PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HOME RULE CONFERENCE

HELD AT

THE ROTUNDA, DUBLIN,

ON

The 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st November,

1873.

WITH

LIST OF CONFERENCE TICKET HOLDERS,

INDEX TO SPEAKERS,

INDEX TO SUBJECTS TREATED OF IN THE DEBATES,

CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF THE IRISH HOME RULE LEAGUE.

AND

FINAL REPORT OF THE HOME GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION.

DUBLIN:
THE IRISH HOME RULE LEAGUE,
29, LOWER SACKVILLE STREET.

1874.

In presenting to the public this complete Report of the Proceedings of the Conference, the Council of the League have to return their best thanks to Mr. J. G. Swift Mac Neill, one of their number, for the care and attention with which he has superintended the publication, and prepared the Indices of Speakers and Subjects.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE HOME RULE CONFERENCE.

FIRST DAY,

18th November, 1873.

AT twelve o'clock, on the motion of GEORGE BRYAN, M.P., seconded by HON. CHARLES FFRENCH, M.P., the Chair was taken by

WILLIAM SHAW, M.P.

On the motion of the Rev. P. LAVELLE, seconded by LAURENCE WALDRON, D.L., the following gentlemen were appointed Honorary Secretaries :—

JOHN O. BLUNDEN.
PHILIP CALLAN, M.P.
W. J. O'NEILL DAUNT.
E. R. KING HARMAN.
ALFRED WEBB.

E. R. KING HARMAN read the requisition convening the Conference, as follows :—

We, the undersigned feel bound to declare our conviction that it is necessary to the peace and prosperity of Ireland, and would be conducive to the strength and stability of the United Kingdom, that the right of domestic legislation on all Irish affairs should be restored to our country; and that it is desirable that Irishmen should unite to obtain that restoration upon the following principles :

To obtain for our country the right and privilege of managing our own affairs, by a Parliament assembled in Ireland, composed of her Majesty the Sovereign, and the Lords and Commons of Ireland.

To secure for that Parliament, under a Federal arrangement, the right of legislating for, and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, and control over Irish resources and revenues, subject to the obligation of contributing our just proportion of the Imperial expenditure.

To leave to an Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the Colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the United Empire with Foreign States, and all matters appertaining to the defence and the stability of the Empire at large.

To obtain such an adjustment of the relations between the two countries without any interference with the prerogatives of the Crown, or any disturbance of the principles of the Constitution.

And we hereby invite a Conference, to be held at such time and place as may be found generally most convenient, of all those favourable to the above principles, to consider the best and most expedient means of carrying them into practical effect.

Signed by about 24,000 persons.

In compliance with the above requisition, we hereby convene a Conference to be held in the Rotunda, Dublin, on Tuesday, 18th November, 1873, to meet from day to day until its proceedings are concluded.

PHILIP CALLAN, M.P.
W. J. O'NEILL DAUNT.
E. R. KING HARMAN.
WILLIAM SHAW, M.P.

The CHAIRMAN said :—I have now, gentlemen, to apologise for the fact that we have commenced this meeting at twelve, instead of eleven o'clock, as was announced in the advertisement. But the general impression, I think, amongst most of us was that twelve o'clock was the hour fixed for the meeting. I know that was my own impression till I saw the paper this morning, and then I happened to have business to attend to. I really felt it very hard to be here at eleven o'clock. However, now that we have commenced, I hope we will go to the business before us in such a business-like way, that before the end of the day we shall have saved the hour which seems to have been lost at the beginning. Perhaps you will allow me to thank you, which I do very heartily, for the honour you have done me in placing me in the chair of this Conference. I feel how unworthy I am of that position. I feel that you might have selected from the gentlemen I see round me many who would have filled the chair, from their habits, much more effectually than I can. But I may say that you would find it, perhaps, hard to find one who has a more thorough and honest faith in the movement, or who is prepared to render more earnest service to the cause for the promotion of which we are assembled. The object we have before us to-day is very simple. It was thought right to call this Conference, in the first place, that we might demonstrate to doubters—and there are doubters outside—that the people of Ireland really believe in this movement; and I think the announcement made here this morning, that the requisition has received over 24,000 signatures, is a quite sufficient answer to those who entertain doubts on the subject. We, who know the people, who mix with them, who have opportunities of learning their opinions, never had a doubt of the honesty and earnestness with which they have taken up this movement. If there are doubters outside, I think their doubt must be removed. I have seen a most respectable Conservative Dublin paper call this movement a failure. It is hard to satisfy some people. I can only say that we who have promoted the Conference are fully satisfied with the result up to the present, and sanguine of the future. We had also this before us—that we wished to remove from the movement which for some years has been carried on by the Home Government Association the appearance of being a private association carried on by a

few gentlemen in Dublin, and place the question, as it has a right to be placed, in the hands of the Irish people. We called, therefore, on the Irish people to take up and adopt this movement, and give it a broad and national basis. I believe, gentlemen, that it has and will have that. Of course, there are great masses of the population of every country that are very slow to take part in any political movement. We have in this country a great number who have no faith whatever in constitutional movements, and we have also a great many of the higher classes who are timid men—men of property and men of means—who never take a prominent position in any political agitation; but I think we have shown by the signatures to this requisition that the active politicians of the country, men that are generally in the front of all movements of the kind, are thoroughly and heartily with us. One part of our business this day will be to show to the men outside that are looking on us that we mean what we say—that we are honest and earnest in this movement—that we do not wish in any shape to put it as if it were against property, against order, against religion. Quite the opposite. I believe that there are no people in the world who have a truer and more earnest love for order, for rank, for property, for morality, and, above all, for religion, than the Irish people; and, if we attempted in any way to disturb these foundations of social order, I am certain the Irish people would not adopt us or follow our lead. But gentlemen, I may say for myself that I have joined in this movement with considerable hesitation, and after a great deal of thought and consideration; for I believed that it was a serious thing for a man having business engagements, and having some stake in the country, to throw himself into an agitation unless convinced it was practicable. I have no time myself—and I am sure other gentlemen here have no time to lose in ventilating theories. We have something else to do; but we have looked to the relationship existing between the two countries for seventy years, and we cannot point to a single period during that time when the connexion had worked well for the country. I am quite sure, too, looking at it from the point of view of an Englishman, that it has not worked well for England, and therefore, every man of business wishes to have done with those constant agitations and excitements that disturb the minds of the people, and distract them from healthy occupation. We are anxious—having all our interest in this country, and every hope and desire bound and mixed up with this country—we are anxious at once to put the relationship between the two countries on a better basis—a basis which securing to Ireland the blessings of self-government, will strengthen instead of weakening the ties that bind us to the empire—will aid in developing all the material, social, and moral interest of our country, and will harmonize local interests with imperial rights; and we believe all this can be done in the mode pointed out in the following resolution. We believe there never has been a time during the seventy years the Union has existed when it was possible to do this until now. The result of recent legislation has been to throw down the barrier that has so long separated man from man in this country; and now all classes, all religious—I scarcely like to use the words "sect" or "religion" here, because in this movement we know no sect—could unite. This movement was above party politics

and outside party politics; we are not Whigs or Tories, but honest nationalits—Irishmen—ready to meet and to think for our country's good. We would not, as far as we could, allow this movement to be spoiled by party complications. It would not be right for me to detain you much longer. I might indulge in retrospection; but as a man of action and of business I would not do so. I look to the future, and I look to it with hope and confidence. I see around me men of business and of thought, men who are really in earnest, and who are determined to carry through, and to make it a fact, and not a theory. Retrospections are vain and foolish; we should look to the future, and strive to make it different from what the past has been. Dissension, division, party feeling, personality, had, I am sorry to say, often ruined movements that looked quite as hopeful as the present; we must determine this day, as men who had characters to lose, that we will not let any of those influences come in to mar this movement. The case is now before us, and in proportion to the earnestness and honesty that we bring into the movement will be the success that will attend it. If we bring in selfishness, double dealing, and party spirit, disunion and failure will be as certain as we sit here, but I am quite confident that this day will be the commencement of better and happier days of political progress in Ireland.

