Royal Barrack,' was erected the national model soup-kitchen, gaily bedizened, laurelled, and bannered, and fair to see; and in and out, and all around, sauntered parties of our supercilious second-hand 'better classes' of the Castle-offices, fed on superior rations at the people's expense, and be vies of fair dames, and military officers, braided with public braid, and padded with public padding; and there, too, were the pale and piteous ranks of model paupers, broken tradesmen, ruined farmers, destitute seamstresses, ranged at a respectful distance till the genteel persons had duly inspected the arrangements—and then marched by policemen to the place allotted them, where they were to feed on the meagre diet with *chained spoons*—to show the 'gentry' how pauper spirit can be broken, and pauper appetite can gulp down its bitter bread and its bitterer shame and wrath together—and all this time the genteel persons chatted and simpered as pleasantly as if the clothes they wore, and the carriages they drove in, were their own.

"We three criminals, my lord, who are to appear in the Court of Queen's Bench, were spectators of that soup-kitchen scene; and we all left it with one thought—that that day we had surely touched the lowest point—that Ireland and the Irish *could* sink no lower; and that she must not see such another Easter Monday, though we should die for it.

"I came to the conclusion on that day, my lord, that the Queen's 'Crown and Government' were in danger—nay, that they ought to be in danger—and I resolved that no effort of mine should be wanting to make the danger increase and become *critical*. As I looked on the hideous scene, I asked myself whether there were, indeed, 'law' or 'government' in the land.

“And what was more shameful and fatal still, this devoted people were in the hands of ‘leaders’ who told them that all this ‘Law’—this London Parliament Law—was the law of God—that if they violated it by eating the food they made, or wearing the cloth they wove, they committed a crime and gave strength to the enemy—nay, those ‘leaders’ never failed to thank God in public with sanctimonious voice and head uncovered, that their fellow-countrymen *were* dying in patience and perseverance amidst their own bounteous harvests.

“Such degradation was unexampled in the world. To think that Ireland was my country became intolerable to me: I felt that I had no right to breathe the free air or to walk in the sun: I was ashamed to look my own children in the face, until I should do something to overthrow this dynasty of the devil. And I resolved that ‘Law’ must be openly defied and trampled on; and that I—if no other, even I—would show my countrymen how to do it; for I knew that the monster was impotent against Truth and Right. In short, I determined to walk, before the eyes of this down-trodden people, straight into the open jaws of ‘Law,’ to draw his fangs, to tear out his lying tongue, and fling his carcass to be trampled on by those who had trembled at his nod. I may be devoured, it is true: We may be destroyed; we will not be defeated. What the people want to see in their leader is individual heroism; is the determination to *do* themselves what they incite others to do: and seeing *that*, I believe they will follow, though it were to the gibbet’s foot or the cannon’s muzzle.

“As you have deliberately pitted this British ‘law’ against the Irish nation, there is one little matter I like should to arrange with you. I have already broached the subject to my LORD CLAREN-

DON ; but there is no use talking to him—he is too hopelessly committed to bad company, and involved in evil courses. I mean, of course, the packing of the jury.

“Of course you will pack the jury against us, because all the world knows you dare not bring us to trial before an impartial jury of our countrymen. It matters little whether you pack or do not pack. Whatever kind of trial you select—a fair one or a fraudulent—a trial for misdemeanour or a trial for felony—or whether you drop justice altogether, and try grape-shot, I tell you that *you are met*. The game is a-foot ; the work is begun : Ireland has now the ‘British Empire’ by the throat ; and if she relax her gripe till the monster is strangled, may she be a province, lashed and starved for ever. Amen !”

It will be seen from this letter that Lord John Russell’s principles had undergone a change after tasting the sweets of office. They underwent an equally great change on his acceptance of office in 1846. Previous to this he had been most anxious for “justice to Ireland,” and for the use of “Conciliatory Measures” ; but all this vanished, and the most violent Tory statesman could not have exceeded this heretofore conciliatory Whig in his use of coercive measures : in fact he inaugurated his acceptance of office with a Coercion Bill. On Tuesday the 18th of April, the Bill came up for third reading, and after a few speeches were made, Lord Russell rose to again defend the measure,

and concluded his speech by saying that "as long as he had any breath in him he would oppose the Repeal of the Legislative Union." On a division being taken the numbers were :

For the third reading	295
Against	40

The bill accordingly passed ; and in future, the man who loved his country was to be branded as a "felon." But they might pass laws declaring as felons those who were working for their country's freedom ; this would not prevent true and honest men from risking everything for their country's good. The appellation of "felon" could not deter them from this, and as far as that was concerned the Bill was a failure.

"Now, citizens and countrymen,
'Tis time for us to learn
Aristocrats are kindest,
When democrats are stern.
They talk us down, and walk us down,
Who cringe to their command,
But the yell of our defiance
Not a coronet can stand."

CHAPTER IX.

Commencement of Mitchel's Prosecution—Striking of The Grand Jury—The Attorney-General determines to proceed on the Information—Arrest and Committal to Prison of Mitchel—"The Man in Jail for Ireland"—Opening of the Commission Court—The "Trial"—Holmes' Speech for the Defence—The Closing Scene—Mitchel's reflections on his Trial—Newgate—No attempt at Rescue—He is carried off—The *Shearwater* sails for Spike Island—Meagher restrains the Clubs—Mitchel commences his "Jail Journal"—His reasons—Arrival in Spike Island—Placed on board the *Scourge* for Bermuda—Arrival in Bermuda—The Hulks—Reflections—Removed to Cape of Good Hope—The *Neptune*—Anti-Convict Rebellion at the Cape—English Attorney-General *versus* South African—Sailing orders for Van Diemen's Land—Rejoicings in Cape Town—"Her Majesty's Gracious Pardon"—"Except the prisoner Mitchel"—Arrival in Van Diemen's Land—Ticket-of-Leave—John Martin—Meeting of the "F.IONS"—Life in Van Diemen's Land—Mitchel is joined by his family—Smith O'Brien—Patrick Joseph Smyth arrives in Van Diemen's Land—Plans for Escape—Defeated—Arrest of Smyth—Released—Falls sick—Escape—Sail for Sydney—California—New York.

ON the 15th of April, 1848, legal proceedings commenced in earnest against Mitchel. On this day the grand jury were called on to find true bills against him for "seditious libels," and against O'Brien and Meagher for seditious speeches. After brief delibera-

tion they found true bills in each case ; and on the application of the Attorney-General, a rule was entered in the case of each of the "traversers," calling on them to plead within four days. But quite unexpectedly, the Attorney-General determined to proceed without the indictment and with the information. This resort to the most harsh, summary, and vindictive procedure known in law, had been disused for years, and was always condemned by lawyers as an odious exercise of prerogative ; but the Attorney-General was utterly indifferent to the harshness so as his point was gained, and gained it was.

The juries were struck in Mitchel's case on the 12th of May, and on the next evening, when he was sitting at dinner with his family in Rathmines, Inspector Guy, of the detective police, handed him a warrant for his arrest upon two charges of "felony," under the new Act of Parliament for "the better protection of the Crown and Government." He was then conveyed in a covered car to the head police-office, accompanied by his brother, William H. Mitchel, and Devin Reilly. Mr. Porter, chief Police Magistrate (as if by previous arrangement), was sitting, and Mr. Kemmis, crown solicitor, and Mr. Perrin, as crown counsel, were in attendance.

Mitchel was then placed at the bar, and informed by the magistrate of the nature of

the charge for which he was taken into custody, and asked if he wished to have the informations read to him? He replied, No; that he only desired to know the substance of the charge against him. Mr. Porter informed him that it was for two publications in the *United Irishman*—one a speech, the other a letter, entitled “A Letter to the Protestant farmers of Ulster.” He then informed him that it would be his duty to commit him to Newgate, to abide his trial at the next court, to which the information would be returnable, which would be the Commission of Oyer and Terminer for the city of Dublin, and which would sit at Green Street on the 20th of May.

Mitchel was then removed in the custody of two policemen, and driven to Newgate prison, where he was handed over to the gaoler.

The warrant for his committal, which was made out under Mr. Porter’s signature, was as follows:—

“POLICE DISTRICT OF
DUBLIN METROPOLIS,

To wit.

} By Frank Thorpe Porter,
Esq., one of the Ma-
gistrates of the Head
Police-Office, in said
district. You are here-
by required to detain

in your custody the body of John Mitchel, of No. 12 Trinity-street, in the said district, who

stands charged before me, upon Oath, for that the said John Mitchel, on the sixth (day of May, instant, at Trinity-street, aforesaid, did wilfully and feloniously compass, imagine, invent, devise, and intend to deprive and depose our most Gracious Lady the Queen, from the style, honour, and royal name of the imperial crown of the United Kingdom, and levy war against her Majesty, in order, by force and constraint, to compel her to change her measures and counsels ; and such compassings, imaginations, inventions, devices, and intentions, did, at such times respectively, at the place last-aforesaid, express, utter and declare, by publishing certain printings in a certain newspaper called *The United Irishman*, of which said newspaper, the said John Mitchel was, at the time aforesaid, and at the place last-aforesaid, the sole and only proprietor, contrary to the form of the statute in each case, made and provided.

“Therefore, the said John Mitchel, you are in safe custody to keep until legally discharged ; and for so doing this shall be your sufficient warrant.

“Given under my hand and seal, this 13th day of May, 1848.

“ F. T. PORTER. (Seal.)

“To the Keeper of Newgate, Dublin, at City of Dublin Commission.

“(Keeper’s seal.)”

Thomas Devin Reilly, writing in the *United Irishman* (20th May), thus gave vent to his feelings :—

“Fifty years ago, and fifty *such* years, Ireland, ruled for England by landlords, stood, as she stands to-day, on the brink of deeper ruin, or of victory.

“ Oh ! my countrymen, look back over these fifty years—over the long, interminable train of ills, and woes, and insults, and ignominies, doomed upon our country. . . .

“ We have been declared surplus in our own land, to be starved and got rid of. Where our fathers looked to Heaven and their hands, we are brought to look to the work-house door, and the mercy of the union clerk. To such straits have our enemies reduced us—to such cruel tyrannies have we submitted, that even the heart of the Turk, on the distant shore of the Dardanelles, at the far end of Europe, was so touched that he sent us the alms of beggars. Ay ! the story of these fifty years is one long, low groan of a nation doomed to torture.

“ And now, on this same 20th of May, in a cell beside that where, fifty years ago, Lord Edward Fitzgerald was abandoned to death, there another man sits a prisoner, for the same holy cause of Irish Liberty—one more true Irish felon, JOHN MITCHEL.

“ Round that living felon’s head are the memories of the past, and the hopes for the future—his cause is the one old cause of our fathers. The soil of Ireland for the lives of the Irish people—the rule of Ireland by the will of the Irish people—the freedom of Ireland by the arms of the Irish people—these are his and theirs, one and indivisible. Stepping back over fifty years, he lifted Irish Liberty out of Emmett’s blood ; and holding it up on high, in its beauty, its purity, its splendour, its glory, side-by-side with English Whiggery and Toryism, and famine, and out-door relief, and ‘ situations,’ and levees, and starvation, and the debasement of provincial beggary and the abhorrence and scorn of nations—he asked you, my countrymen, which you chose ; and so he takes his stand in the felon’s dock on Monday.

“ For *you*. His are no sordid aims of self or

class. Popularity, personal influence, vulgar cliquery, or clap-trap, were never his means or his aim. He worked against popular opinion, without a clique, or a party, or organised body, of any sort, at his back—without pandering to this sect or that—this hierarchy or that—without jealousy or flattery—without secrecy or trick—but open and plain as the sunlight—relying on the omnipotence and majesty of Truth, the immortal beauty and serene purity of Freedom, the right of this old Irish Land to Irish Life, and the brawny arm, and the noble heart of the working man. And how he has succeeded, the bars which shut him out from liberty prove. Why is he there, but because he is the most mortal enemy of our enemies? Why is he there, but because his words have entered into, and became those of the people? Why is he there, but because he has struck the true chords of the Irish heart—because now are heard throughout Ireland the tones which our tyrants tremble most to hear.

“Now that he is locked up in jail, I, his friend, can speak of him. We all recollect that day when the Council of the body he helped to found and strengthen repudiated him. Of that meeting there were but 188 who agreed with him that the Irish people should arm, to win and hold their liberty. Recollect the time, Democracy was asleep in Europe—France had apparently sunk under the military rule of Louis Philippe—England had passed in safety over the year 1847—Ireland had undergone a famine, the most frightful the world had ever seen, without striking one blow for land or life. A coercion bill and a well-looking chief-butcher to her Majesty sufficed to hold us, emaciated and despised, to the earth. Even the landlords were easy. Tipperary was disarmed. Altogether it was the saddest and most ominous

period of our history. We were about to end forty years' 'agitation' by the wholesale slaughter of one million, and to enter on a new course of patient degradation, of pauper diet, and parish coffins, and milk and water bubbles of speeches. The ruffian aristocracy had taken their final stand with the English—O'Connellite agitation had reduced the middle classes to the lowest state of boon-craving abasement. The people were fast losing hold of the land, and even in Ulster tenant-right was going. On this starving people no man relied.

"Save one. Then it was, in that dark, gloomy, despairing time, that this one man, who now lies in jail, resolved the people *should not be deserted*—that their tenant-right should not be sold or sacrificed to any class—that they should not be wholly pauperised, wholly robbed, wholly starved without a struggle. He staked his life and liberty on that. He knew that if they did not strike for their own lives, it was because no man dared to show them how. He showed them how—he taught them that this rule which choked them was a dream, an unreality, a vile incubus, which it needed but one bold blow, even by one man, to dissipate for ever. And on Saturday night last, as he walked into Newgate, *he triumphed*. The rest remains with us.

"Never—oh! never again—let the faults of '98 bring down the just hand of an avenging God, in reigns of terror, and tyranny, and famines, upon a people ungrateful—upon men so bewildered or depraved, as not to know that 'to be brave is to be truly wise.'"

"There must be prompt decision," wrote John Martin, "no Irish national leader must

be allowed to be carried off a convicted felon from our shores. Before this day week, Ireland will have gained a third, and far more important triumph over the foreign enemy—or the cause of Irish nationality will be lost for a generation.”

Would that Irishmen had heeded that counsel, and resisted to the death this latest insult to them.

The Commission Court opened with the usual formalities on the 20th of May, and Baron Lefroy proceeded to charge the grand jury. On Monday the foreman handed down a true bill against Mitchel. The Clerk of the Crown asked for what the bill was. “For sedition,” answered the foreman. “For sedition?” asked the clerk of the crown. “For treason, felony, or sedition, or whatever it is,” answered the foreman.

This serves to illustrate the haste with which the whole business was despatched; and the utter indifference whether there was justice done or not. Justice! the thing is not to be had in British law courts. The petty jury having been sworn, the remaining portion of this awful scene was very quickly gone through.

The Attorney-General stated the case in a lengthy and scurrilous diatribe, and endeavoured to defend himself against the charge

of having tampered with the jury-list (for the jury was packed as never jury was before).

"No matter what religion a man professed," said he, "it was my duty to have excluded from the jury box, every man whose political opinions coincided with those of the prisoner. May I ask you, gentlemen, if men were biased in their judgments, would they be proper persons to put upon a jury?"

The Attorney-General seemed to imagine that though men were biased against Mitchel it was all right. As if men prejudiced against the prisoner would find a verdict favourable to him. But the Attorney-General argued that so long as the men were sure men, Castle men, he might allow his conscience to be easy: there would be no fear of the *Spectator's* gloomy forebodings of an adverse verdict being realised. Assuredly not: the men were such as could be relied on; and it was a mere matter of form to mimic a trial at all, seeing that the verdict was ready before the case had even commenced.

Some witnesses were then examined, and at a quarter past twelve o'clock, Robert Holmes,* the veteran Republican of '98, the

* For the benefit of a younger generation to whom the name of Robert Holmes is comparatively unknown, I will give a few facts of his life. He was born in Dublin, in 1765, of northern parents (natives of Antrim);

brother-in-law of Robert Emmet, rose to address the jury on behalf of the prisoner. The old man seemed to have gathered together all his former energies to discharge

educated in Trinity College, Dublin (which he entered in 1782); he distinguished himself during his college career, showing a great liking for science. Called to the bar, he for a considerable period travelled the north-east circuit, gaining a reputation for great learning and legal skill, which was abundantly demonstrated in his speech in defence of C. G. Duffy (in reality Mitchel, by whom the indicted article was written), in 1846, which speech was characterized by Chief Justice Pennefeather as the most eloquent ever heard in a court of Justice. He remained all his life at the outer bar, although being a Protestant he could have risen to the bench; but he scorned to rustle in the official livery of an English Government, and preferred to remain in the comparative (but honourable) obscurity of his choice. He married Robert Emmet's sister, by whom he had one child, a daughter, who married George Lenox Conyngham, Esq., whose daughter was married, in 1861, to Viscount Doneraile.

Holmes' career at the bar was throughout an honourable one, his eloquence being always enlisted on the side of truth and justice. He died at the house of his daughter, in London, 7th October, 1859, aged 94. He was the author of three published works: the first, published in 1799, was entitled "A Demonstration of the Necessity of the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland;" being a satirical pamphlet ridiculing the arguments of its supporters. The next was "An Address to the Yeomanry of Ireland, demonstrating the necessity of their declaring their opinions upon Political Subjects." But his most important work was "The Case of Ireland Stated," which went through six editions, the last being in 1847.

his last duty to the great Republican of a younger century. "What memories must have throbbled through him!" says Savage. "He had not entered *that* court-room for half a century. The brother of his wife had left that dock—in which Mitchel stood—for the scaffold." And yet, though the memories it aroused might be sad, the grand old Republican of '98 resolved to attest the justice of the Republican of a later day, and hurl defiance in the face of English "law."

His speech—the last he ever uttered—was as follows:—

"May it please your lordships, and gentlemen, I am counsel for the prisoner, John Mitchel; and I am well aware of the important duty which devolves on me this day, as counsel for that gentleman, and also of my inadequacy to discharge that duty; but I will avow, that I feel proud of being selected on this occasion by Mr. Mitchel, because I believe in my heart that he is an honest man, sincerely attached to the principles he avows—and no doubt which he avows boldly—and although the Government of this country may fear him, or hate him, they cannot despise him.

"Gentlemen, having thus said a word respecting the prisoner as to character, I shall now proceed with his case. The Attorney-General has fairly stated the case on behalf of the Crown, and has read very fairly all the publications respecting which Mr. Mitchel stands indicted; and there is only a part, and one part only of the Attorney-General's statement to complain of,

and that is the conclusion. I do not think he was warranted in stating in this court what instructions he, or those connected with him, received from the Chief-Governor of this country with respect to the striking of the jury; I think the Crown should never know anything of striking juries—not a word—or give any instructions on the subject; for, if the Crown can do it, with respect to giving fair instructions, it—

[The Attorney-General interrupted to say he received no instructions from the Lord Lieutenant.]

“Well, my lords and gentlemen, I may be mistaken, but I misunderstood him to intimate that his instructions were from the Lord Lieutenant: I may be mistaken in that; but there is yet something in the Attorney-General’s concluding statement I cannot be mistaken in, and with which I find fault. There was, as you are aware, a challenge to the array in this case on the part of the accused, in consequence of information he had received, to the effect that those whose duty it was to empanel an impartial jury had not in all instances done so, particularly with respect to Roman Catholics. That issue was raised and questioned, and the triers found, on their oaths, that the panel was a fair and impartial one; but what do I find then? I find that of this fair and impartial jury—found to be so by two respectable citizens—the Crown strikes off no less than thirty men, eighteen of them Roman Catholics. There can be no doubt on that subject—therefore I will at once dismiss it.

“In this case, gentlemen, the prisoner, John Mitchel, stands charged with two distinct offences; and it is somewhat remarkable that, in support of those two distinct offences, the very same

evidence is given to support both. The Attorney-General will be very well satisfied, no doubt, if you give your verdict on both or either charges, or for anything, like the foreman of the Grand Jury who found the bills. The foreman of the Grand Jury, gentlemen, having been asked if the jury had found bills against the prisoner—replied—‘Oh yes, we find him guilty of sedition.’ ‘Gentlemen,’ said the officer of the court, ‘he is not indicted for sedition.’ ‘Well,’ said the foreman, ‘we find him guilty of treason.’ ‘But, gentlemen,’ again interrupted the officer, ‘the charge against Mr. Mitchel is for felony.’ ‘Oh, no matter,’ said the foreman, ‘sedition, treason, or felony, it is all the same to us.’ And so with the Attorney-General: if you convict the prisoner, that is all that he wants. Gentlemen, as the court will tell you, the question in this case is not whether Mr. Mitchel may have committed in these publications other offences; if you think him guilty of high treason, you ought not to find him so, for you must believe him guilty of one or both of the charges made against him, or find a verdict of acquittal. The first charge is, ‘that he compassed, imagined, invented, devised, or intended to deprive, or depose, our most gracious Sovereign the Queen, from the style, honour, or royal name, of the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom.’ I can understand deposing the Queen from the throne perfectly well. I can understand an attempt made on the life of the Queen perfectly well, or expelling her from her dominions; but I do not, for the life of me, know what it is to depose her ‘from the style, honour, or royal name of the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom.’

“If Mr. Mitchel was indicted upon another section of this statute, for ‘intimidating both,

or either, of the Houses of Parliament,' I could understand the evidence here as applicable, perhaps, if it were alleged that by so doing he got them to pass an Act to increase the Irish representatives from one to two hundred, but I cannot understand this charge; for, notwithstanding that he did so, the Crown would not be affected in the least 'in the style, honour, or royal name, of the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom;' she would be still as she is, and have the same title. I am not accusing the Attorney-General of a blunder in drawing the indictment, for he has followed the Act, but we must have Acts of Parliament that we can understand; and I defy any man to understand what it is to deprive her Majesty of the style, honour, and royal name of the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom. The importance of this consideration would appear from the first section of the article, which declares:—

“That from the 1st of January, 1801, the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland shall be forever united by the name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and that the royal style and title appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom, and all the armorial bearings, etc., shall be such as his Majesty, by his royal proclamation under the Great Seal, shall appoint.’

“Now, I can understand anything done to deprive the Queen of her title of Sovereign of the United Kingdom; but, as I said before, I cannot understand depriving her of ‘the style, honour, and royal name,’ as laid in this indictment. What the deprivation is I cannot comprehend—therefore I cannot understand this charge against the prisoner. What is the other charge? It is ‘advising or intending to levy war

against her Majesty, her heirs or successors, living in any part of the United Kingdom, by force or constraint, to compel her to change her measures or councils.' What measures? What councils? Is there the slightest evidence here as to what measures or councils these publications purported to change? Are you, gentlemen, as a jury, to grope in the dark? Are these publications calculated to force the Queen to alter her measures with France, or America, or any other country on the face of the earth? What the measures are the prisoner wants to change, I cannot understand. What have been the measures of this session of Parliament for the improvement of Ireland? The Poor-law. That is the only measure I know of, and has Mr. Mitchel endeavoured to change it? Not in the least; therefore I ask my learned friend, the Attorney-General, or the gentleman who will follow me for the Crown, to tell you, on your oaths, what course or measure it is my client has endeavoured, 'by advising the levying of war,' to force the Queen to change. I would be glad to hear, even now, if the Attorney-General would condescend to inform me. I have no objection to let him mend his speech, if, by doing so, he can tell you any measure or council Mr. Mitchel endeavoured to compel her Majesty to change by trying to levy war. Gentlemen, this is a criminal case, and it is incumbent on those who make the charge to prove it as clear as light—to prove a specific offence under the statute. The Crown, I admit, have done all they could—they have followed the Act of Parliament; but they have not proved that Mr. Mitchel has tried to levy war against the Queen, 'to compel her by constraint to change her measures or councils.' I put it to your lordships, that, under this Act, unless the

Crown prove a specific measure or council that the prisoner wanted to have changed by these publications, he is entitled to an acquittal; and, therefore, I apply myself further to the case—I would wish to have your lordships' opinion on the subject as to what is to be left to the jury. If your lordships do not wish to interfere at this stage of the trial, I will of course proceed—

[Baron Lefroy stated that whatever the charge was appeared on the record, and the court would refer to it].

“ Will the learned gentleman tell the jury what measures—what councils are those laid in this Act of Parliament which Mr. Mitchel has conspired against, and upon which, if you convict him, he will be transported for life? Will he leave the jury in that state of uncertainty; and if he does not think otherwise, it will be my duty to go fully into the case. It is not my duty here to tell you, gentlemen of the jury,—and if I did you would not believe me—that there are very strong expressions used by my client in those publications. There are, and he avows them, and many of those expressions I also avow, and I want to try this case of felony between the Crown and the accused, which I cannot do without calling your attention to something of the history and the present state of Ireland; and, with that view, I tell you, in the first instance, that Ireland is an enslaved country. A great mistake is entertained by many persons to the effect that there cannot be slavery—that no man can be a slave unless he be in chains, or subject to the lash of the planter like the negroes; but the slavery of which I speak is the slavery of the people, which consists in this, that they do not make their own laws themselves—that they do not make the laws by which they are governed, but that those laws are made by

others, and I say it boldly, that a people so circumstanced are in a state of slavery.

[Baron Lefroy said the court were reluctant to interpose, but the course pursued by Mr. Holmes was calculated to embarrass them in the situation they occupied, by introducing objectionable matter, to which, if they did not express their dissent, it might make them liable to the imputation of having approved the line of argument advanced by Mr. Holmes].

“I am the last man to press upon the court that which I had not a right to do; and I think it impossible to do justice to my client without doing justice to Ireland also.

[Loud cheers, which Baron Lefroy called upon the Sheriff to suppress].

“The Act of Parliament under which Mr. Mitchel stands at the bar does not prescribe one punishment—it might be for two years’ imprisonment, or seven years’ transportation, or transportation for life—and if there should be a verdict of conviction, is it not important to show all the circumstances of the case, and the provocations under which my client has acted in those publications. I think it is quite essential to his case, and, with that view, the line I have prescribed for myself is quite necessary for his defence: my client may be guilty of felony, but I say it broadly and boldly that England is the cause of the offence of which he is accused, and I will demonstrate it. I care not by what means you have been empannelled. I address you because I believe you to be honest men and faithful Irishmen. Take nothing from me; I will state on high authority:—‘What does the liberty of a people consist in? It consists in the right and power to make laws for its own government. Were an individual to make laws for another

country, that person is a despot, and the people are slaves. Where one country makes laws for another country (and that England in making laws for Ireland, I will demonstrate, by which Ireland is enslaved), the country which makes the laws is absolutely the sovereign country, and the country for which those laws are made is in a state of slavery.' I give that upon the authority of an Englishman—an honest man in his day—Blackstone. And what does he say? In constitutional questions he will not be suspected or accused of being too much in favour of popular rights, he says :—'It follows from the nature and constitution of a dependent state, that England should make laws for Ireland'—(treating Ireland as a conquered country, he is arguing that England had a right to do so). 'Ireland'—(this is a conquered country)—'conquered, planted, and governed by England, it might be necessary that it should be subject to such laws as the superior state thinks proper to prescribe.' In speaking of this country, Ireland, he (Blackstone) maintains that because Ireland had been a conquered country in his days, Ireland of the present time, and for posterity for ever, should be bound by such laws as the conquering state thinks proper to make for her. Accordingly, England, except for a period of eighteen years, did make laws for Ireland. There was a celebrated statute, called 'Poyning's Law,' passed in the reign of Henry the Seventh, by which it was enacted by the English Parliament, that the Irish Parliament should not have the power to pass any law for Ireland unless it was first approved by the King and Parliament of England; and at a later period, in the reign of George the First, an Act was passed declaring expressly in words that England alone had the right to make laws for the government of

Ireland, so that England, by that law, declared that no law could be passed for Ireland, unless they permitted it; but that the English Parliament alone had the power to make those laws. I question will the able lawyer who, in the course of his eloquent address, put questions to me, deny the accuracy of what I state. Let him controvert it if he can—that down to the present time Ireland has been deprived of the power of making laws for herself. It happened that some years after that a body of men appeared in Ireland—armed men—the glorious Volunteers of 1782. At that time the Parliament of England for a while did justice to this country—they repealed that Act of Parliament declaring that England had the right to bind Ireland, and declared solemnly by that Act passed in 1783, and from that period England announced that Ireland had the power to make her own laws, and that the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, and no other had power to make laws to bind Ireland. After that solemn Act, in eighteen years—in less than twenty years—the Act of Union was carried. By that Act of Union Ireland is said to be represented in the English Parliament by one hundred members, whilst the English Parliament is composed of five hundred—five members to one. Does Ireland—will the learned and able gentleman, the Attorney-general, now say that Ireland makes laws for herself? There never was, in the history of nations, so flagrant an Act as the passing of that Act of Union in this country. What was the Irish Parliament then chosen to do? To make laws, the ordinary laws, and it had no more right to delegate its powers for that purpose—it had no right to surrender the solemn obligation committed to its charge by the people—to conspire with the English Parliament to annihilate itself—

than I had. What would be said of the English Parliament should it delegate its authority to make laws for England, or to change anything at present existing, and make an absolute state? She would have just the same right to do so as the Irish Parliament had to destroy itself: and I say it boldly and broadly, as a man, that the Act of Union is only binding as a thing of expediency. Men will often submit to a certain order of things rather than run the risk of subverting, by force of arms, the state of things as established. No man, upon slender grounds, should endeavour to subvert the order of things; but it is the right of an enslaved country, and the laws of Providence approve the right, to arm and right itself. What man here would live——”

[Baron Lefroy said they could not listen to this; they could not suffer the case of the prisoner to be put to the jury founded on the subject of Repeal of the Union by force of arms.]