I now call on Mr. Butt to move the first resolution.

Mr. BUTT, Q.C., M.P.—I come forward, Sir, to commence the business of the Conference by submitting a series of resolutions, which I trust will be accepted as a declaration of the objects which we seek and the principles we entertain. I am anxious, in the first place, to explain in a few words the circumstances under which I do so. Every one here will feel that it was absolutely essential that some person should be prepared on the assembling of the Conference with proposals for considerations deliberately and carefully prepared. Those who originated the requisition all concurred in the wish that I should undertake this duty. I endeavoured, in the first place, to obtain in private counsel the views of as many friends as I had an opportunity of consulting. At first, it was intended that the resolutions we prepared should be brought forward without any official authority. It was afterwards deemed more advisable that I should move them as chairman of the Committee for conducting the arrangements of the Conference, and with the sanction of that Committee. The resolutions were then submitted, although not formally, to the Council of the Home Government Association, and finally were considered at a very full meeting of the Conference Committee. They are therefore in their present form the result of repeated and careful deliberations. But still they are only proposals to be discussed. In presenting them, with the sanction of the Committee, it is not intended in the slightest degree to interfere with the fullest and freest expressions of opinion. The resolutions form one connected whole, and it will be obviously convenient that I should submit them with an explanatory statement that will include them all. But each resolution will be put separately from the chair, and will become the subject of the fullest and freest debate. Each of them will be open to discussion, to amendment, to alteration, or to negative exactly as the Conference may think fit; and if there be any person present who at the close of the discussion upon them considers that

they are insufficient or deficient in any of the elements that ought to mark our national manifesto, it will be perfectly open to him to propose any additional resolutions he may think fit. I cannot say too clearly or too emphatically, that every member of the Conference is entitled to state his own views, to move the amendments he thinks necessary, and to propose his own resolutions, with just the same authority, and with the same title to the attention of the Conference as I have in bringing forward the resolutions which I propose. I need not say, Sir, that in thus inviting the fullest and freest discussions I am not inviting rash or ill-considered proposals. I believe I am speaking to men who know the solemnity and importance of the occasion and feel the responsibility of taking a part in it. Still less am I inviting verbal objections or captious criticisms. These would be utterly misplaced. But, I do mean that if there be any one here who dissents substantially from all or any of these resolutions; or who feels that they in any respect fall short of the occasion, and who feels that he has a comment or a proposal worthy to be submitted to this national assembly, I earnestly ask him to co-operate with me in the most effectual way by submitting his views to the Conference; and I do so in the perfect confidence that any discussion that may arise will be conducted in a manner worthy of a deliberative assembly, in a manner that will show that Irishmen possess the qualities which fit them for the management of their own affairs. I feel deeply how much I personally need the indulgence of this assembly. I could earnestly wish that some one had been found better fitted to fill the duty that has been cast upon me. I know all the difficulty. I feel all the responsiblity of that duty. I feel the solemnity of this moment. Upon the manner in which we conduct the business of this Conference much depends for the cause of our country. Met together in this general representative assembly in obedience to a requisition, such as has had heretofore no parallel in the political history of Ireland, we sustain to-day for good or evil the character of our country. If we prove ourselves a deliberative assembly, worthy of the occasion, we immeasurably advance the cause of Ireland's self-government—but if our meeting be marred by dissensions or distracted by unmeaning strife then we have thrown back for years the progress of that cause. Deep is my own responsibility that not one word may fall from my lips unworthy of this occasion, one sentence that can lower your thoughts from the generousness that ought to elevate us all, and as these thoughts press upon my heart, it is with a reverence suited to the solemnity of the occasion that I would humbly offer up my fervent prayer to that Great Being—without whom we are told that not a sparrow falls to the ground, and who most assuredly looks down on those assemblies that can influence the well-being of millions of his creatures—that He may so guide and direct our thoughts and words and actions, that they may be worthy of the nation in whose name we speak, and the sacred cause which we are assembled to promote.

The resolutions which will be submitted to you embrace three different things. The first eight contain the declaration of our rights, and a clear and distinct statement of our claims. A second series of resolutions relates the formation of the new organisation which we hope this Con-

ference will inaugurate. A third series provides for that without which in these material days the noblest political projects are likely to languish, the raising of the funds necessary to carry on our movement. It is only of the first series that I have taken charge. The remaining resolutions will be brought before you by other gentlemen at a future stage of our proceedings. I will only ask your attention to the subjects which bear on the eight resolutions which embody that which I may truly describe as our national declaration of right.

As I have said, Sir, these eight resolutions I am about to submit form one connected whole. I believe they are in the hands of members, and every one will be able from the printed papers to follow me as I read.

I.—That, as the basis of the proceedings of this Conference, we declare our conviction that it is essentially necessary to the peace and prosperity of Ireland that the right of domestic legislation on all Irish affairs should be restored to our country.

II.—That, solemnly reasserting the inalienable right of the Irish people to self-government, we declare the time in our opinion has come when a combined and energetic effort should be made to obtain the restoration of that right.

III.—That, in accordance with the ancient and constitutional rights of the Irish Nation, we claim the privilege of managing our own affairs by a Parliament assembled in Ireland, and composed of the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons of Ireland.

IV.—That, in claiming these rights and privileges for our country, we adopt the principle of a Federal arrangement, which would secure to the Irish Parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, while leaving to the Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the Empire with Foreign States, and all matters appertaining to the defence and stability of the Empire at large; as well as the power of granting and providing the supplies necessary for Imperial purposes.

V.—That such an arrangement does not involve any change in the existing constitution of the Imperial Parliament, or any interference with the prerogatives of the Crown or disturbance of the principles of the constitution.

VI.—That, to secure to the Irish people the advantages of constitutional government, it is essential that there should be in Ireland an administration for Irish affairs, controlled, according to constitutional principles, by the Irish Parliament, and conducted by ministers constitutionally responsible to that Parliament.

VII.—That, in the opinion of this Conference, a Federal arrangement, based upon these principles, would consolidate the strength and maintain the integrity of the Empire, and add to the dignity and power of the Imperial Crown.

VIII.—That, while we believe that in an Irish Parliament the rights and liberties of all classes of our countrymen would find their best and surest protection, we are willing that there should be incorporated in the Federal Constitution articles supplying the amplest guarantees that no change shall be made by that Parliament in the present settlement of property in Ireland, and that no legislation shall be adopted to establish any religious ascendancy in Ireland, or to subject any person to disabilities on account of his religious opinions.

I ask, Sir, of this Conference to accept these resolutions as the declaration of the rights and claims of the Irish people. In doing so, I will ask your attention to the past history of Parliaments in Ireland. Our claims must be less or more based on historic facts.

From the very earliest introduction of the power of the English kings into Ireland, the Irish who submitted to the rule of those kings had a right to the same Parliamentary constitution as that which England enjoyed. No matter how that power was established, whether by right of conquest, as English writers have chosen to assert, or as Irish writers have said by the

voluntary submission of some Irish chiefs—from the day when first, at Lismore, and afterwards in Dublin, King John declared that the Irish people were to have the benefit of the great charter and of English law—it became an essential part of the union between Ireland and the English crown, that the sovereign should govern us—as in England—by the advice of a national assembly. English power but slowly reduced the whole island to submission. During the process our parliaments were but parliaments of the English Pale. It was not until the reign of James I. that the constitution of the Irish House of Commons was settled on a basis professing to embrace the entire island. At that time the English sovereigns had not surrendered the power which, in the early times of parliamentary history, they certainly possessed—that of enfranchising towns, and conferring on them the right, or rather imposing the duty—it was once deemed a burdensome duty—of sending representatives to the House of Commons. King James, after the settlement of Ulster, exercised this power of enfranchising boroughs. These boroughs were in its last struggle the weakness—they were always the corruption—of the Irish Parliament. But at all events they completed the Parliamentary system of Ireland, a system which continued unaltered until, by the act of union, it was finally destroyed. In the 17th century, from the accession of James to that of William III., the action of Irish parliaments was more or less interrupted by wars and revolutions. From the battle of the Boyne to the Union, an Irish parliament regularly met upon the basis that was settled in the days of James. It was constituted according to English law. It had, like the English Parliament, its hereditary House of Peers. Its House of Commons was elected exactly like the English House of Commons, by the freeholders of the counties, and by cities and towns, deriving their right to return members from the charters of kings; but in the two countries the laws regulating the parliamentary franchise were exactly the same. The freehold franchise was the same in both; and the royal charters had exactly the same effect, and were construed and tried by the same rules of law. Close boroughs had existed in England as in Ireland, although not so numerously in proportion to the other elements of representation.

The Irish Parliament consisted of three hundred members. Of these, sixty-four were returned by the forty-shilling freeholders of the thirty-two counties; two were sent by the University of Dublin; sixty-two were elected by the counties of the cities or towns in which the Freeholder Franchise existed, or by boroughs possessing more or less of popular franchises. Of the three hundred members, only one hundred and twenty-eight were chosen by the shadow of a popular election. The remaining one hundred and seventy-two were absolutely the nominees either of the English Government or of persons who held the power of nomination as their private property—in some instances, of English noblemen—in many instances, of absentee proprietors; in four instances, at least, of the Bishops of the Irish Established Church; not by Irish Bishops, but by Bishops sent here to serve the English interest, like Cleaver at Kilkenny, or Boulter and Stone at Armagh.

The records or the awards of compensation to private proprietors for boroughs extinguished at the Union abundantly establish these facts.

Eighty-four boroughs were treated as private property, and compensation given for that property to their patrons.

Such was the constitution of the Irish Parliament. Let me briefly glance at its position and its powers.

It was always an admitted principle of the Constitution that the crown of Ireland was appendant and inseparably annexed to the Imperial Crown of England. Mr. O'Connell stated this in very strong, but, after all, scarcely exaggerated, language when he said that whoever was king *de facto* in England was king *de jure* in Ireland. This much, at least, is unquestionable, that if, by any legitimate authority, a right was acquired to the Crown of England, the person who became king of England was *de jure* Sovereign of Ireland. When the successor to the English Crown was altered by the Act of the English Parliament, excluding the heirs of Charles I. and setting the crown upon the descendants of the Princess Sophia, no corresponding Act was ever passed by the Irish Parliament. It was admitted that the English Parliament, in disposing of the English crown, disposed, at the same time, of the appendant crown of Ireland. Their power to do so was never questioned—it was distinctly recognised. The title of the House of Hanover to the crown of Ireland rested solely on a statute of the English Parliament.

From this admitted dependence of the crown of Ireland upon that of England, arose the claim of the English Parliament to legislate for Ireland. Over all the colonies and dependencies of the British crown, the British Parliament had exercised the right of legislation. Over Ireland they asserted the same right. I need not tell you how fiercely it was contested, and that it was finally abandoned in 1782. But up to 1782 the right was asserted and occasionally exercised.

This claim was disputed. But there was another consequence of the dependence of the Irish crown, which was not so. The sovereign of England, in all matters of his foreign relations, in all questions of peace and war, was advised solely by his English Privy Council, by his English parliament, and by English ministers, responsible only to that parliament. But all his acts done under this advice bound Ireland. I will presently ask your attention more particularly to the effect of this under the arrangement of 1782.

To complete our view of the position of the Irish parliament, we must remember that by an act of parliament itself, a most important restriction was placed upon its legislative powers. By an Irish act of parliament, passed in the reign of Henry VII., in the year 1495, it was enacted that no bill should be presented in the Irish parliament until the heads of is had been submitted to the English Privy Council, and certified as approved of under the Great Seal of England. This law is known as Poyning's law, from the name of the person who was Lord Deputy when it was passed. This law was a matter entirely distinct from any claim of the English parliament to legislate for Ireland; it was a law of the Irish parliament itself, passed by the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, deriving its authority from a source entirely independent of the English claim, and continuing in force when that claim was abandoned. The original law required the assent of the English Privy Council to be given to the intended Bill before parliament met. In the reign of Queen

Mary it was modified, so as to admit of that assent being given while parliament was sitting; but that assent was still necessary to authorise the introduction of the Bill. With this modification the law of Poynings' continued in force up to 1782.

Such was the position of the Irish Parliament in the interval between the revolution and 1782. I trust I am not wearying the Conference by dwelling on these historic details, attention to them is absolutely necessary to the right understanding of our position, to the determination of the course we should pursue.

I have now to ask the attention of the Conference to the change which was made in the position of the Irish parliament by that which has been somewhat inaccurately called the constitution of 1782. In the proper sense of the word there was no new constitution established in that year. Grattan and the Volunteers compelled England to renounce the claim of legislating for Ireland, and it was solemnly declared that no power on earth could make laws to bind Ireland except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance and the value of that great achievement. It placed the liberties of Ireland in the keeping of her own parliament. It removed the galling sense of subjection and dependence; while its immediate practical importance was chiefly felt in freeing the trade and commerce of Ireland from restrictions which the claim of the right to legislate for Ireland had enabled the English Parliament, under one pretence or other to impose. The commercial as well as the civil freedom of the country was placed under the guardianship of the Irish parliament itself. The truth is, that in the purely internal affairs of Ireland the instances of direct and actual interference by English legislation had been but few and comparatively unimportant.

The only change which was then made in the parliamentary constitution of Ireland was by a modification in the law of Poynings. The Irish parliament was authorized to consider and to pass bills without the previous sanction of the English Privy Council. But that assent—the approval of the English Privy Council—was still made necessary to their becoming law. In all other respects the parliamentary system of Ireland was left untouched. The absolute dependence of the crown of Ireland upon that of England was absolutely reaffirmed. The House of Commons was elected exactly in the same manner as before, and its legal and constitutional powers were unchanged.