“I will make it appear by the conduct of England, and with respect to this very question of Repeal, that England has been the cause of the present state of this country. The English ministry, by this very question of Repeal, has brought this country into the unfortunate state in which it now is. By their duplicity on this question they are the guilty persons, and not my client. The question of Repeal has been agitated for several years in this country. Mr. O’Connell, whose powers of mind, and great popularity we all know, bearded the Whigs and the Tories for years on this very question, and, at the same time, the government were determined that the measure should never pass. They had declared it should never pass—that they would prefer a civil war, and yet that same government suffered Mr. O’Connell to agitate that question for years. Was that weakness, or

guilt, or both? In the year 1831, I believe there was a Whig ministry then in power, Lord Althorp said, in reference to Repeal—"Is it not evident that Repeal must produce a separation of the two countries? I trust that those persons engaged in a course so dangerous to the peace and prosperity of the country, will not succeed; but if they do, it must be a successful war, and I know that most of my countrymen (meaning the English) feel assured that such an event would be attended with complete success,"—that is, Lord Althorp's countrymen would vanquish the Irish, and prevent the Act of Union from being repealed. He stated that the Repeal of the Union would end in separation—that he would prefer a civil war, and his countrymen would be victorious in that war, and after that declaration was made, the present prime minister and his colleagues suffered that question to be agitated in this country, in the manner we all know. I say, if it were an honest resolve, and that Repeal would lead to separation—that he preferred civil war rather than suffer the Act to be repealed—they should have passed an Act of Parliament making it high treason to attempt to repeal the Union. That would be a bold step, I admit, which no man could justify, but it would be an honest, open, and bold one. We could have understood the thing; but they suffered a man to be entrapped into what they now complain of. They permitted a struggle for Repeal, while they themselves were parties to it, and they continued this agitation of a measure which, they asserted, should end in separation; and their last act is the prosecution of an unfortunate Irishman for agitating the question. It might be asked, was there any prosecution for that? There was a prosecution, they all knew the fate of that prosecution, and that it ended in the defeat of the Crown. Mr. O'Connell survived it—he gave

the agitation a magic meaning—he called it ‘moral force,’ and was suffered to agitate the question, which he did to the last hour of his life, in this country. But, although the Whig government foresaw that, if granted, it must end in separation, they made no law against attempting to repeal it. Nay, more, they restored Mr. O’Connell, the head and leader of the agitation, and several other Repealers besides, to the commission of the peace; and yet now they say it is an offence under this new Act of Parliament to deprive the Queen of the style, honour, and royal name of the imperial Crown. I say, and every man must agree with me, that the very government that has instituted this prosecution, have been themselves the greatest cause of bringing this country into the wretched state in which it is. My client may be *statutably* guilty, but they are *morally* guilty. It is laid down distinctly, by Blackstone, vol. i., p. 147, that the people have a right to have arms, and to use arms against oppression. I am not wantonly or wilfully broaching doctrines of my own, but address you on constitutional grounds and principles; and can refer to high authorities and historical facts in support of every word I utter. The doctrine of Mr. Mitchel and others is condemned by the wealthy. There are men—and they are chiefly to be found in what are called the better ranks of society—excellent men—religious men—moral men—kind men—but if all mankind were like them we would have no such thing as liberty in the world. Peace in their time is their first prayer; and their highest aspiration, to enjoy the good things of this life. They are consoled for the misfortunes of others by the reflection, that the sufferer here is only in a state of trial, on his passage to another world—that other world, where the tyrant must account for his oppression, and where the slave will be

relieved from bondage. Oh, Ireland! Ireland! Ireland! thousands, and thousands, and thousands of thy children, have for ages been obliged to look to that other world alone for release from their destitution. From past times let us turn to the present time, and what do we see? An Attorney-General, an able lawyer, under a special commission, a most successful prosecutor. Death has followed his footsteps, and it is asked, ought not the assassin to suffer for his crime? Yes, but in the history of the civilized world, and of free nations, has there ever yet been a nation of assassins? No; assassination is the crime of the untutored savage, or the brutalised slave. Is the assassin to suffer for his crime? Yes; but deep, deep, deep, is the guilt of England in its unprovoked invasion and unjust dominion in Ireland. At the close of seven centuries of wasting wars—wasting laws—and still more wasting policy—it is found necessary to maintain that dominion in Ireland by special commissions, state prosecutions, and military force—by the gibbet, the jail, and the sword. I have heard much in praise of the present Chief Governor of this country, and it is neither my province nor my wish to say one word in derogation of his name; but I will say that be that noble lord the best of the good—the wisest of the wise—the bravest of the brave—he cannot long maintain a connexion between England and Ireland, under a common crown, by the gibbet, the jail, or the sword—the laws of eternal justice forbid it. How is that connexion to be maintained? By Justice—by giving to Ireland her rights—her rights by nature, and her rights by compact,—by giving to her her own Parliament, truly representing the interests of her people. By giving to Ireland that, they might have the two countries united for ages under a common Sovereign, by a community of interests,

and an equality of rights—by mutual affection and reciprocal respect ; but if for that be substituted a connexion founded on the triumph of strength over weakness, you will have jealousy, distrust, fear, hate, and vengeful thoughts, and bloody deeds, the sure and never-failing proofs of injustice. Give to Ireland her own Parliament—not the Parliament of '82—that was a meteor light which flashed across the land—a deceptive vapour, which quickly vanished. Ireland wants a fixed star—bright and resplendent—the cordial influence and reflecting radiance of which may be seen and felt in the glorious union of liberty, happiness and peace ; but it is urged that if you do this, it will lead, as Lord Althorp said, to separation, and Ireland erected into a separate independent state. Suppose it does, who is to blame for that ? England ! What right has England—what right has any country—to build and peril its greatness upon the slavery, degradation, and wretchedness of another ? Strip the case of the disguise with which ambition, and crime, and the love of power have invested it, and the sophistry of conquerors, and princes, and courtiers, and lawyers has cast around it—what, then, is it ? A strong man, because he is strong, insults his brother man, because his brother man is weak—the slave struggles to be free, and the enslaver kills him because he struggles. That is British Conquest, and dominion in Ireland—that is British legislation in Ireland. I speak not merely for my client ; I speak for you, and your children, and your children's children. I speak not for myself—my lamp of life is fluttering, and soon must be extinguished ; but were I now standing on the brink of the grave, and uttering the last words of expiring nature, I would say, 'May Ireland be happy, may Ireland be free.' I call upon you, gentlemen of the jury, as you value your oaths, and as you

value justice and public good, manly bearing and personal honour, and as you love your country, to find a verdict of acquittal."

Holmes having concluded his speech, the counsel for the Crown, Mr. Henn, replied. Judge Moore then charged the jury, who retired to consider their verdict, which after some time they brought in and handed down to the clerk of the Crown. That verdict was "Guilty." The sensation created in court was indescribable: several gentlemen, including distinguished members of the bar, rushed forward to grasp the hand of the "felon" whom they looked upon almost for the last time; whereupon Baron Lefroy expressed his astonishment at their so far forgetting themselves. "Heartless administrator of demon law."

On the following morning at the sitting of the court, the clerk of the Crown went through the solemn mockery of asking the prisoner if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon him? "I have," answered Mitchel, "I have to say that I have been found guilty by a packed jury—by the jury of a partisan sheriff—by a jury not empannelled even according to the law of England. That is the reason I object to the sentence being passed upon me."

Baron Lefroy then proceeded to pass sentence. He commenced by denying that the jury had been packed, recapitulated all the

offences mentioned in the indictment, and concluded by saying:—

“I wish you to understand (addressing the prisoner) that we have, with the utmost anxiety, and with a view to come to a decision upon the measure of punishment which it would be our duty to impose, postponed the passing of sentence upon you till this morning. We have with the utmost deliberation, examined the matter, with an anxiety to duly discharge the duty which we owe on all hands—the duty which we owe the prisoner of not meting out punishment beyond the just measure of the offence, and the duty we owe to the public that the degree of punishment will be such as to carry out the object of all punishment, which is not the mere infliction of the penalty upon the person convicted, but the prevention of crime—that that punishment should carry with it a security to the country, as far as possible, that one who has offended so perseveringly—that so deliberate a violator of the law shall not be permitted to continue his course of conduct to the disturbance of its peace and prosperity. We had to consider all this—to look at the magnitude of the crime, and to look also at the consideration that if this were not the first case brought under the Act, our duty might have obliged us to carry out the penalty it awards to the utmost extent; but taking into consideration that this is the first conviction under the Act—though the offence has been as clearly proved as any offence of the kind could be—the sentence of the court is, that you, John Mitchel, be transported beyond the seas for the term of fourteen years.”

An outburst of indignation followed upon the delivering of this sentence. As soon as silence had been restored, the accents of the

new-made "felon" were heard throughout the court. In a clear and firm voice he spoke as follows:—

"The law has now done its part, and the Queen of England, her crown and government in Ireland, are now secure pursuant to Act of Parliament. I have done my part also. Three months ago I promised Lord Clarendon, and his government in this country, that I would provoke him into his courts of justice, as places of this kind are called, and that I would force him publicly and notoriously to pack a jury against me to convict me, or else that I would walk out a free man from this dock, to meet him in another field. My lord, I knew I was setting my life on that cast; but I warned him that in either event the victory would be with me, and the victory is with me. Neither the jury, nor the judges, nor any other man in this court, presumes to imagine that it is a criminal who stands in this dock. I have kept my word.

"I have shown what the law is made of in Ireland. I have shown that her Majesty's Government sustains itself in Ireland by packed juries, by partisan judges, by perjured sheriffs. I have acted all through this business, from the first, under a strong sense of duty. I do not repent anything I have done: and I believe that the course which I have opened is only commenced. The Roman who saw his hand burning to ashes before the tyrant, promised that three hundred should follow out his enterprise. Can I not promise (looking at Martin, Reilly, and Meagher, who stood round the dock) for one, for two, for three, aye, for hundreds?"

An outburst of enthusiasm followed this speech, and several voices exclaimed, "Yes, Mitchel, for thousands." "And promise for me." Phrases of similar import issued from

all parts of the Court, and it seemed as if the whole auditory vied who would be first to give him a pledge that his self-sacrifice would not be in vain.

Thus concluded the last scene in the last act of this frightful drama. Looking back upon it through the memory of intervening years it is not to be wondered at that Mitchel should say:—

“Let any man try to conceive himself in my place on that day: confronting that coarse mimicry of Law and Justice; on the brink of a fate worse than a thousand deaths; stationed in a dock for having dared to aspire to the privileges of freedom and manhood for myself and for my children; with all the horrible sufferings and high aspirations of my country crowding on memory and imagination, and the moan of our perishing nation seeming to penetrate even there and to load the air I breathed: beholding the cause of our ancient nationhood brought to be decided, not, as I had hoped, by the proud array of our people in the field, but by the ignominious parchments of a dastard lawyer and the packed jury of a perjured Sheriff. Scorn almost overcame indignation, as I saw the exquisitely elaborated preparations of the enemy; and I felt that I would respect Lord Clarendon far more if he had hired one of his detectives to stab me in the dark. That would have been a crime, but surely not so vile and hideous a crime as this prostitution of the name and forms of Justice.”*

The panic created in court was unparalleled: the judges fled from the bench; the prisoner's

* Last Conquest (Perhaps), p. 279.

friends and counsel rushed over every obstacle to bid farewell to the gallant-hearted man who, though the chief actor in the scene, alone stood unmoved, resolved not to blanch, no matter what form of punishment might be devised for him.

He was conveyed by an underground passage to Newgate prison, and ushered into a dark and noisome cell, where he took a hasty leave of his wife and children; but he was not destined to remain long there, for a gaoler brought in a pair of iron fetters, and immediately fastened one of the bolts on his ankle, but so hurried was he by the prison authorities that he had only succeeded in fastening the one, when he said, "Here, take the other in your hand and come along." He did so, and was immediately conducted through the hall of the prison to the outer door.

He stood on the steps for one moment and looked around over the vast throng. What a sight met his eyes. The prison van, guarded by a squadron of dragoons and mounted police with drawn sabres, was the central figure; and stretching far away to either side, was a vast sea of human faces, straining to obtain one last look at the brave and dauntless man who for them and their children was now being carried away to a distant and cheerless prison.

Mayhap he was at the moment repeating the words of the poet :—

“Dead are my hopes, and my desponding soul
An arid soil, that bears not fruit nor flowers •
And, blindly tottering to an unknown goal,
Joyless and godless pass my futile hours.

“There is no sunshine in my spring of life—
There is no rest-place in my pilgrimage ;
All outward ill and endless inward strife,
My youth have fettered with chains.”

And of a certainty it might be said that his hopes were dead. Had he not laid himself the task of lifting up his country from the despondency into which she had sunk, when, near fifty years before, the hopes and aspirations of another brave man were drowned in blood? And to what had it led him? Unsupported by his countrymen, he fell an easy victim to the inexorable cruelty of English law: and to their everlasting shame be it said that they allowed this insult to pass unavenged. When they should have drowned in a sea of blood the whole fabric of English law and English government, they allowed themselves to submit to the tame counsels of expediency. Thinking upon it, the conclusion forces itself upon the mind, that the Irish people of this latter day are deficient in that courage for which their fathers were universally renowned.