It is strange, Sir, how little the real constitutional history of this period is understood. There are many persons I know who have been under the impression that in 1782 all control over Irish legislation in the English Privy Council was removed. Far from it; the consent of the sovereign under the Great Seal of England was still necessary before any measure could become law. This arrangement was expressly made part of the declaration of rights moved by Mr. Grattan in the Irish House of Commons. On the 16th of April, 1782, Mr. Grattan moved the address to the King which denied the power of the English parliament to make laws for Ireland. But after solemnly making that denial, and after affirming the inseparable annexation of the crown of Ireland to that of Great Britain, on which connection, in the words of the address, "the in-

terests and happiness of both nations essentially depend," that address proceeded—

To assure his Majesty that his Majesty's Commons of Ireland do most sincerely wish that all bills which become law in Ireland should receive the approbation of his Majesty under the Great Seal of Britain ; but that yet we consider the practice of suppressing our bills in the counsels of Ireland, or altering the same any where, to be a just cause of jealousy and discontent.

These are the words of the celebrated declaration of rights—the claim of the legislative independence of Ireland—solemnly put forward by Mr. Grattan and the Irish Parliament of 1782. In reply to this address, the Duke of Portland, on the 27th of May, conveyed to both Houses of the Irish parliament a message from the King, telling them that in addition to the renunciation by the British parliament of the claim to bind Ireland—

The concessions so graciously offered by our sovereign, are the modification of Poynings' law, and not only the abridgment of the mutiny bill in point of duration, but the formation of it on the model of the English mutiny bill, and prefacing it with a declaration of rights.

Nothing can be more distinct than the deliberate intentions of the men who led the Irish nation in 1782 to retain a portion of the subjection to the English Privy Council in which the law of Poynings placed the parliament of Ireland. The restrictions of that law had been imposed by an act of the Irish parliament. An act of the Irish parliament could remove them. Accordingly, a bill was brought in by Mr. Yelverton, modifying the law of Poynings. Mr. Flood alone objected to that bill, as falling short of that which Ireland had a right to demand. The measure of Mr. Yelverton provided that the bills which passed both houses of the Irish parliament should be certified by the Lord Lieutenant under the Great Seal of Ireland to his Majesty, and should not pass until they were returned under the Great Seal of Britain. It also provided that they should be returned without alteration, but it left untouched the requirement of Poynings' law that Irish bills must be sent over to England and returned with an approbation certified under the Great Seal of that country—that it is approved of by the advice of English ministers and the English Privy Council. This provision was wholly distinct from the constitutional necessity of obtaining the royal assent. That assent was subsequently given by the Lord Lieutenant in the name of his Majesty in the Irish House of Lords. The certifying of the bill under the Great Seal of England was a condition precedent to the King of Ireland giving his assent. Mr. Grattan pointed this out very clearly in the Regency debates. Lord Clare illustrated it very strongly, but not more strongly than truly, by the statement, that if his Majesty came to Ireland, appointing a regent for England in his absence, the King could not have given the royal assent to any bill in his Irish parliament until his regent had certified it to him under the English Great Seal. The provision virtually gave to the English Privy Council the power of negativing any Irish measure of legislation ; and it would be easy to show how strongly this veto was relied upon by the national party in the Irish parliament as a real and practical security for the connection between the countries.

The real concession which was obtained on this point—and it was a most important one—was that measures might be passed in both Houses of the Irish Parliament without the previous assent of the English Privy Council. That assent was now required, not before their introduction, but after they had passed. The restriction was no longer on the deliberative, but solely on the legislative power of the Irish parliament. But let it be remembered that from 1782 to 1800 there did exist that restriction on its legislative power which consisted in requiring an assent under the Great Seal of England before any measure passed by it could become law.

But under the arrangements which existed during the same period there was no such thing as an Irish administration responsible to the Irish parliament. In modern times it is considered essential that the ministers of the crown should possess the confidence of parliament, and that when they cease to do so they should resign. This is now established as the constitutional practice in Canada and in the Australian colonies. You will find it remarkably established in papers recently laid before parliament, connected with the retirement from office, in the colony of Victoria, of the ministry of Sir Charles Duffy. But no such practice had ever been established in Ireland. If it had been, Irish liberty never could have been destroyed. In 1799, when Lord Castlereagh first introduced the measure of the Union, it was defeated. Had the constitutional practice prevailed, he must have resigned, and a minister opposed to the Union must have taken his place; but in Ireland the ministers were the mere creatures of the English administration, changing when that administration changed, and therefore really dependent for their continuance in office on the votes, not of the Irish, but of the English, parliament. I have marked some extracts from the books before me, intended to show the importance of this subject. But that importance is so manifest, and I have so many matters to go over, that I am unwilling to dwell upon this. I will only ask you to remember that before the Union there was no such thing as an Irish administration responsible to an Irish parliament, even for the management of purely Irish affairs. In one of the resolutions I ask you to declare that such an administration is essential to our full enjoyment of constitutional government. I invite you to demand for Ireland not only a domestic parliament, but a domestic ministry—both, however, managing only our internal affairs—giving to us in those affairs the same constitutional and responsible government which England has so wisely and with so much advantage conceded to so many of the colonies of the British crown. But while Ireland, even after 1782, was thus left without any really responsible administration of her internal affairs, in all that concerned her external relations she was absolutely subject to the action of the English sovereign, taken under the advice of English ministers, controlled by an English parliament, in which Ireland had no voice. It was the King of England who entered into treaties with foreign nations by the advice of his English Privy Council. It was the King of England who, by the same advice, declared war or made peace. By those treaties Ireland was bound. A declaration of war involved Ireland in that war. A treaty of peace bound Ireland by its terms. In all these things Ireland

was the subject country, just as much bound by the acts of the English government as Canada or Australia are now bound. When George III. by the advice of his English ministers, declared war against France, the King of Ireland was at war with that country, and every Irishman who aided or held intercourse with his French enemies was guilty of high treason. This is not matter of theory. It was the actual and literal state of fact. The army was the army of England; the navy was the navy of England; the ambassadors to all foreign courts were the ambassadors of the King of England. All the colonies were dependencies of the English crown; and over their government Ireland or the Irish parliament did not exercise the slightest controul. One of these resolutions proposes to substitute for this state of things a Federal arrangement between the countries, under which Ireland shall have her voice in all that are properly imperial concerns.

I ask of any advocate of that which is termed simple repeal, is he willing to recur to the state of things which existed on the day before the Union was passed? Is he willing to covenant that Ireland should abide by it? Let us suppose that an act were passed declaring the Union null and void. We would return to the state of things that existed after 1782. In the first place you must have all bills passed by the Irish parliament approved of by the English Privy Council, and sanctioned under the Great Seal of England, by ministers responsible only to the English parliament. More, far more, than this; you would have no Irish administration really responsible to your Irish parliament; you would have your internal, your local affairs, managed by ministers dependent for their continuance in office upon the votes of an English parliament at Westminster coming in and going out with an English party, and, lastly and above all, you might find yourselves plunged into all the dangers and horrors of war by advice given by an English ministry. You would have all questions of peace and war, and all imperial questions settled by the advice of a ministry over whom you have no controul, and settled by a parliament in which you were not represented, and, as I have said, the very moment itheEnglish ministers advised the Queen to declare war against France without consulting Ireland at all, without one single Irishman having any voice in the matter, that moment the Irishman who aided France would be guilty of treason.