Did not the courage and daring deeds of their ancestors cause monarchs to wonderingly ask were such a people enslaved? And did not the news likewise go abroad that now they would not dare so much as save the life of one man, one of the best and truest of Erin's sons? How it must have chilled the heart of the lonely man when in his cold and cheerless cell he thought of the callous-heartedness of that people for whom he had given up all that made life dear, and to think that when the time came for testing their love, for seeing were they worthy of that love which he had poured out so immeasurably for them, oh, it was enough to have wrung his heart-strings asunder to think that he had done all this in vain; that there was not one in that vast multitude who watched his departure who would lift a finger to attempt his rescue. No matter. He had the solitary comfort of thinking that he had done his duty, and that he for his part could lay his hand upon his breast and say that it was not for want of the will he had failed. "If any thing had been wanted to justify me, in my own eyes," said he, "for all that I had done, and meditated, the earnest and impassioned advocacy of the brave old Republican of '98 would have contented me well. It caused me to feel that my defeated

life was at least one link in the unbroken chain of testimony borne by my country against Foreign dominion; and, with this consciousness, I knew that my chains would weigh light." This was, indeed, but sorry comfort, that but one out of so many thousands should have given the "felon" cause to think he was not alone in the world. But, alas! ingratitude has been but too often the lot of men who have devoted themselves to their country's service. The history of Greece and Rome tells the same sad tale; and Ireland has not been exempt. Beneath the outward appearance of harshness that surrounded Mitchel, there lurked gentleness and tenderness soft as woman's; and the broken heart became only too evident in the stooped and wasted figure of the prematurely old man. "Those who knew him intimately realised how it might be possible that the portraits left us of some of the French Revolutionists of '89 were not mere fancies of a disordered imagination. Like them, he seems to have had two distinct natures—a political and a personal—the one, fierce, un pitying, remorseless; the other, all tenderness. The one is known to the world by his pen—a diamond stylus dipped in vitriol; the other lives in the sorrowing memory of his friends, who call to mind the happy household which his presence

lighted like a sunbeam, and grieve over the desolation that has fallen upon it—thinking of the old times, of the venerable, gray-haired mother, of the affectionate and accomplished sisters, the young and charming wife, and the lovely group of joyous children.”

As soon as he was placed in the van, the troops closed four deep around it, and it dashed off at a gallop, by a slightly circuitous route, to the North Wall, where an armed steamer—the *Shearwater*—lay, with steam up, ready to put to sea as soon as it had received its freight. The van stopped, and Mitchel was ushered to the quay-wall, between two ranks of carbineers with naked swords. He was placed in the boat belonging to the vessel, and was quickly on board, when the vessel immediately put to sea. In a few minutes he had taken a last look at the country of his birth and pride. On his leaving the quay, one man bade him God speed; whereupon a police inspector roared out to him that he had better make no disturbance. On board he was treated with the greatest respect, and everything was done to make him feel at ease. Alluding to a conversation between himself and one Captain Hall, he thus writes in his *Jail Journal*:—

“There was a huge lump in my throat all the

time of this bald chat, and my thoughts were far enough away from both Peru and Loo Choo. At Claremont Bridge, in Dublin, this evening, there is a desolate house—my mother and sisters, five little children, very dear to me ; none of them old enough to understand the cruel blow that has fallen on them this day, and above all—above all—my wife.”

He was now safely removed from out of Ireland, and the English government were surprised and astonished at the ease with which they had carried him off. Their elaborate preparations betokened fear of a conflict, and a determination to quell any resistance. Yet there was not even a shadow of an attempt at resisting his removal on the part of the people. And what made this all the more shameful and degrading was that the people had repeatedly asserted that he would not leave their shores except through their blood. And when the time came for redeeming this promise they shrunk back and quailed before the armed battalions of a tyrant usurper. And it is not to be wondered that foreign nations were backward, in later years, in sending armies to their shores to help them in the achieving of their independence, when they saw that they bore, unresisted, all the insults that hate could heap upon them. What avails it that men talk and

promise much when they perform nothing? Of what use for Meagher to exclaim, "we are no longer masters of our lives. They belong to our country—to liberty—to vengeance. Upon the walls of Newgate a fettered hand has inscribed this destiny. We shall be the martyrs or the rulers of a revolution," when he at the same time dissuaded the people from insurrection. Words avail nothing. It was not by words that France achieved her liberty—that Sicily drove out a tyrant ruler—that Poland redeemed the name of Kosciusko. No, but by actions. By doing what they intended and not talking of it; and until Irishmen go and do likewise, they need never complain of their slavery: they deserve to be slaves, and to be spat upon and scorned by their oppressors.

Meanwhile, Mitchel was being sped away to an unknown prison. His first act, almost, was to commence a journal of his daily life, and set down everything of interest that occurred to him. His object in doing this was to turn inside out the British prison system, and to expose the cruelties perpetrated on its victims under the name of punishment. The horrors of his sufferings, thus recounted, are sufficient to make the flesh creep. How any "civilized" govern-

ment could devise such loathsome cruelties surpasses imagination.

On Sunday, the 28th of May, he landed at Cove, and was rowed in a boat to the prison of Spike Island. Having been handed over to the Governor, he was conducted to a vaulted chamber which was to be his cell, and here, as soon as he was alone, his pent-up feelings gave way, and he burst into a flood of passionate tears. These were not tears of base lamentation for his fate—but, tears of regret, and pity for his country. What thoughts and feelings agitated him at that moment are not for pen to describe; language fails to depict the unutterable woe that descended on his soul. In a short time he recovered himself, and standing up, exclaimed, “I am ready for my fourteen years ordeal, and whether it bring me toil, sickness, ignominy, or death—fate, thou art defied.”

Orders presently arrived from Dublin Castle saying that he was to be treated “as a person of education and a gentleman,” and to have accommodations thereunto correspondent. The same despatch contained directions for his removal to Bermuda by the *Scourge* war steamer, at that time lying in the harbour. It was on the first of June that he was placed on board the

Scourge, and from that day dates his utter banishment from Ireland.

He might, on that day, have exclaimed with the poet:—

“Sweet thoughts, bright dreams, my comfort be,
All comfort else has flown ;
For every hope was false to me,
And here I am, alone.

“What thoughts were mine in early youth !
Like some old Irish song,
Brimful of love, and life, and truth,
My spirit gushed along.”

It had been his hope “to right his native isle,” and see her redeemed, regenerated, free, “first flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea.”

The *Scourge* arrived in Bermuda on the 20th of June, and Mitchel was immediately brought to the hulks, where his cell was, he tells us, “a sort of cavern, just a little higher and a little wider than a dog-house; it is, in fact, the very hole through which the main mast formerly ran down into the ship, and would be quite dark but for two very small and dim bulls’ eyes that are set into the deck above. I cannot stand quite erect under the great beams that used to hold the main mast in its place; but half of my floor is raised about nine inches, and on that part I cannot stand at all. The

whole area is about six feet square; and on the lower part I have a promenade of two steps (*gradus*), making one step (*passus*). When I entered, the cavern had, for furniture, one wooden stool. 'Here's your place,' said the mate. 'Very well,' quoth I, sitting down upon the stool, and stretching out my feet to the corner of my apartment.

"A hammock was then brought into my dog-hutch; and in order to make room for it, they had to swing it diagonally. A cup of milkless tea and a lump of bread were then brought me; and when I had despatched these, a piece of candle was left upon a narrow board or shelf projecting from the wall, and my door was locked. The light of the candle showed me a great many big brown cockroaches, nearly two inches long, running with incredible speed over the walls and floor, the sight of which almost turned me sick."*

In his Journal, about this time there occur the following reflections on his short political career:—

"I know very well that my whole idea and scheme wears a wonderfully feeble and silly aspect in the eyes of statesman-like revolutionists; they can see nothing more in it than a number of gentle-

* Jail Journal. p. 54.

men agreeing to dash out their own brains, one after another, against a granite fortress, with the notion that they are laying desperate siege to it. These statesman-like politicians say to us that we should wait till we are stronger ; that we should conspire and organise *in secret*, keeping under the shelter of the law for the present ; that when plainly advising men to arms is made a 'transportable offence,' we should no longer plainly advise, but exhort and influence them privately, until, etc. *Wait till your principles take root before you disseminate them*, said a prudent adviser to me. But he who talks thus knows nothing of Ireland. In Ireland there can be no secrecy, so thick is it planted with castle-spies. In Ireland you can never organise to any useful purpose, so long as they are so miserably cowed by 'law,' and see nobody willing to deny and defy this law. We must openly glorify arms, and this in defiance of law ; and the more diligently that London laws are expressly made against it. We must, in short, make final protest against this same law—deny that it is law ; deny there is any power in the London Parliament to make laws for Ireland, and declare that we will obey such laws no longer. I think there will be found some virtue in this statesmanship of mine, if men still grow in Ireland ; at any rate I know no better."*

Eleven months of dismal confinement elapsed—eleven months out of fourteen years—and orders arrived for his removal from Bermuda. A convict ship—the *Neptune*—arrived in Bermuda bound for the Cape of Good Hope, and in this vessel Mitchel was to be removed. The English Government

* Jail Journal, page 52.

contemplated landing the whole convict crew of the *Neptune* at the Cape, and forming that place into a colony, like Tasmania; but the residents of the Cape were determined to resist this; and not allow their country to be turned into a shore to receive the offal of London and other cities; but they at the same time made exception in Mitchel's case, having heard that he was on board the *Neptune* as well.

After a voyage of close on five weeks the *Neptune* dropped anchor at Pernambuco, to take in supplies for the remainder of the voyage; and after a stay of three weeks started for the Cape, which they reached on the 19th of September, 1849. But there they were destined not to land, for the Colonists were so determined to prevent their landing that they absolutely refused to supply the ship's occupants with either food or clothes; thereby resolving to starve them away.

Great meetings were held, and pledges adopted, to refuse all intercourse with the *Neptune*, and even to the Admiral they denied food. The Attorney-General in England pronounced it illegal on the part of the Cape Colonists to resist the landing of the convicts; while in Cape Town this opinion was denied altogether. Who shall decide when lawyers disagree? In England great

excitement was caused by the news that the Cape colonists had made a firm stand; and there was great discomfiture in Parliament. However, rather than risk a battle, they sent out despatches ordering the vessel to proceed to Van Diemen's Land, and, on its arrival there, all the prisoners to receive "Her Majesty's Conditional Pardon," except "the prisoner Mitchel," whose case being entirely different from any of the others, was reserved for "special consideration;" instructions respecting it to be forwarded to the governor of Van Diemen's Land. Great were the rejoicings in Capetown—a reconciliation of all parties; public dinners, balls, and illuminations. The *Neptune* sailed on the 19th of February, and cast anchor in the Derwent, a quarter of a mile from Hobart Town, on the 7th April, 1850. Here Mitchel received that form of liberty known as "ticket-of-leave;" the only condition being that, while he held this ticket, he was not to attempt his escape from the colony. Acting on the doctor's advice he accepted the ticket-of-leave, and was quartered in the village of Bothwell, where also was John Martin, who had been "tried," and, of course, found guilty, and shipped off to Van Diemen's Land in punishment of serving his country. It was an unwonted indulgence on the part of the Government to allow the two "felons" to live

together; but having got them out of Ireland they were satisfied, and might well let them enjoy each other's society. Mitchel had not been three days in Bothwell before he and Martin determined on paying a visit to Meagher and O'Doherty—also transported,—they had to travel several miles to accomplish this; and although it poured rain, they resolved to enjoy the pleasure of seeing “the old familiar faces,” even though they had to endure a heavy soaking. Mitchel's health was very much impaired by the ten months' solitary confinement in Bermuda, and eleven months' cruising in the *Neptune*, and in addition, he suffered from asthma, to which he had long been a victim.

The following account of the meeting of the exiles is from his *Jail Journal*:—

“We (Martin and I) had arrived within four miles of our destination, and halted at Cooper's rest; but on dismounting I found myself too much exhausted to ride any farther, so Cooper took one of our horses and set off to Townsend's, to ask our friends to come to me, seeing that I could not go to them. Townsend's is another hut, four miles further on, and usually made a place of meeting, because it has several rooms.

“‘You just keep the fire up, gentlemen,’ said Cooper, ‘that I may get the tea and chops ready when I come back, and I'll engage the other gentlemen will be here in an hour.’ We threw on more wood, and tried to dry our clothes. It now began to grow dusk, for we had been four hours and

a-half on the way; and the evening was fast growing dark, when we heard the gallop of three horses, and a loud laugh, well known to me. We went to the door, and in a minute Meagher and O'Doherty had thrown themselves from their horses; and, as we exchanged greetings—I know not from what impulse, whether from buoyancy of heart, or *bizarre* perversity of feeling—we all *laughed* till the woods rang around; laughed loud and long, and uproariously, till two teal rose, startled from the reeds on the lake-shore, and flew screaming to seek a quieter neighbourhood.

“I suspect there was something hollow in that laughter, though at the time it was hearty, vociferous, and spontaneous. But even in laughter the heart is sad; and curses or tears, just then, might have become us better.

“Both these exiles looked fresh and vigorous. Kevin O'Doherty I had scarcely ever met before; but he is a fine, erect, noble-looking young man, with a face well bronzed by air and exercise. . .

“Our talk was all of Ireland, and of Richmond and Newgate prisons, and of Smith O'Brien; and it soon made us serious enough. I had still very much to learn—though before coming up to Bothwell at all, I had met MacManus at a wayside inn, and he told me all he knew. They have been in Van Diemen's Land just five months; and they inform me that Smith O'Brien has been, during that time, subjected to most rigorous, capricious, and insolent treatment by the 'Comptroller-General' and his subordinates. This 'Comptroller-General,' one Hampton, is specially exasperated against O'Brien because he could not bring himself to show him some of those external marks of respect which he is in the habit of exacting from the real convicts: and being restrained from using his usual methods of coercion and punish-

ment in our case, scourging, hard labour, and the like, the comptroller (who is bound to assert his dignity somehow) strives to conquer and torture his haughty captive by hourly mortification in detail. I suppose it is the man's trade; and we must all live; but how much better it had been for that gallant heart, if he had been shot down at Ballingarry, or even hanged before the county jail at Clonmel.