In 1791, eight years after 1782, Wolfe Tone thus described the position of Ireland in the imperial confederation—for a confederation, although an imperfect one, there was:—

"The present state of Ireland is such as is not to be paralleled in history or fable. Inferior to no country in Europe in the gifts of nature—blessed with a temperate sky and a fruitful soil—intersected by many great rivers—indented round her whole coast with the noblest harbours—abounding with all the necessary materials for unlimited commerce—teeming with inexhaustible mines of the most useful metals—filled by four millions of an ingenious and gallant people, with bold hands and ardent spirits—posted right in the track between Europe and America, within fifty miles of England and three hundred of France; yet, with all these great advantages, unheard of and unknown, without pride or power or name, without ambassadors, army or navy, not of half the consequence in the empire, of which she has the honour to make a part, with the single county of York, or the loyal and well-regulated town of Birmingham."

This is a true description of the state of things which existed in 1791.

This, Sir, would plainly and indisputably be the effect of an act which would simply repeal the act of union, and so send us back to the state of things which existed the day before it was passed, binding Ireland in all imperial relations by the acts of an English ministry and an English parliament. The advocates of simple repeal never contemplated anything else. For this I can refer to the highest authority. Sometime in the year 1843, Mr. Sturges Bourne, a name well known in English politics, proposed that the relations between England and Ireland should be settled by a federal arrangement based upon principles similar to those which I now ask you to adopt. In the course of the discussions which followed he called on Mr. O'Connell to state what matters under his proposal of repeal of the Union would be left to the English ministry to decide. Mr. O'Connell replied to him in a letter to which he obtained the formal and authoritative sanction of the Repeal Association. In that letter he said :—

> Our reply to that must commence by reminding you that what the Irish desire is a parliament to regulate all the local affairs of Ireland—a parliament to have supreme legislative authority, with the assent of the monarch of Great Britain and Ireland, in all matters exclusively relating to Ireland.

That was the claim made by the Repeal Association.

> Turning that objection into a question, it would come to this—What parliament would have the nomination (for it comes to that) of the minister of the crown entrusted with the foreign, the colonial, the naval and military affairs of the empire? Our reply is precise and distinct—Beyond all doubt the British parliament. To that parliament the crown has absolutely committed legislation over many of the colonies—that is of colonies which might have been governed by the prerogative alone, but the crown never did make any such concession to the Irish parliament. Thus your question is emphatically answered—that the British parliament ought to have the nomination of the ministers of the crown, who would be responsible for peace and war, colonial administration, home and foreign treaties, as well, of course, as of all matters of internal legislation within the precincts of Great Britain. The plan of government of the two countries—separate parliaments under one monarch—would leave to the British parliament more extended power and authority than was at all necessary for the Irish parliament. DANIEL O'CONNELL.

This, Sir, is a distinct and a most authoritative avowal that under any plan of simple repeal, Ireland must in all questions of peace and war be bound by the decisions of an English ministry and an English parliament, and that in all imperial concerns, in treaties with foreign States, in all the legislation for the colonies and dependencies of the empire, Ireland shall have no voice. I ask of any man here to compare with this plan of simple repeal the federal arrangement to which you are asked in one of these resolutions to give your assent. Strictly speaking, Sir, that question is concluded by the terms of the requisition. Every man who has signed the requisition has declared himself an assenting party to the proposal of a federal arrangement. Every man who is present is so upon the faith that he so assents.

But, Sir, if the question arises, I, for one, would advise you to the terms of that assent the largest and most liberal constitution. The requisition was framed so as to give the widest latitude to individual opinion. I know that it has been signed by men like my friend, Mr. Smyth, I believe I may add by my friend, Mr. O'Neill Daunt, who believed in their individual conviction that we would act more wisely in making a demand

for a simple repeal of the act of union, who would for themselves prefer that repeal to any federal arrangement, but who are ready to yield their own opinion to that of the majority of their countrymen, and will cordially unite with us in seeking a federal arrangement, and believe that if the country has plainly declared in favour of such an arrangement it is the duty even of those who might abstractedly prefer simple repeal to give their authority and influence to that which the country accepts as the national movement. The requisition was advisedly worded so as to admit persons holding such sentimenls to sign it without any other compromise of their individual opinion than that which is implied in their readiness to surrender them to the national opinion and the national will.

But, Sir, if any one here desires to raise the issue between simple repeal and a federal arrangement, I, for one, think he should be permitted to enter fully and freely on its discussion. If the sanction of the Irish people is given, as I believe it is given to our proposal of federation, it is essential that it should be intelligibly and deliberately given, and with full knowledge of the nature and character of our proposal. I am quite ready to enter on a full and calm consideration of all the reasons that ought to influence us in choosing between a proposal for a federal arrangement and one for "simple repeal."

Every one ought to understand the elements of this question. Under the arrangement of 1782 under the movement for a return to that arrangement which arose at a later period, under the guidance of Mr. O'Connell, there was left to the English parliament and the English ministry, uncontrolled by the Irish parliament, the exclusive right of making peace and war, the exclusive right of control over all imperial concerns.

We do not propose to give to an Irish parliament any power of interference with these questions; but we do not propose to restore the control over these matters to a parliament exclusively English. We propose to continue it in an imperial parliament in which Ireland shall have a voice—in the very same imperial parliament in which the act of union has vested it.

In return for our share in the management of all imperial concerns, we propose to submit to our fair contribution to all imperial expenditure. Before the Union the contribution of Ireland to these expenses was limited to grants for the army and navy and the civil list of the Sovereign, and these depended entirely on the will of her own parliament. Ireland could not prevent the King of England going to war, but when we were at war the Irish parliament could refuse to contribute one shilling to its expenses. In all other respects, in sending troops into Ireland, in garrisoning our towns, in sending their navy into our ports, the English government could act wholly independent of our parliament. If England set her heart upon a war, her government would think very little of the Irish supplies. But whatever might be the value of the power of refusing them, we propose to give it up. One of our resolutions pledges us to consent, as part of a federal arrangement, to contribute to all the expenditure which the imperial parliament may judge necessary for imperial purposes. The mode in which that contribution

is to be enforced must be settled in the adjustment of details. But we argue that in some form or other the imperial parliament shall have the power of levying from Ireland her proportion of the imperial supplies. I may observe that even if we proposed a simple repeal of the act of union we must still make some arrangement as to our share of many of the imperial expenses. Mr. O'Connell stated distinctly that such an arrangement must be consequent upon repeal.

I have asked your attention to the real position of the Irish parliament even after the concessions of 1782. Let me carry you back for a moment to the period of the revolution, and ask you to observe what was accomplished by that parliament in the century which followed. If I desired to point to an illustration of the value and power of the most enfeebled parliamentary institution, I could not find one more striking than that which is supplied in the history of the Irish parliament. It was not the parliament of the whole people—it was chosen exclusively by the representatives of the Protestant minority, while the Catholic majority were excluded from all share of political power. It was not chosen by the voice even of the Protestant people. Nearly two-thirds of its members were sent in by a system of nomination from which all popular influence was excluded. It had no Irish administration through which it could bring its influence to bear directly on the counsels of the sovereign —Irish ministers were the irresponsible agents of English parties. It was hampered in all its movements by the law, which, in its strict interpretation, forbade even the consideration of measures which had not been previously sanctioned by an English Privy Council. Without any real possession of the powers, even in financial matters, which enabled the English House of Commons to assert the rights of the English people. It is impossible to conceive a more disadvantageous position than that in which the Irish parliament was placed. Yet see what it accomplished. In the beginning of the last century its members were elected virtually for life; they could not be disturbed except by the death of the sovereign or a dissolution. They extorted from the English Privy Council a reluctant assent to a measure which shortened the duration of parliament to eight years. I am not sure that the members of the present House of Commons, if we felt ourselves virtually secure of our seats for life, would make a similar sacrifice to public liberty. We can scarcely avoid noticing the contrast between the legislatures of the two countries. In England, a House of Commons elected for three years passed a statute extending its tenure to seven. In Ireland, a House of Commons elected for the life or during the pleasure of the sovereign abridged its tenure to seven years,—it was in the English Privy Council that the term was altered to eight years, in the hope that the Irish parliament would reject the bill, when so altered, as a violation of their privileges. It was the same parliament which established the Volunteers. It wrung from England the solemn renunciation of her usurped claim of legislating for Ireland—it modified the law of Poynings—it established, after years of conflict, the necessity of an annual mutiny bill, to be passed by the Irish parliament—it asserted for itself the right of originating and appropriating supplies. When its existence was put an end to by violence, and corruption, and fraud, it was gradually establishing the same constitu-

tional privileges of parliament which have been the safeguards of English freedom. But more than this. A Protestant parliament, elected exclusively by Protestants—it had repealed the penal laws which ground down the Catholic people. In 1793, it admitted the mass of the people to share political power with their Protestant countrymen. In that year it gave Catholics the elective franchise, long before the exclusion was removed in England; and in the same year the degrees in the university of Dublin were opened to Roman Catholics, a measure of liberality which the English universities have imitated within the last few years. It was the same Protestant parliament that established and endowed a Catholic seminary for Catholic priests. It is hard for us now, in the advance of liberal opinions, to realize all that was involved in these measures. But when we remember that a parliament representing a portion of the people who enjoyed a monopoly of political power, of the learned professions, and of the landed property of the country, had gone thus far in admitting their Catholic countrymen to a share in all these, we may well believe, with Mr. O'Connell, that if that parliament had not been extinguished, a very few years would have seen the removal of every religious disability, and the admission of the Catholic people to a full participation in all the privileges of the constitution.

These triumphs of the principles of civil and religious liberty were achieved in a parliament, hampered and enfeebled by defects, and difficulties such as I have described. Need I remind you of what it did for the material prosperity of the country in the eighteen years during which the renunciation of all claims on the part of England to legislate against Irish commerce, left us free to foster the industry and enterprise of Ireland. "There is not," said Lord Clare, speaking in 1798, "a nation on the face of the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation, in agriculture, and in manufactures, with the same rapidity as Ireland." I will not weary you by quoting the testimonies with which many of us are familiar. Our sea fisheries, now decaying and perishing, before the Union had driven the Scotch and English trade out of the continental markets. They were a source of wealth to the country and employment to our population. Every where our manufactures flourished in streets, in villages, in districts where all manufacturing industry is now extinct. All testimonies bear out the statements of Lord Grey in the English House of Lords, of Mr. Foster and Mr. Plunkett in the Irish House of Commons, that in the words of Plunkett, "Ireland's revenue, her trade, her manufactures had thriven beyond the hope or the example of every other country of her extent within the few years before the Union with a rapidity astonishing even to herself."

I almost fear that I am lowering this great argument if I turn to one of the many instances that have been adduced as tests of the condition of the Irish people before the Union. I borrow the test from a speech delivered at the Protestant Conservative Society or Ireland by the Rev. Charles Boyton in 1832. That able and distinguished gentleman compared the number of sheep sold at the great fair of Ballinasloe and the number exported with the numbers sold and exported in the year in which he was speaking. He took the number sold in each year as a

fair test of the number in the country, and he took the number exported as showing that a market was found for the rest at home.

I will compare the number of sheep sold at the great fair of Ballinasloe and the number exported in the years 1799 and 1870. I take the numbers for 1799 from Mr. Boyton's speech; those for 1870 from that invaluable repertory of Irish statistics, the almanac of Mr. Thom. Here are the numbers :—

Sheep sold at Ballinasloe for	1799	...	...	...	77,900
,, ,,	1870	...	...	...	71,910
Sheep exported from Ireland for	1799	...	...	...	800
,, ,,	1870	...	...	...	620,834

Taking the same statistics as to horned cattle, they stand thus :—

Horned cattle sold at Ballinasloe Fair for	1799	...	...	9,900
,, ,,	1870	...	...	13,674
,, exported to England for	1799	...	...	14,000
,, ,,	1870	...	...	415,673

Now, Sir, if Mr. Boyton was right in supposing that the rise or fall in the number of sheep or cattle sold at the great fair of Ballinasloe, to be a fair comparative test of the numbers reared in the country—and I believe every gentleman here acquainted with country affairs will agree that this is so—then, Sir, the inference is irresistible. In 1799 Ireland reared more sheep than she does now, and very nearly as many horned cattle. But in 1799 there was scarcely an appreciable exportation—now there is an enormous one. What became of the sheep and cattle—in other words, of the beef and mutton in 1799? What becomes of it now? Before the Union there was a market at home. There was an Irish population eating meat and paying for it. Now, with an increased population there is no consumption for it at home. Observe, the production is not increased—the market only is changed. Before the Union it was an Irish, it is now an English one. I do not believe that it is possible for statistics to supply a more striking and a more unerring test of the decline in the comfort and means of the mass of our population. Raising the very same amount of produce we export it now because the country is too poor to give the farmers purchasers at home, and yet the very exportation which are the result and proof of our poverty, are paraded as the evidence of that Irish prosperity, of which English ministers and Irish placemen are so proud. I ought, perhaps, to apologise to the Conference for having broken my statement by this reference to a trifling, at all events, an isolated detail. It is no part of my business to-day to accumulate the proofs of Irish prosperity before 1800, but the one I have cited struck me so forcibly that I thought I would be forgiven for referring to it. It reminded me of a passage in a pamphlet published a few years ago on the Land Question, by the late Lord Rosse. "I well recollect," wrote that distinguished nobleman, "the glowing terms in which several old people were wont to speak of the plenty in their younger days, bread, meat, and the best ale being the ordinary peasant's fare." This may help us to understand why cattle and sheep were reared to remain at home in 1799, and are reared to be exported in 1870. And, Sir, as I have paused to dwell upon this subject, let me say that there is far too little acquaintance with it. Every day is making it more diffi-

cult to collect the proof of that decline in the condition of the great mass of the people, of that diminution in the amount of enjoyment in Ireland of the comforts and luxuries of life which unquestionably followed the Union. Forty years ago those proofs were collected with wonderful industry and ability in that speech of Mr. Boyton, to which I have referred, a speech spoken, be it remembered, in an assembly comprising a great number of the highest of the Irish gentry amongst its members. That speech completed the proof up to the time at which he spoke. I do not know that we could render a better service of the kind to the national cause than by now republishing that speech. An equal service would be rendered by any one who could with equal industry and ability bring down these proofs to the present day. Every man among us knows that the prosperity of the country in the days of her independence is no fiction or dream. The testimonies of the time which record it have become memories deep sunk in the heart of the Irish race. Our fathers of that time have told us. Many among us have conversed with men who remembered it. Every research into the minutest chronicle in which the most trifling details are recorded confirm the account, and the traditions of the progress of our country under our own parliament form one of the elements of that passionate attachment with which the Irish people cherish the memory of that parliament.