“Our meeting at the Lakes, begun with factitious jollity, soon grew dismal enough: and it was still more saddened as we talked of the factions of Irish refugees in America—factions founded principally on the momentous question, who was the greatest man, and most glorious hero, of that most inglorious Irish business of '48; and each imagines he exalts his own favourite ‘martyr’ by disparaging and pulling down the rest—as if the enemy's government had not pulled us all down, and ridden roughshod over us. It seems that I have my faction, and Meagher a still stronger one. If our respective partizans could but have seen—as we discussed this question of our own comparative importance—how bitterly and how mournfully we two smiled at one another across the gum-tree fire in that log-hut amongst the forests of the Antipodes, perhaps it might have cooled their partizan zeal.

“We reluctantly parted; and rode our different ways. So ends my first visit to Lake Sorel: and it has pleased me well to find that my friends are all *unsubdued*. The game, I think, is not over yet.” *

Life, on the whole, passed smoothly in Van Diemen's Land. The exiles went over the

* Jail Journal, pages 216—219.

country, admiring the scenery—of which Mitchel has given us some really beautiful descriptions in his *Jail Journal*—and occasionally enjoyed a *reunion* at the house of some friendly colonist.

Being more or less settled, Mitchel wrote home to his wife telling her to come out and bring the children with her. His loving solicitude for her safety, and his anxiety to see her once again after so long a separation, are all given to us in his faithful *Journal*. Never was there a more devoted and loving wife: in the brief and stormy career of her husband, she was ever aiding him and strengthening him with her counsel and encouragement; and now she braved unknown perils to be at his side again, to cheer him in his lonely hours, and comfort him in his exile. She arrived in Bothwell late in August, 1851, and rejoined her husband immediately. "Methinks," said Mitchel, "I shall have something like a fireside again." He now had a cottage and a farm of two hundred acres, situated on the banks of the Clyde. "From the windows," said he, "we command a view of the valley stretching about three miles northward to the base of Quoin Hill. The land is capital pasture; and I am stocking it with sheep and cattle. Four hours every day are devoted to the boys' lessons; then riding, or roaming the woods with the dogs."

He had an intense desire to see Smith O'Brien, for whom he entertained a great regard; but his first attempt to see him was baffled, owing to police interference; the second, however, was successful. I give his own narrative:—

“We set out, my wife and myself, to visit Smith O'Brien, who has been staying some months at Avoca, a district in the mountains of the north-east. He accepted the ‘comparative liberty’ almost a year ago (of course giving his parole at the same time), and resided first at New Norfolk; but wanting some occupation, he removed to the house of Dr. Brock, a settler at Avoca, and has undertaken the instruction of his sons. We have not seen him for three years and a-half, and from Meagher’s description, I fear we shall find him much altered. We had twenty-four miles to ride through the woods to Oatlands, where we were to take the coach. The horses, Tricolor and Fleur-de-lis, were in high order, and devoured the bush. The spring day has been most lovely, and the mimosa is just bursting into bloom, loading the warm air with a rich fragrance, which an European joyfully recognises at once as a well remembered perfume. It is precisely the fragrance of the Queen of the Meadows, ‘spilling her spikenard.’ At about ten miles’ distance, we descend into a deep valley, and water our horses in the Jordan. Here, as it is the only practicable pass, in this direction, between Bothwell and Oatlands, stands a police-station. Two constables lounge before the door as we pass, and, as usual, the sight of them makes us feel once more that the whole wide and glorious forest is, after all, but an umbrageous

and highly-perfumed dungeon. Every sight and sound on this mail road, reminds me that I am in a small, mis-shapen, transported, bastard England; and the legitimate England itself is not so dear to me that I can love the convict copy.

“ We rested for the night at the principal hotel in Campbelltown, a very elegant house, and splendidly furnished, which would be a credit to Bray or Kingstown. From hence we are to take a public conveyance the day after to-morrow to Avoca, where Mr. O’Brien is to meet us.

“ After a journey of twenty-one miles, through the wild valley of the South Esk, we alighted at a decent hotel, and in a few minutes a gentleman passed the window, whom, after nearly four years, we had some difficulty in recognising for William Smith O’Brien. We met him at the door as he entered; and our greeting was silent, but warm and cordial, although the last of our intercourse in Ireland had been somewhat distant. He seems evidently sinking in health; his form is hardly so erect, nor his style so stately; his hair is more grizzled, and his face bears traces of pain and passion. It is sad to look upon this noblest of Irishmen, thrust in here among the off-scourings of England’s gaols, with his home desolated, and his hopes ruined, and his defeated life falling into the sere and yellow leaf. He is fifty years of age, yet has all the high and intense pleasure of youth in these majestic hills and woods, softened, indeed, and more pensive by sorrow, and haunted by the ghosts of buried hopes. He is a rare and noble sight to see: a man who cannot be crushed, bowed, or broken; who can stand firm on his own feet against all the tumult and tempest of this ruffianly world, with his bold brow fronting the sun like any other Titan, son of Cœlus and Terra; anchored immovably upon his own brave heart within; his clear eye and soul

open as ever to all the melodies and splendours of earth and heaven, and calmly waiting for the angel death.

“We were at breakfast when he came in ; and that over, he proposed a walk, that he might lead us up the glen of the South Esk. We wandered several hours, talking of '48. He gave me a more minute account than I had before heard of his own movement in Tipperary ; and attributed his failure, in great part, to the behaviour (what shall I call it?—the cowardice, the treachery, or the mere priestliness) of the priests. Priests hovered round him everywhere, and, on two or three occasions, when the people seemed to be gathering in force, *they* came whispering round, and melted off the crowd like a silent thaw. He described to me old grey-haired men coming up to him with tears streaming down their faces, telling him they would follow him so gladly to the world's end—that they had long been praying for that day—and God knows it was not life they valued ; but *there* was his reverence, and he said that if they shed blood they would lose their immortal souls ; and what could they do? God help them, where could they turn? and on their knees they entreated him to forgive them for deserting him. So they slunk home to take care of their paltry old souls, and wait for the sheriff's bailiff to hunt them into the poor-house. On the whole, O'Brien accepts defeat—takes desertion or backwardness of the people, and the verdict of the Clonmel jury, such as it was, for a final pronouncement against armed resistance ; and, therefore, regards the cause as lost utterly, and the history of Ireland, as a nation, closed and sealed for ever. So do not I.

“He is well aware that he would be released upon making ever so trifling a submission ; and distinct intimations to that effect have reached him

indirectly, through members of his own family. He is too proud for this ; and cannot endure the thought of begging pardon ; yet, with his views of the meaning and moral of his failure, why not ? If I could bring myself to believe, for one minute, that the country had really pronounced against us and condemned our intended rebellion, and, moreover, that I had been *tried* by my countrymen and afterwards found guilty of that attempt—that is to say, if I believed Queen Victoria to be really the sovereign of Ireland and not a foreign tyrant, I would certainly beg her pardon. At least, I at present think I should.

“ So conversing, we returned towards our hotel. A large black snake, the first I have seen this summer, lay upon our path ; and my wife would, probably, have walked over it, but that O’Brien, who saw it first, pushed her back, and jumped forward to kill it ; but it glided away, as they always will do, if they can, amongst some dense tufts of *iris*, and we could not find it. . . . This morning we parted. O’Brien has fourteen miles to walk up the St. Paul’s Valley ; and he asked us to go with him about two miles that he might show us a beautifully-situated cottage and farm, on the St. Paul’s river, which he advised me to rent ; for I may now live in any district I please, as independently as any ticket-of-leave rick-burner in the land.

“ We sauntered and lingered as long as we could in that beauteous valley. At last it was necessary for us to part, he on his way to Dr. Brock’s residence, where he must give certain lessons this evening ; we, back to Avoca, to take the public spring waggon for Campbelltown. We stood and watched him long, as he walked up the valley on his lonely way ; and I think I have seen few sadder and few prouder sights. Oh ! Nicé, queen of

Carthage ! pour thou upon that haughty head all the vials of thy pitiful revenge ; heap on that high heart all the ignominy that can be imagined, invented, or created *by thee*—and that head bows not, that heart breaks not, blenches not. Of honour and dishonour, thou, oh, queen ! art not the arbiter or judge ; and the Parliament, platform, pulpit, press, and public of thy mighty people, know nothing about the same.

“ We turned slowly away—I, with a profound curse, my wife with a tear or two, and came back to Avoca.” *

Meanwhile, Mitchel's friends in America were not idle. A body called the Irish Directory were making preparations to effect his escape ; and the person appointed to carry out their intention was Patrick Joseph Smyth, a distinguished Irishman. †

Mr. Smyth lost no time in communicating his mission to Mitchel and the other exiles, and commencing preparations. He sailed from New York and arrived in Van Diemen's Land on the 9th of January, 1853. He travelled by coach from Launceston to Bridgewater. Mitchel went down from Bothwell, to

* Jail Journal, pages 235—244.

† “ Smyth had been intimately acquainted with us in Dublin, and also with John Martin. Since then, he has been roving over Ireland, trying, like the rest, to kindle an insurrection that would not burn—then escaping by a Galway emigrant ship to America—editing a newspaper in Pittsburg—agitating in the New York *Sun*, the Nicaragua railroad question. He is also, from old, a close friend of Meagher.”—Jail Journal, p. 270.

Hobart Town, and then on to Bridgewater to meet him. The coach by which Smyth was to come was two hours late, and just as Mitchel had given up all hope of his arriving, and engaged a bed at the hotel, it arrived. "A young man alighted from it, and entered: he looked me full in the face, and I him: it was Smyth; but neither of us, after four years, knew the other. He went into the office, and engaged a bed; yet I did not know his voice. He came out to the coach to get his portmanteau, I followed and went round after him to the outer side of the coach, where all was dark. 'Is your name Smyth?' He turned upon me suddenly: clearly he thought I was a detective—that he was a prisoner, and that all was over. I hastened to undeceive him, for he looked strongly tempted to shoot me and bolt. 'All right, Smyth: silence; follow me into the parlour.' So I strolled carelessly in. Presently he followed, and joined me, and we spent the evening together in a private room."*

The next day they went to Smith O'Brien's lodgings in New Norfolk, where the plan was discussed; O'Brien insisting that Mitchel was the man to be freed; for them not to mind him (O'Brien), as he might, in time, be set free voluntarily. On the 12th January,

* Jail Journal, p. 269.

they set out for Bothwell, where Smyth was to rest for a few days. He then proceeded to Melbourne to negotiate about a ship, as Hobart Town was considered dangerous; and succeeded in securing a brigantine, by name the *Water Lily*, owned by one John Macnamara, of Sydney. This vessel was to come into Hobart Town, thence to New Zealand, and coast round by Spring Bay, on the eastern side of the island, about seventy miles, and lie there for two days, under pretence of taking in timber. Scarcely had these arrangements been made than they learned that the police authorities had got wind of the proceedings, and that a reinforcement of police had been sent up to Bothwell, together with two additional chiefs of police, to be ready for the first move. In fact, two constables were stationed on a little hill behind Mitchel's house, to watch the place. Next day news arrived that Smyth had been arrested, having been mistaken for Mitchel, it was in vain that he protested, he was thrust into the watch-house, and afterwards lodged in the Hobart Town police station. On his journey thither he was compelled to travel one night in an open waggon, and the weather being wet and cold, he was in a high fever by the time he reached Hobart Town. Here he was kept in custody for a few hours, and then

discharged without a word of apology or explanation.

Mitchel was highly indignant on hearing of the treatment his friend had been subjected to, and immediately posted off to Hobart Town. On his arrival there he went straight to the police office and demanded an explanation; in reply he was coolly informed that it was "all a mistake," and the clerk in the office treated the whole affair as a capital joke. Mitchel told him that he could not see any jocoseness in it, and that he considered the arrest of Mr. Smyth *for him* not only an outrage upon Smyth, but also an insult to himself. He left the office and went to the hotel where Smyth was staying, and there they resolved, as soon as Smyth was sufficiently recovered, to effect an escape.

Nearly two months elapsed before Smyth had altogether recovered his health, and as soon as he had, they decided upon a day for the visit to the magistrate, for Mitchel was determined not to leave the island without paying a formal visit to the police magistrate and there resigning his parole. Accordingly, on the 9th of June, 1853, they both (Mitchel and Smyth) proceeded to the district police station. The scene that followed is best described in Mitchel's own words:—

"On entering the village Smyth and I rode leisurely down the main street. At the police-

barrack, situated on a little hill, we saw eight or nine constables, all armed, and undergoing a sort of drill. At the office door there was, as usual, a constable on guard. Mr. Barr, a worthy Scotch gentleman and magistrate of the district, was standing within a few yards of the gate.

“We dismounted. I walked in first, through the little gate leading into the court, through the door, which opened into a hall or passage, and thence into the court-room, where I found his worship sitting as usual. Near him sat Mr. Robinson, the police clerk. ‘Mr. Davis,’ I said, ‘here is a copy of a note which I have just despatched to the governor; I have thought it necessary to give you a copy.’

The note was as follows:—

“BOTHWELL, *8th June, 1853.*

“TO THE LIEUT.-GOV., ETC.

“‘SIR,—I hereby resign the ‘ticket-of-leave,’ and withdraw my parole,

“‘I shall forthwith present myself before the police magistrate of Bothwell, at his office, show him a copy of this note, and offer myself to be taken into custody.

“‘Your obedient servant,

“‘JOHN MITCHEL.’

“Mr. Davis took the note; it was open. ‘Do you wish me,’ he said, ‘to read it?’ ‘Certainly; it was for that I brought it.’ He glanced over the note, and then looked at me. That instant Smyth came in and planted himself at my side. His worship and his clerk both seemed somewhat discomposed at this; for they knew the Correspondent of the *New York Tribune* very well, as also his errand from New York. I have no doubt that Mr. Davis

thought I had a crowd outside. There is no other way of accounting for his irresolution. Then I said, 'You see the purport of that note, sir; it is short and plain. It resigns the thing called ticket-of-leave, and revokes my promise which bound me so long as I held that thing.'

"Still he made no move, and gave no order. So I repeated my explanation: 'You observe, sir, that my parole is at an end from this moment; and I came here to be taken into custody pursuant to that note.' All this while there was a constable in the adjoining room, besides the police clerk, and the guard at the door; yet still his worship made no move. 'Now, good morning, sir,' I said, putting on my hat. The hand of Smyth was playing with the handle of the revolver in his coat. I had a ponderous riding-whip in my hand, besides pistols in my breast-pocket. The moment I said 'Good morning,' Mr. Davis shouted 'No—no! stay here! Ranisford! Constable!' The police clerk sat at his desk, looking into vacancy. We walked out together through the hall; the constable in the district-constable's office, who generally acts as his clerk, now ran out, and, on being desired to stop us, followed us through the court, and out into the street, but without coming very near. At the little gate leading out into the street, we expected to find the man on guard on the alert between us and our horses. But this poor constable, though he heard the magistrate's order, and the commotion, did not move. He was holding two horses, one with each hand, and looked on in amazement, while we passed him, and jumped into our saddle.

"We concluded that we had done enough, and that there was no reason to wait any longer; therefore—

“ ‘ We gave the bridle-rein a shake ;
Said adieu for evermore, my dear ;
And adieu for evermore ! ’

Mr. Davis and two constables rushing against one another, with bare heads and loud outcries—grinning residents of Bothwell on the pathway, who knew the meaning of the performance in a moment, and who, being commanded to stop us in the Queen’s name, aggravated the grin into a laugh ; some small boys at a corner, staring at our horses as they galloped by, and offering ‘ three to one on the white un ; ’—this is my last impression of Bothwell on the banks of the Tasmanian Clyde.”

Thus did Mitchel effect his escape. He might have dispensed with the danger of visiting the magistrate, but with his keen sense of honour he hesitated to do anything that would cast a blemish on him. He preferred to risk his being arrested rather than have his children to think that he would be guilty of a dishonourable action. Yet, notwithstanding the plainness of this fact—the fact that it would have been easier to have fled and dispensed with a resignation of parole—some writers put it that “ he fled.” This is unjust to the memory of the man, seeing what risks he ran to acquit himself of the business honourably, and only exposes the littleness of mind, and malice, of those who are thus guilty of concealing the *truth* and stating what is *false*. Smith O’Brien whom no one (not even his enemies) can accuse of being deficient in points of honour, was

clearly of opinion that the only mode of discharging the parole was to withdraw it formally in the police office of the district, giving the authorities full opportunity to take him into custody (if they were able); to do this within the business hours, from ten till three; and that any force or violence (short of killing) would be allowable and justifiable. And it was with his full sanction and approval that Mitchel acted as he did.

It might not be necessary to dwell thus upon the point, with which no fair-minded man could possibly find any fault, were it not that some recent writers have gone out of their way to cast a slur upon his memory.

They crossed the river just below the town, and held on to the south-west till they arrived in the forest. Here they pulled up, and Smyth left to call at Nant Cottage, and then go on to Launceston. Mitchel rode on through the forest, until night coming on, he was forced to discontinue his riding, and rest for the night. Accordingly, he dismounted, lighted a fire with some dead branches, tied his horse to a tree, looked to his pistols, and was soon asleep from sheer exhaustion. The first grey streak of dawn saw him up and pushing on his way. He soon reached the hut of Job Sims, shepherd to a friend of his named Russell. Here he was quite safe; for it was here that Meagher had halted, a short time before, when

making his escape; and old Job was never so well pleased as when aiding the flight of any of Her Majesty's prisoners. He only remained a short time here, and then went on to the farm-house of an Irish emigrant named Burke. Having remained here a fortnight he went to another part of the island, and, disguised as a clergyman, reached Hobart Town. Here he rejoined Smyth, who had settled affairs at Nant Cottage, and made arrangements for Mitchel, and his wife and family, leaving in the same vessel. Accordingly, on the 19th of July, 1853, they sailed in the *Emma* for Sydney; Mitchel, still disguised as a clergyman, remained alone in the vessel, in order not to arouse suspicion. Sydney was reached in safety, and Mitchel felt that he could breathe a little more freely when out of the foul Tasmanian air, loaded as it was with crime and infamy.

Again they put to sea, and on 9th of October sailed through the Golden Gates of California. Once more he was surrounded by freemen, by men whom he was not ashamed to look upon as his fellow men, as he had been in that British Government sink—Tasmania. He remained in California three weeks, to breathe the air of freedom, and drink in the luxury of being free to move about without being dogged by a detective.

From California he was to proceed to New York; and, in his *Journal*, he thus anticipates the pleasures of the reunion that would then take place:—

“In less than a month I shall see my mother, my brother, and sisters, and Reilly, mine ancient comrade; and Meagher, and Dillon, and O’Gorman, and Michael Doheny, that devoted rebel, and the whole band of refugees—shall mutually hear and tell of all our good and evil fortunes since the fatal and accursed ’48; and together consult the oracles whether that black night is ever to know a morning.”

This happy prospect was soon realised, and a period put to his wanderings. Freedom opened her arms to receive him, and beneath the glorious banner of the United States he found a haven and a rest.

On the 29th of November he once more embraced his mother, who, perhaps, thought that when she parted from him in Newgate she would never see him more. But inscrutable are the ways of Providence, which bore him up all through his long exile and suffering, and brought him back in safety from the malignity of his enemies to the bosom of his family and home. The exile was now at rest; he once more gathered around him a home in a land of freedom and of glory; but still, amidst all the pleasures of his new-found liberty, his heart yearned to be in the old

land again ; to be on the old familiar shore,
amid the old scenes, and working in his
country's cause.

“She is a rich and rare land ;
Oh ! she's a fresh and fair land ;
She is a dear and rare land—
This native land of mine.”

CHAPTER X.

Rejoicings in New York—He establishes the *New York Citizen*—Removes to Tennessee—The *Southern Citizen*—He writes the History of the Famine Conquest—"The Last Conquest (Perhaps)"—"Five Years in British Prisons"—Criticism thereon—He publishes his "History of Ireland"—Visits Paris—Literary work there—Removes to Virginia—The Civil War—He gives his support in the *Richmond Enquirer*—Battle of Fort Sumter and Gettysburg—His two sons killed—He is arrested and imprisoned—Released—Returns to New York—Edits the *Irish Citizen*—James Anthony Froude visits America—His purpose—Father Burke confounds him—Mitchel's exposure of Froude's slanders—His visit to Ireland in 1874—Arrival in Cork—Enthusiasm of the people—He proceeds to Dublin—Tipperary becomes vacant—He addresses the electors—Return to America.

MITCHEL'S arrival in New York was hailed with unbounded joy, both by his fellow countrymen, and by the liberty-loving Americans themselves. Banquets were spread and toasts given in his honour; and nothing was left undone to convince the exile of the good-will and esteem with which he was regarded by all classes in America.

But as soon as he was settled in his adopted home he proceeded to devote his time and energies—though removed to such a distance—to the good of his beloved Ireland. It may

be asked, what could he do for the Irish cause in a foreign country, cut off from Irish politics? He could do much. He could continue to keep before the minds of his fellow countrymen, fellow exiles, and the American public, the sufferings of Ireland, the wrongs of Ireland, the tyranny under which Ireland groaned, the perfidy of some of her sons in deserting her in her hour of need, and thus rendering her weaker still; and the horrible fact that three millions of persons had perished of starvation in Ireland, while there was food enough growing in the country for twice that number. He could, and he did, tell them this; and the remembrance of it fired his pen and made his pages flash with the eloquence of a Burke or a Grattan. He had not to seek for his themes in the realms of fiction, he found them ready to his hand; and in only too great abundance.

It was in the pages of a newspaper called the *Citizen*, started by him in New York, in January, 1854, that he first took up the Irish cause. He carried on this paper with his wonted energy, and gave the American public quite a literary treat in his characteristic and trenchant writings. But his unceasing labours, and the unhealthy climate of Bermuda, had weakened his sight, and he was forced to seek a milder climate. He, therefore, removed to Knoxville, Tennessee;

and established a new journal, the *Southern Citizen*. In addition to his editorial labours he undertook to write the history of the subjugation of the Irish people by famine, from the years 1845 to 1849. This work was written in the form of letters addressed to the Honourable Alexander Hamilton Stephens, a distinguished lawyer of Georgia State, and was published in 1858 under the title of "The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)." This work—considered his best—abounds with beautiful and elegantly written passages, and is not surpassed by anything of the kind in the English language. He commenced with the year 1843, called the Repeal Year, and concluded his narrative with the close of the dismal year, 1849. Dismal, for in that year a nation's cause sunk beneath the load of a nation's corpses; and the agonising cry of a people for food drowned the passionate aspirations of freedom yet living within its shores.

Throughout this work he triumphantly maintains his assertion that the people of Ireland will have to fight for freedom, or else perish. "Looking back over the gulf of fifteen years, I firmly believe that O'Connell's voice could indeed have made a revolution in Ireland. One word from his mouth, and there would not in a month have been one English epaulette in the island."

His "Last Conquest" established his literary fame, and marked him as a writer of genius. Previous to this—in 1854—he gave to the world his *Jail Journal* under the title of "Five Years in British Prisons." This work is well written, but is considered, in parts, inferior to his "Last Conquest;" some of the passages being too studied and finely worded. This may be attributed to its having been written in the abundant leisure of his cell, which gave him time to too carefully consider what he had written, and fall into extravagances which he otherwise would never be guilty of. But perhaps his greatest work is his celebrated "History of Ireland," which he commenced in 1861 and completed in 1868. This is a most valuable history, embracing, as it does, the period from the Treaty of Limerick to the end of 1851; thus taking up the record where it was left off by the Abbé MacGeoghegan. In his preface to this work, Mitchel says:—

"If I have succeeded—as I have earnestly desired to do—in arranging those facts in good order, and exhibiting the naked truth concerning English domination since the Treaty of Limerick, as our fathers saw it, and felt it;—if I have been enabled to picture, in some degree like life, the long agony of the Penal Days, when the pride of the ancient Irish race was stung by daily, hourly humiliations, and their passions goaded to madness by brutal oppression :—and further to picture

the still more destructive devastations perpetrated upon our country in this enlightened nineteenth century ; then it is hoped that every reader will draw for himself such general conclusions as the facts will warrant, without any declamatory appeals to patriotic resentment, or promptings to patriotic aspirations :—the conclusion, in short, that, while England lives and flourishes, Ireland must die a daily death, and suffer an endless martyrdom ; and that if Irishmen are ever to enjoy the rights of human beings, the British Empire must first perish.”

These were prodigious labours for him to accomplish ; labours which have handed his name down to enduring fame, and enshrined his memory in the hearts of his countrymen. But, while he breathed, he would assert his country's rights, and hurl defiance at the thrice accursed British Empire, by placing on enduring record their barbarities, their outrages, their inhuman cruelties, all perpetrated under the name of “law.” Verily, O'Connell spoke truth, when he said, “Never was there a people so barbarously treated as the Irish.”

This continuation of MacGeoghegan's great work is unquestionably the best record of Ireland's dark story ; and that Mitchel spared no pains to make it an authentic and satisfactory one is evidenced by the works enumerated in his preface as having been consulted. From a literary point of view it

is equally valuable, the style being fresh and clear, with a pungent dash of sarcasm, of which he was a complete master.

So valuable was his history considered in Ireland that an edition was brought out in Dublin shortly after its appearance in New York.

About this time he determined on paying a short visit to France, a country which he had never previously been in. Accordingly, early in August, 1859, he started from New York, making the voyage in the sailing ship *St. Nicholas*, which arrived in Havre the end of the same month ; a short railway journey and he was in Paris. Here he stayed for about four months, and was visited in the month of October by his brother William, and John Martin, whom he had not seen since they parted at Nant Cottage on that eventful June morning six years previous. While here, in addition to other literary labours, he wrote his "Apology for the British Government in Ireland." This is a very able exposition of the mode of "government" adopted with regard to Ireland, written in a fine vein of sarcasm. "If my 'Apology,'" said he, "shall help to convince my countrymen and the world, that the English are not more sanguinary and atrocious than any other people would be in like case, and under like exigencies, that the disarmament, degrada-

tion, extermination, and periodical destruction of the Irish people, are measures of policy dictated, not by pure malignity, but by the imperious requirements of the system of Empire administered in London, and that there is no remedy for them under heaven save the dismemberment of that Empire—then the object of my writing shall have been attained.”

He returned to New York in January, 1860, but did not remain there long, as we find him back in Paris again in September, 1860; this time he was accompanied by his wife, and his two daughters, Isabel and Henrietta (both of whom became Catholics, the latter dying in a convent in Paris, in 1863). His stay in Paris lasted two years, during which period he acted as Correspondent for the *Charlestown Standard*, and the *Irish American*, also for the *Dublin Irishman*. The most noticeable event during his residence in Paris was the visit of Father Kenyon, his old and trusted friend, whose pleasant society he never enjoyed again; for time had dealt heavily with the good priest of Temple-derry, and ere John Mitchel landed in Ireland he had been laid in his grave.

Upon his return to America in September, 1862, considerations of health induced him to remove from New York to Virginia, where, in

the *Richmond Enquirer*, he boldly advocated the Southern cause, then agitating the whole of American public opinion. It has been truly said that his pen was of more service to Jefferson Davis than a troop of soldiers, for whenever Mitchel interested himself in any subject he gave to it his whole energies; and never tired till success or defeat finished his labours. And to the cause of the South he devoted himself heart and soul, and gave practical pledges of his attachment in the services and the lives of two of his sons, Captain John Mitchel, who commanded Fort Sumter, being killed in the disastrous battle fought April 14th, 1861; and William Mitchel at Gettysburg, 4th July, 1863. No greater pledge of devotion to the cause could Mitchel give than the sacrifice of the lives of his two brave sons, and that defeat should reward his labours seemed his doom; but, nothing daunted, he continued to wield his trenchant pen, undismayed by the shadow of death around him. His griefs were many and bitter, but he was comforted by the recollection that it was in arms against tyranny they had fallen. He himself fell a victim to Government hate, and was imprisoned for his sympathies with the South, but was released on the solicitation of an influential deputation of Irishmen to President Johnson.

He then returned to New York, and, towards the close of the year 1867, turned to the Press once more. He longed to be of use to his fellow countrymen, and, although the state of his health demanded rest, took upon his shoulders the burden of a newspaper—the *Irish Citizen*—wherein he wrote many able articles on Irish subjects, and contributed to it some reminiscences of his early days in Ireland. He wielded in this paper as facile a pen as had startled the British in Ireland twenty years before. Sickness had not dimmed the lustre of his mind, which burned as bright as of yore. His vigorous intellect remained clear and strong amid all the trying scenes through which he had passed, and he was spared for another literary triumph to crown those which had already added lustre to his name. A third visit he had paid to the gay capital of France in 1866 had partially restored his health, and gave him an opportunity of judging for himself whether the Empire was, as Bonaparte had pronounced it to be: “L’Empire, c’est la paix.”