But there are in the Irish heart other and higher memories associated with that parliament. Every Irishman is proud of its glory and its fame. No one will say that he is not justly so. In the proudest and noblest days of English parliamentary history, in the days of Pitt, of Fox, and of Erskine, when Ireland, indeed, contributed to the splendour of the English senate the grand additions of her Sheridan and her Burke, our Irish parliament suffered nothing by a comparison with the great—it was a great—assembly at Westminster. Never, perhaps, was there an assembly which produced so many men destined to be great within the same period as that Irish parliament. The name of Arthur Wellesley, or as he then called himself, Wesley, was upon its rolls. Among its prominent members was Castlereagh, afterwards the director of the foreign policy of England, and thus to some extent the arbiter of the destinies of Europe. Fitzgibbon, although like Castlereagh, the enemy of his country, was in intellect equal to the greatest of his rivals. The walls of our senate house echoed to the voices of Bushe and of Plunket. The fame of our own parliament, the memories of Grattan, of Curran, and of Flood, are some of the precious inheritances with which a nation may not part, and wherever in any other country or in any clime there is an Irishman who has a pride in the glories of his country, his heart turns in passionate remembrance to that senate house which threw a lustre on our land—the senate house which he fondly remembers as "the old house in College-green."

If I ask what memories has he of the means by which his country was despoiled of that parliament, I am not wandering from the practical subject which engages our attention to-day. There is a sense in which it matters very little how we lost our parliament, but there is another in which it matters a great deal. The Irishman believes, and truly believes, that its parliament was wrested from his country by fraud and violence

unparalleled in the history of the world. The feelings of nations are facts with which statesmen who know anything of statesmanship must deal. The sense of national pride—the traditions which nations cherish in their inmost souls—the memories of by-gone wrongs—the recollections of former greatness and former good—all these are realities which it were a miserable statesmanship to neglect. They make up the soul and spirit of the nation with which you have to deal. You must take them into account just as much as you would the physical condition or capabilities of a country. It is not a high statesmanship—it is not statesmanship at all—which could meet the demand of Ireland for the restoration of her old parliament by the miserable answer, that if Ireland is entitled to her separate parliament, Wales ought to have one too. Putting aside all the considerations which make such an answer a trifling with a serious subject, I reply if Wales had had her parliament secured to her by solemn engagements—if every Welshman knew and felt that while Wales, under that parliament, had been prosperous beyond all precedent—that with the loss of that parliament its prosperity had withered and declined—if he knew and felt further that seventy years ago Wales had been robbed of that parliament by intolerable perfidy and wrong—if the memories of that wrong still rankled in the hearts of the people—and if, at the same time, the years of the existence of that parliament were associated with proud recollections of national glory—then, but not till then, the analogy would arise. All these things exist in the case of Ireland, and to leave them out of account, is simply to ignore the forces which really move the masses of mankind, and which therefore govern the affairs of men—the forces on which statesmen must calculate, and which it is the very business of statesmanship, by wisely devised measures, to employ, to direct, and to control. It is impossible to separate a nation from that past history, which is a part of its existence. The attempt is as vain as it would be in the case of an individual. The man is made up of the memories of his life, of the character they form, and the passions and the principles to which they give life; and the Ireland of to-day, the Ireland that British statesmen have to conciliate, is an Ireland upon which are impressed the memories of her prosperous and glorious independence, and of the terrible and cruel wrong by which that independence was destroyed.

In the sight of these great political truths I may venture to make a passing appeal to those who admit that the arrangements of the Union require readjustment, but suppose that this may be accomplished by some measure which will fail in restoring to Ireland the dignity of her old parliamentary constitution. I do not stop to argue on the practicability of really working such a scheme. I do not inquire how far it is possible to frame for Ireland a board for railway bills, or gas bills, or water bills, or a great Irish grand jury, with control over our roads and our turnpikes, which would, even on such matters, give to Ireland the benefit of Home Rule. Extend, if you can, the powers of that board or committee of members, or whatever else you please to call it, to local affairs of higher moment—it is not our Irish parliament, it is but a big grand jury still. I believe nothing would be more unwise than to attempt any readjustment of the relations between the countries which would not be

final and complete. No readjustment can be so which would not satisfy our sense of national pride by restoring to us—whatever be its powers—all the grandeur and dignity of the parliament of which we were despoiled.

I resume my narrative, and come to the passing of the act of union. I have shown you what the Irish parliament had done—how it had asserted civil and vindicated religious liberty—how it had promoted the material prosperity of the country—how its genius and intellect had thrown lustre on the national annals. We must give a few minutes' attention to the means by which it was destroyed.

Let me read for you the words in which Lord Plunket, then Mr. Plunket, resisting the Union in the Irish House of Commons, described those means. He spoke at a time when the atrocities of the French revolution were not, as they are with us, the transactions of the far off past, but when they were visibly present to the minds of the generation in which they were enacted. It was at such a time that he said :—

"I am bold to say that licentious and impious France, in all the unrestrained excesses to which anarchy and atheism have given birth, has not committed a more insidious act against her enemy than is now attempted by the professed champion of the cause of civilised Europe against a friend and ally in the hour of her calamity and distress—at a moment when our country is filled with British troops, when the loyal men of Ireland are fatigued and exhausted, by their efforts to subdue the rebellion—efforts in which they had succeeded before those troops arrived—whilst the Habeas Corpus Act is suspended—whilst trials by court-martial are carrying on in many parts of the kingdom—whilst the people are taught to think they have no right to meet or deliberate; and whilst the great body of them are so palsied by their fears and worn down by their exertions, that even this vital question is scarcely able to rouse them from their lethargy—at a moment when we are distracted by domestic dissensions—dissensions artfully kept alive as the pretext of our present subjugation and the instrument of our future thraldom."

'The country,' said Lord Plunket, 'is filled with British troops.' Before the English government ventured to propose the union, they passed an act giving a bounty of £10 to every Irish militiaman who would enlist for foreign service. This appeared to be an act influenced only by the desire to invite Irish valour to the defence of the empire in its foreign wars; but mark what followed. Ten regiments of Irish militia accepted the bounty and volunteered for foreign service. They were instantly replaced by ten English regiments; so that it was manifest that it was not for the purpose of taking troops abroad that this was done. While England was engaged in a desperate continental struggle, Ireland was held by 130,000 armed men—troops that had free quarters on the people, and on whose use of that privilege I do not choose to dwell. Let it be told in the burning words of their commander-in-chief.

I have read to you the testimony of Mr. Plunket. I will cite one more. It is an extract from the protest in the House of Peers against the passing of the act of union—a protest signed by two bishops and eighteen lay peers. The signature of the Duke of Leinster was the first. Twenty members of the Irish House of Lords have left on record, in its journals, the protest in which, among other reasons, they objected to the act of union in these words :—

"Because, when we consider the weakness of this kingdom at the time that the measure was brought forward, and her inability to withstand the destructive designs of the minister, and couple with the act itself the means that have been employed to accomplish it—such as the abuse of the Place Bill—for the purpose of corrupting the parliament; the appointment of sheriffs to prevent county meetings; the dismissal of the old steadfast friends of the constitutional government, for their adherence to the Constitution; and the return of persons into parliament who had neither connexion nor stake in this country, and were therefore selected to decide upon her fate—when we consider the armed force of the minister, added to his power and practices of corruption—when we couple these things together, we are warranted to say that the basest means have been used to accomplish this great innovation, and that the measure of the Union tends to dishonour the ancient peerage for ever, to disqualify both houses of parliament, and subjugate the people of Ireland for ever. Such circumstances, we apprehend, will be recollected with abhorrence, and will create jealousy between the two nations, in place of that harmony which for so many centuries has been the cement of their union.