Here he wrote a preface to an Irish edition of his “Last Conquest,” in which he says: “Whether Ireland’s latest conquest is to remain, or not, the ‘Last Conquest’ will depend upon Irishmen themselves altogether.” This was indeed a truism

sufficiently grave to be borne in mind by all Irishmen upon whom the despicable state of their country weighed; yet, when the time for action arrived, we find them looking about for Foreign aid; and thinking of the aid, thus generously given by Irishmen in America, Mitchel exclaims: "All honour be to the men who made the daring effort, and staked their lives upon it. Whatever judgement may be formed of others, *they*, at least, 'stood the cast their rashness played,' and the best of them are expiating in dungeons the crime of loving their country and striving to serve her—just as Irishmen have generally expiated that offence for many ages. Yet, no cause is utterly lost so long as it can inspire heroic devotion, no country is hopelessly vanquished whose sons love her better than their lives."

Shortly after his return to America, James Anthony Froude, the English historian, paid his memorable visit to New York in the autumn of 1872, for the ostensible purpose of lecturing on the connection between England and Ireland, so mistakenly termed the "Union," but in reality to sow the seeds of dissension between the Irish in America and their brethren at home, and endeavour to alienate the sympathies of the great American nation from the afflictions of Ireland. The lectures thus delivered he afterwards pub-

lished under the title of "The English in Ireland, in the Eighteenth Century;" and to the task of refuting the slanders and falsehoods which made up this book Mitchel applied himself.

The "historian's" lectures had been ably replied to by the distinguished Dominican, Father Burke, but when the lectures were revised and put into a volume, Mitchel felt called upon to expose them in a form more durable than lectures. Accordingly in a pamphlet entitled, "1641: A Reply to the Falsification of History by J. A. Froude, entitled 'The English in Ireland,'" he disposed of the "historian's" fallacious arguments, and showed on what false and untrustworthy authorities he based his assertions. A subject of which Mr. Froude was most anxious to make a point was the fact of a "Massacre" of Irish Protestants in 1641. That there was no such massacre no one knew better than Mr. Froude; but it suited his evil purpose to quote the words of interested parties of that time, whose profit it was to insist that there had been a massacre, and that the number of killed was something appalling.

Disposing of this portion of the "historian's" book, Mitchel occupies a large portion of his "Reply," from which I quote the following passage:—

“Now, I propose to show—

“First, that there was no massacre at all.

“Second, that the historian knows there was no massacre.

“Third, that he intentionally and advisedly cites ‘authorities’ which prove nothing, and shed not a ray of light.

“Fourth, that in producing Temple, Petty, Dean Maxwell, and others, as witnesses, he is producing those carpet-baggers who had need of establishing a ‘massacre,’ because it was their title-deed to the great estates afterwards confiscated—that, in short, there was *money in the massacre*.

“Fifth, that he has woven together this tissue of sanguinary falsehood for the purpose of blackening and scandalising a whole people before the civilised world, or, as he expresses it, making that gory fable ‘the explanation and defence of the subsequent treatment of Ireland,’ meaning penal laws, and the whipping-post, and the gallows, and universal plunder of all people who went to Mass.

“Sir William Petty gathered together, out of the confiscated estates, those vast domains which his descendant, Lord Lansdowne, now possesses in Ireland. Sir John Temple was the founder of the Irish fortunes of the Temples, Lords Palmerston. Dr. Maxwell was made Bishop of Kilmore, in reward for one affidavit; to be sure it was a hard one, as we shall see; but he swallowed it, and it agreed with him. Sir John Borlase, an Englishman, but a carpet-bag Judge on the Irish bench, had a share out of the spoil of the Papists. And these men, and many others like them, and their dependants, could not afford to let the ‘massacre’ be questioned at all; it was on the massacre they lived and were providing for their families; if

any man at that time doubted the massacre they would have his blood."*

These were the "authorities" quoted by Mr. Froude as being "most reliable." Men who had perjured themselves to an extent that betokened a depravity the most appalling. And yet an enlightened English historian of the nineteenth century is not ashamed to hold them up to the public as "reliable." Assuredly, the English have a right to be proud of their "Historian." He was prepared to write anything that he knew would agree with their appetite for Irish horrors, but did not calculate upon the ignominious exposure to which he was doomed.

"Perhaps," said Mitchel, "I should never have undertaken to expose any of the delinquencies of Froude, but that the excellent Father Burke, in his most admirable course of lectures, dealt so gently with the impostor, and even admitted his honesty and good faith. Father Burke's lectures, as I read them now in their collected form, appear to me a most complete answer, and most scathing rebuke; a work, indeed, which will live while the Irish race lives. If I have ventured to come forward into the same field, it has been mainly with the view of exhibiting not the honesty and good faith, but the

* Reply to Froude, page 27.

determined dishonesty and treachery of that pretended 'Historian;' and to show that all this has been perpetrated with the odious intention of affronting and scandalizing a whole race and nation.

"He has done evil as he could; and has sought grievously to injure a people which has done him no wrong."*

But the honour of Irish Catholics, and Irish Protestants too, is not to be wounded by the poisoned arrow of a Froude; and that Religion which has triumphed over every slander, and every persecution, will not fall beneath the frantic blows of a bigoted and mendacious historian. Mitchel received a high compliment from Father Burke on his undertaking to reply to Froude, and the approbation of so distinguished an Irishman must have been especially pleasing to him in his labours to vindicate his country's honour, and expose and utterly refute the malignant attacks of a bigoted Englishman on the Irish Faith and character.

Early in the year 1874 Mitchel resolved upon defying the British Government, and visiting the land of his birth, from which he had been exiled for twenty-seven years. Through the many scenes he had passed during those twenty-seven years his heart

* Reply to Froude, pp. 88, 89.

remained true to Ireland. For her, and for her only, did he work all those weary years, many of them years of sorrow and of death; and, now, feeling that his days were drawing to a close, he yearned to cast a long, last look upon his beloved country before he closed his eyes for ever. Accordingly he sailed from New York early in July, taking with him his daughter Isabella, and accompanied by Dr. Carroll of Philadelphia, and a few other friends, landing at Queenstown on the 25th of July. So anxious were the people to tender him their sympathies, and express their joy at seeing him among them once more, that he was obliged to hold an informal reception at the hotel, although the state of his health required rest and freedom from all excitement.

His arrival in Dublin was greeted with an enthusiasm that had not been witnessed in that city for a long time, and the Shelbourne Hotel was thronged with visitors anxious to see and speak with the man whom they all loved, and whose life had been spent in their service. The number of people who thronged around him to receive his autograph and treasure it up as a precious memento, exceeds description. His reception was a complete triumph for his principles, and must have galled the English, who looked on in silent rage and awe. From Dublin he went to the north of Ireland to visit old friends, and

stayed with his sister Margaret (Mrs. Hill-Irvine), in whose house his eventful career was so soon to close.

This visit to Ireland roused within him somewhat of the old fire, and induced him to do one more service to his country. The premier county—Tipperary—was about to be rendered vacant by the retirement of Colonel White, the then representative; and Mitchel placed an address to the electors in the hands of Mr. A. M. Sullivan. He then left Ireland for America to arrange his affairs previous to taking his final departure from, and bidding farewell to the hospitable people who had cheered his exile, and had sympathised with his griefs. The heart of the American is large and generous, and does not need to be reminded of the manifold claims that Irishmen have upon their sympathies, therefore it is that when Irishmen are banished from their native land, they turn with one accord to America as their second home.

CHAPTER XI.

Sketch of Irish History from 1848 to 1875—The Clubs restrained—Irish Confederation re-constituted—John Martin establishes the *Irish Felon*—His aim and position—He is arrested, “tried,” and transported—Habeas Corpus Act suspended—O’Brien attempts an Insurrection—Ballingarry—Mitchel’s remarks thereon in his “History of Ireland”—O’Brien’s arrest and “trial”—The Conquest completed—“The Celts are gone”—Encumbered Estates Act—More Poor Law—Landlord and Tenant—Royal Visit to Ireland—Death of the principal men of ’48—Ireland subdued—Home Rule Conference in Dublin, 1873—No practical results therefrom—Only hope for Ireland.

A BRIEF sketch of the History of Ireland from the time of Mitchel’s transportation under the Treason Felony Act, to his addressing the Tipperary electors, may fitly precede that important event.

The fierce enthusiasm of the Irish confederates was redoubled after the removal in chains, as a “felon,” of John Mitchel. Men asked themselves were they safe in a country where conviction and transportation were but the work of a few moments, after being decided on in the Castle; and were it not for the fears of a few who, under the name of prudence, permitted the insult offered to the Irish

nation to go unpunished, the stars on that night of the 27th May, 1848, would have looked down upon ten thousand crimson graves. But for that once, "prudence" prevailed, and to this day Ireland lies bleeding under that insult.

The Confederation re-constituted its council, and set itself diligently to the task of inducing the people to procure arms with a view to a final struggle in the harvest; and there were men bold enough to dare the worst and plant themselves in the breach caused by the suspension of the *United Irishman* newspaper.

Foremost among these brave few was John Martin, of Loughorne, the brother-in-law of John Mitchel, and, like him, a fierce opponent of British tyranny. This gentleman had been for years connected with all national movements in Ireland—the Repeal Association, the Irish Confederation—but had never been roused to the pitch of desperate resistance till he saw the bold and daring atrocity of the English on the occasion of Mitchel's pretended trial and conviction. Then he came, along with many others, to the conclusion that the nation must set its back to the wall, and fight to the death if need were. With this conviction he established in Dublin, on the 24th of June, 1848, a newspaper called the *Irish Felon*.

The opening article in the new Journal, signed by John Martin, will sufficiently indicate his purpose, and his position :—

“ At the time when John Mitchel lay in Newgate prison, expecting what fate Lord Clarendon’s ‘loaded dice’ might bring, I stated it as my opinion that if the Irish people permitted the English Ministry to consummate his legal murder, the National cause would be ruined for this generation. The transportation of a man, as a felon, for uttering sentiments held and professed by at least five-sixths of his countrymen, seemed to me so violent and so insulting a National wrong, that submission to it must be taken to signify incurable slavishness. The English Government, the proclaimed enemy of our Nationality, had deliberately selected John Mitchel to wreak their vengeance upon him as representative of the Irish Nation. By indicting him for ‘felony’ they virtually indicted five-sixths of the Irish people for ‘felony.’ By sentencing him to fourteen years’ transportation to a penal settlement, they pronounced five-sixths of the Irish people guilty of a crime worthy of such punishment ; and they declared that every individual of the six millions of Irish Repealers who escapes a similar doom, escapes it not through right and law, but through the mercy, or at the discretion of the English Minister. The audacity of our tyrants must be acknowledged. They occupy our country with military force, in our despite, making barracks of our very marts and colleges, as if to defy and challenge any manly pride that might linger among our youth. They insult the poor dupes of ‘legal and constitutional’ agitation, and rudely open their eyes to the real nature of foreign rule by such an outrage upon

public decency and justice as this 'trial,' aggravated by the official meanness, brutality, hypocrisy, and perjury, requisite for effecting their object. They took measures to provoke the active hostility of all Irishmen who loved justice, or respected religion. They defied and challenged all parties of the Irish people.

"I must frankly say that I still disapprove of the policy pursued by the Repeal leaders. For enabling them to overthrow foreign tyranny, the people of Ireland want only a defiant, determined spirit, and the small measure of common sense which is needed to make men who have a common object co-operate in the attempt to secure it. I do not despair of successful resistance to 'Government,' and I hope to witness the overthrow, and assist in the overthrow, of the most abominable tyranny the world groans under—the British Imperial system.

"To abolish the political conditions which compel the classes of our people to hate and to murder each other, and which compel the Irish people to hate the very name of the English—to end the reign of fraud, perjury, corruption, and 'Government' butchery, and to make *law, order,* and *peace* possible in Ireland, the *Irish Felon* takes its place among the combatants in the holy war now waging in this Island against foreign tyranny."

Kevin Izod O'Doherty, James Finton Lalor, a powerful writer, and Thomas Devin Reilly, also contributed to the paper. Reilly, in the first issue, thus addressed himself to Lord Clarendon, on the subject of Mitchel's transportation:—

"My Lord, you had a noble enemy, and you

dealt ignobly with him—you had a chivalrous opponent, and you met him like a coward—you had a man of proud heart and loving soul, great and original, who challenged, defied, and terrified you in the open day, in the world's hearing, and you, skulking behind a lawyer's gown, and a jury of packed, purchaseable bankrupts, conspired against him in the dark, and fastened him into irons by a method so old, so worn, so mean, so very contemptible, so transparent in its infamy and its action, so utterly base and cowardly, that the most vulgar cut-throat, the poorest Tipperary 'Thug,' who takes his enemy down from behind a ditch, decently, is a noble and brave man in the world's estimation compared with you. I would wash the feet of that man before I would defile my hand with yours. Oh, my lord assassin, it was very poor and very base."

"Remember John Mitchel!" exclaimed the gifted "Eva."* "Remember John Mitchel! That name it is heard from the hill-top and the valley—from the depths of the earth and sea—it screams and rings from a thousand tongues of flame. Do you not, oh my countrymen! pant for the day of vengeance and retribution? and cherish the divine hope of one day (and that not far distant) righting this last grievous wrong."

"Sedition" continued to be promulgated in the *Irish Felon* for five weeks, but the "Government" were resolved that it would not reach a sixth week: they accordingly arrested Martin, and on the 16th of August,

* Now Mrs. Kevin Izod O Doherty.

1848, he was placed at the bar on a charge of treason-felony. Of course there was a verdict of guilty, and a sentence of transportation for ten years, and thus was another Irishman exiled for serving his country. "I acknowledge," said he, in his speech before sentence, "I acknowledge, as the Solicitor-General has said, that I was but a weak assailant of the English power. I am not a good writer, and I am no orator. I had only two weeks' experience in conducting a newspaper until I was put into prison. But I am satisfied to direct the attention of my countrymen to everything I have ever written, and to rest my character on a fair examination of what I have put forward as my opinions. I shall say nothing in vindication of my motives but this, that every fair and honest man, no matter how prejudiced he may be, if he calmly considers what I have written and said, will be satisfied that my motives were pure and honourable."

The *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, and matters brought by the "Government" to a crisis.

Smith O'Brien was at the house of a friend in Wexford County, when he heard of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, and that a warrant had been issued for his arrest as well as for Meagher, MacManus,

and O'Donohoe. He immediately endeavoured to raise the people to insurrection; Doheny and MacManus, with some others, betook themselves to the hills of Tipperary; O'Gorman hurried to Limerick and Clare; Reilly and Smith ranged over Kilkenny and the adjoining districts, all the while communicating with O'Brien, to whom, on account of his character, his services, and his value to the cause, the leadership was by common consent assigned. But his endeavours to raise an insurrection were fruitless; and, after a few shots were discharged at Ballingarry, he was arrested, put on his "trial" by a packed jury, and sentenced to death. This sentence, as well as a sentence of death passed upon Meagher, MacManus, and O'Donohoe, was commuted to transportation for life.

Mitchel, in his "History of Ireland," alluding to this attempted insurrection of O'Brien's, wrote:*—

"It comes very easy to men who sat at home in those days, and did and attempted to do nothing, to criticise the proceedings of O'Brien and those brave men who sought in his company for an honourable chance of throwing their lives away. But it must be obvious, from the narrative of the three years' previous famine, what a hopeless sort of material for spirited National resistance was

* History of Ireland, vol. II., pp 443, 444.

then to be found in the rural districts of Ireland. Bands of exterminated peasants, trooping to the already too full poor-houses ; struggling columns of hunted wretches, with their old people, wives, and little ones, wending their way to Cork or Waterford to take shipping for America ; the people not yet ejected frightened and desponding, with no interest in the lands they tilled, no property in the house above their heads, no food, no arms, with the slavish habits bred by long ages of oppression ground into their souls, and that momentary proud flash of passionate hope kindled by O'Connell's agitation, long since dimmed and darkened by bitter hunger and hardship,—Ah ! how could the storm-voice of Demosthenes, and the burning song of Tyrtæus, rouse such a people as this ! A whole Pentecost of fiery tongues, if they descended upon such a dull material, would fall extinguished in smoke and stench like a lamp blown out.

“And so it would assuredly be amongst any other peasantry on earth, who had been so long subjected to similar treatment. But there is in the Irish nature a wonderful spring and an intense vitality ; insomuch that I believe, even now, the chances of a successful insurrection in '48 to have been by no means desperate. At any rate O'Brien and his comrades were resolute to give the people a chance ; knowing full well that though they should be mown down in myriads by shot and steel, it would be a better lot than poor-houses and famine-graves.”

There were now removed out of Ireland all the men whom the British Government considered dangerous to their grasp on that Island. First, they had put forth their

entire strength to crush Mitchel, and then success emboldened them to proceed; and now, with Ireland in their full possession, the question in England was what to do with her. Famine was still raging fiercely, slaying the people by tens of thousands, and the Government emigration scheme was drawing away many thousands more, and the London *Times* (prematurely) announced "the Celts are gone—gone *with a vengeance.*"

Sir Robert Peel, in the English Parliament, promulgated a plan for a new "plantation of Ireland" by the English, which plan afterwards resolved itself into the famous "Encumbered Estates Act."

"The conquest of the Island was now regarded as consummated—England, great, populous, and wealthy, with all the resources and vast patronage of an existing government in her hands—with a magnificent army and navy—with the established course and current of commerce steadily flowing in the precise direction that suited her interests—with a powerful party on her side in Ireland itself, bound to her by lineage and by interest—and, above all, with her vast brute mass lying between us and the rest of Europe, enabling her to intercept the natural sympathies of other struggling nations, to interpret between us and the rest of mankind, and represent the troublesome sister Island, exactly in the light that she wished us to be regarded—England prosperous, potent, and at peace with all the earth besides—had succeeded (to her immortal honour and glory) in anticipating

and crushing out of sight the last agonies of resistance in a small, poor and divided Island, which she had herself made poor and divided, carefully disarmed, almost totally disfranchised, and almost totally deprived of the benefits of that very British 'law' against which we revolted with such loathing and horror. England had done this; and whatsoever credit and prestige, whatsoever profit and power could be gained by such a feat, she has them all. 'Now, for the first time these six hundred years,' said the *London Times*, 'England has Ireland at her mercy, and can deal with her as she pleases.'"*

Poor law followed Poor law, as it had been discovered that they were the very thing for clearing off the "Celts" while appearing to relieve their distress. And thus Ireland's dismal story dragged along. "It is the story," said Mitchel in his "Last Conquest" "of an ancient Nation stricken down by a war more ruthless and sanguinary than any seven years' war, or thirty years' war, that Europe ever saw. No sack of Magdeburg, or ravage of the Palatinate, ever approached in horror and desolation to the slaughter done in Ireland by mere official red-tape and stationery, and the principles of Political Economy." The condition of the tenant was still the most miserable; at the mercy of a harsh and unjust landlord he was ground down to

* "Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)," pp. 310, 311.

a state of abject poverty that was worse than death. In the midst of this ghastly appearance of peace and order, the Queen of England, under the advice of her Ministers, decided upon visiting Ireland. Lord Clarendon took precautions against any appearance of disaffection, and the better to secure this, his paid organs, and thousand placemen, whispered into the public ear that the State prisoners would receive "her Majesty's gracious pardon" if she was not insulted by any Repeal demonstration. Her Majesty, therefore, was allowed to pass peaceably through the city, and flatter herself that "that portion of the United Kingdom" was now reduced to its proper state of a province, with its produce devoured by the Foreign enemy.

No event of practical importance occurred in Ireland in the ensuing few years. The peasantry were in a condition of unexampled poverty and misery; the landlord became more exacting every day, and when the unfortunate tenant was unable to pay the exorbitant rent demanded for his miserable cabin he was mercilessly turned out on the roadside to perish of cold and hunger. But, assuredly, a day of retribution is at hand, when the un pitying landlord shall be called to account for his unrelenting tyranny, and shall receive the just punishment of his evil

deeds. Assuredly, the long sufferings of the Irish peasant shall see a speedy end, and his lot be made as the lot of other men. "When, oh when, will justice be rendered to thy sons, O loved fatherland?"

Meanwhile, death had removed from beyond the reach of their enemies some of the principal actors in the gloomy drama of '48. Smith O'Brien, after enduring a rigorous confinement in Tasmania, which shattered his previously delicate constitution, died at Bangor, in Wales, in June, 1864. The gallant Meagher, whose brilliant oratory had attracted the gaze of two Continents, and whose rare talents were just in their bloom, met with an untimely end, being drowned off a steamer in the Mississippi at the early age of 43. Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee, who had emigrated to America after the fiasco of '48, and who had risen to be a member of the Canadian House of Assembly as representative of the city of Montreal, was basely assassinated at Ottawa in 1868. And the gifted Mangan, of whose poems Irishmen will always be justly proud, and whose genius sheds a lustre on the page of Ireland's History, died in 1849. Mitchel, who greatly admired this talented Irishman, with loving hands collected and edited most of his poems and translations, and in the biography of the author, which he prefixed to the volume, he

says: "I have read the lives and sufferings of Edgar Poe and of Richard Savage. Neither was so consummate a poet, neither so miserable a mortal. Yet in one respect poor Mangan compares favourably with them both; he had no malignity, sought no revenge, never wrought sorrow and suffering to any human being but himself." And last, but not least, Thomas Devin Reilly, the true friend and staunch Republican, found, too, an early grave. "Thomas Devin Reilly," wrote Mitchel, "is dead. The largest heart, the most daring spirit, the loftiest genius, of all Irish rebels in these latter days, sleeps now in his American grave." *

Passing over the uninteresting events of the few intervening years, we come to the year 1873, when Irishmen made one more struggle for independence. In November of this year a great conference assembled in the Rotunda, Dublin, to consider the question of Home Rule, which then occupied the public mind. At this conference, resolutions were passed, dealing with the subject under consideration. But what avail resolutions without action? Nothing, absolutely nothing. When Irishmen resolve to act, and not to talk, then, and not till then, need they expect to see a solution of the

* Jail Journal, page 257.

political problem. Let them shake off the chains of slavery, and then, when they are free, consider the form of Government they will establish. It is of no use to plan impossible forms of Government while Foreign laws bind and enslave. It was not by considering whether it would be a monarchy, or an empire, or a republic, that they would establish, that the French achieved the independence which they have successfully held against opposition, but by stern and decisive action. And not until Irishmen do likewise will they behold their country—

“Great, glorious, and *free*,
First flower of the earth,
And first gem of the sea.”

CHAPTER XII.

The Tipperary Election, 1875—Mitchel elected unopposed—His election a national triumph—He lands at Cork—Enthusiastic reception—Debate in the English Parliament—Tipperary election declared void—New writ issued—Captain Stephen Moore—Mitchel again elected—Majority—Victory complete—Mitchel at Newry—Last illness—Death—His Character.

No sooner was Mitchel's address placed before the Tipperary electors than they hailed with acclamation this opportunity of testifying their admiration for his devotion to the cause, and their conviction that he alone was the man most worthy of representing them. They established this fact beyond dispute by electing him without opposition on the 16th of February 1875. His election, thus unopposed, was a triumph both for himself, and for the country. A triumph for himself, inasmuch as he had asserted that his opinions were the opinions of nine-tenths of the Irish people; and a triumph for the country, for it showed that they were true to themselves and their traditions, and that when the choice of a representative devolved upon them, they returned a man worthy of the confidence

of Ireland. His election was a proof that when the Irish nation needed an honest voice, that voice was John Mitchel's. The numbers who polled at this memorable election was another proof of the confidence reposed in him; and his election on the basis, in his own words, of "Home Rule, that is the sovereign Independence of Ireland," was both a national and an individual victory.

On the day after his election he landed at Cork from America, whence he was hastily summoned on the vacancy occurring. His recall was so urgent he had not time to make the final arrangements for transferring his home to Ireland. His reception was most enthusiastic, and it must have thrilled him with joy to see the gladness with which he was welcomed by his countrymen at that the most victorious moment of his life; for he had, in offering himself as a candidate for Tipperary, flung the gauntlet of defiance down before the British Government and dared them to do their worst. Great indeed was the victory, but all too small for the victor. His life up to that moment had been a defeat; but defeat was changed into victory. He triumphed over British power, over British bribery, and over British meanness, and dealt their sway in Ireland a weakening blow. But the British Government would not yield with-

out a struggle. On the 18th of February Mr. Benjamin D'Israeli (afterwards Lord Beaconsfield) led on a debate for the purpose of considering (to use the noble lord's own phrase), "Whether Mr. Mitchel should be allowed to sit in that House, he being a convicted felon whose guilt was not purged by the completion of his sentence," and that, therefore, his election was void. The debate, which was a stormy one, and in which John Martin and P. J. Smyth defended Mitchel against the attack made on him, concluded by a new writ being ordered, by a majority of 269 to 102 votes. The men of Tipperary, however, knew their duty and did it bravely. One Captain Stephen Moore, a Conservative, came forward as Mitchel's opponent at the second election, which took place on the 11th of March in the same year. The gaze of the nation was then directed to Tipperary, and many were the hopes that Tipperary would not fail.

Again was Mitchel returned, and again was the Government defied. The numbers were—

Mitchel	3146
Moore	746

Mitchel's victory was complete, but it cost him his life. When he landed at Cork, on the 17th of February, he was a dying man; but excitement, and the anxiety to

do this last act for his beloved country, and make this last protest against British rule, buoyed him up and gave him strength to carry his glorious resolve into execution. In the flush of the election victory he was most hospitably entertained in Dublin, notably by Lady Wilde, where he met Father Burke, the great Dominican, who was proud to meet Ireland's great historian. Feeling that his end was fast approaching, he retired to Newry to the home of his infancy to end his days amid the happy scenes and memories of childhood.

There, tended and surrounded by his family, his last hours were spent.

“In all my wand'rings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down.
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return, and die at home at last.”

How applicable are the poet's lines to the closing scenes of Mitchel's life. His days passed amid the storms and tempests of political life and exile, to draw to a gentle close in the home of his youth. It seemed like a special interposition of Providence that the giant wrestler with wrong, the fierce assailer of loathsome tyranny, the defender of his country's rights, should, after so many and varied wanderings, return

to his childhood's happy home, and close his eyes amid peaceful scenes.

Here, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, after a brief illness of nine days, his heroic and unbending spirit passed peacefully away on March 20th, 1875, at Dromolane, Newry, the residence of his brother-in-law, Mr. Hill Irvine. His last moments were consoled by the presence and loving attention of his brother William and "honest John Martin."

His death was indeed a national calamity, and was mourned as such by all who knew of what value he had been to the cause of Irish independence. On the 23rd of March his remains were laid in the family burying-place, High Street, Newry, whereto they were followed by some thousands, embracing all shades of opinion, both political and religious; all uniting to do honour to the memory of the gallant-hearted man who had spent his life in the service of his country. Chief amongst the mourners was John Martin, the faithful friend, who spent so many happy days with him whose remains he then followed as chief mourner.

Such were the life and death of John Mitchel: a man of lofty soul and giant intellect, who made everything subservient to his country's independence, and deemed death itself as but a slight sacrifice for so great a gain. One fetter of tradition

loosened, one web of superstition broken, one ray of light let in on darkness, one principle of liberty secured, are worth the living for. Fame! it is the flower of a day, that dies when the next sun rises. But to have done something, however little, to free men from their chains, to have aided something, however faintly, the rights of reason and of truth, to be unvanquished through all and against all, these bring one nearer the pure ambitions of youth.

He was of that stern and unbending soul of which heroes are made; and was, perhaps, the most disinterested public man the generation produced; and it is unjust to his memory to consider him merely a revolutionist.

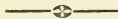
He was a man of refined literary taste, as his many brilliant works testify. In private life he was the gentlest of the gentle, and the idol of his family. In public life he was always a leader, his haughty and defiant spirit brooking no opposition. As a political leader he was rash and impulsive, seldom deliberating sufficiently before acting; but once committed to an undertaking he carried it through to the end. Failure did not unnerve him, but served as a stimulus to greater exertion. His life was, to all outward appearance, a defeat, and his labour lost. But it is not so. The seeds he planted

will yet take root, and, shooting upwards, spread abroad the glorious freedom for which he fought so bravely, and the banner of sovereign Irish nationhood, which he hoped to raise, will yet spread its folds over a free Irish people.

Whether we take him as a political leader, or as a writer his name must always be found in the foremost rank. He was one of the many great men whom Ireland has produced; and viewing him both in his public and private career, the words of the great moralist occur to the mind as being an epitome of his character, for he had

“ The elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up,
And say to all the world, ‘ This was a man.’ ”

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