With these testimonies—with the testimony of all history—I may assume that the union was carried by a system of force, and fraud, and corruption, for which no parallel is to be found in the history of a nation which was even nominally free.

Now let us see what was done in 1800. An accurate attention to this may very much guide us in seeing how and how far it is to be undone. There was nothing like a fusion of the two parliaments. The Irish parliament was destroyed. The English parliament remained undisturbed. Not a particle of change was made in the English constituencies. Out of the 300 Irish members, 100 took their seats in the British parliament. That was all. The British parliament had previously consisted of 558 members. The addition of the 100 scarcely made a perceptible change. There was not even a dissolution. In the middle of a parliament 100 Irish members were introduced, and every thing went on as before. I ask your attention to this because I cannot help thinking it shows us something as to the mode in which we ought to seek to undo the mischief which was then done.

Before the union with Ireland the English parliament had two classes of business to attend to. It attended to the internal affairs of England, and it controlled the external relations of the empire. The Union added to these duties that of attending to the internal affairs of Ireland, and the power of taxing Ireland. With the assumption of these new duties and powers the parliament received an addition of 100 new members sent over from Ireland, who, of course, had a right to interfere in imperial concerns, and also in the internal affairs of England.

Now let me ask as to the transfer of the management of the internal affairs of Ireland from the Irish to the English parliament, has this experiment—and it was the boldest and most daring experiment even of that revolutionary period—of governing one country constitutionally by the parliament of another—has it succeeded?

At this moment, I say, Ireland is not only deprived of her parliament, but deprived of all constitutional government. What is constitutional government? Constitutional government is this—that whatever be the form of government—take it as ours is, a monarchy—the Sovereign carries on the government of the country by advisers controlled by a representative assembly of the people. That is constitutional government,

and by this means government is brought into harmony with the feelings and sentiments of the people. Have we anything like that in Ireland? Is there a single department of the Irish government really under the control of the Irish nation? I don't know of any. The experiment to govern Ireland by the English parliament has utterly failed. And why? Because no alien assembly can speak with the voice or to the hearts of the Irish people; and therefore the country is without any constitutional government at all. I need not go into the history of Ireland since the Union. Has it succeeded in bringing us peace? Has it succeeded in bringing us prosperity? It has not. Then comes the question, What change is to be made? Several views are put forward on the subject, but one fact is clear, that no one is satisfied with the present arrangement of affairs. There must be a re-adjustment of the Union, whatever it may be. What is the present mode of transacting Irish business in the English House of Commons? The bulk of it is transacted at two or three o'clock in the morning. On that point I can appeal to the personal testimony of every member of the House of Commons who is here. It is transacted in the dark, and when virtually the House of Commons is not there. I do not take into account forty or fifty members, sitting up to a late hour to obey the mandate or beck of the whipper-in—they are not the House of Commons. They are the dregs, the refuse of the House of Commons, long after the House of Commons is gone to bed. A readjustment of the Union is absolutely necessary. If that be so, ought not the readjustment be complete? Ought it not be such as to end for ever the quarrels of centuries if it can be done safely, and I think it can be done safely. There are objections to simple repeal, but Federalism would obviate every one. I do not ask the disintegration of the empire. We do not ask to do anything further in Ireland than is done in Canada and Australia—to allow us to have in Ireland a parliament to manage our local affairs—a parliament growing up in Ireland just as it has done in Canada, within the imperial constitution—and beside that imperial parliament, to which we would still leave the management of all imperial affairs.

I shall detain you for a short time while I refer to the history of this question of Federalism. It is a very remarkable one. In 1831 O'Connell proposed the repeal of the Union. Very soon after that Sharman Crawford proposed a plan of a Federal constitution, and in 1843, when O'Connell was at the height of his power, and at the time of the monster meetings, Mr. Sturges Bourne from the English side, proposed a Federal Union as a substitute for repeal; and when Lord Chancellor Sugden removed magistrates who attended repeal meetings, Mr. O'Hagan, the present Lord Chancellor, and several other moderate men, came down to the repeal association and joined it, guarding themselves distinctly by saying that they joined as Federalists. Federalism was then fairly started. It was put before the country by Mr. Crawford, by those gentlemen who so joined the repeal association, and also by Mr. Sturges Bourne.

I do not dwell upon the wonderful agitations of 1843. I thought for a moment that every one here remembered them as I do myself. I can recall in vivid distinctness of memory those scenes. I see before me now

the grand form of the Liberator, the name by which the people delighted to honor him. I bring back to my mental vision the gorgeous processions, the multitudinous gatherings, of some of which I was myself an eye-witness. You may excuse me for forgetting that I am now speaking to many who were not born when those memories were realities. But yet, even to these, I may rapidly glance at the history of the monster meetings and great agitations of 1843, and come at once to their disastrous close. In the October of that year the Government suppressed the Clontarf meeting, and it was then a gentleman who is among us to-day—the Rev. Thaddeus O'Malley—came down to the Repeal Association, and in a speech of very great eloquence and ability proposed that the Association should adopt Federalism. I think he made one great mistake. He proposed a plan to which he still, I believe, adheres, to alter altogether the constitution of England, and have one Imperial Board nominated by two parliaments. I think I will show you presently that England will never consent to alter her old constitution to give us Home Rule. Then came 1844, when, I was going to say, the conviction, but the supposed conviction and the imprisonment of O'Connell and his associates took place. I am speaking by the side of one of those (Sir John Gray) who shared his imprisonment for Ireland. He has come to-day to give to the cause of Federalism, as we present it, the value of his authority and his name, and I believe in the cause of Federalism he would brave again imprisonment, if he thought his duty to his country required it. In September, 1844, O'Connell was released from his imprisonment by the judgment of the House of Lords.

That judgment decided that the sentence under which he and his associates had suffered four months' imprisonment was illegal.

I ask the attention of the Conference to the events which followed on that release. Before the judgment of the House of Lords, suggestions for a federal union between the countries had been again thrown out by Mr. Porter, a gentleman of high station in the county of Fermanagh; again by Mr. Sharman Crawford and by Mr. Keon, of the county Down. I am sure that most persons present are familiar with the statement made, some time since, by Mr. MacNamara Cantwell—a statement for the truth of which the high character of that gentleman is pledged. It was my duty when that statement appeared some time since to direct attention to it by proposing a formal resolution of the Home Government Association. That statement was a weighty and important one. Mr. Cantwell publicly stated that it came to his knowledge that at the time of the judgment of the House of Lords, a meeting of the leaders of the Whig party was held in London, and that they resolved to effect an alliance with Mr. O'Connell and the people of Ireland upon the basis of carrying a federal arrangement between the countries. I ask the attention of the Conference to this. That statement has been deliberately made. There were men living who could deny it—who ought to deny it—if it were untrue. Challenged as these men have been, the statement has never been contradicted to this hour. It has not been contradicted because it is true.

In looking over some contemporary records for the purpose of preparing for to-day, I met with a most remarkable confirmatiou of this

statement. Immediately after the reversal of the conviction in the House of Lords, an article appeared in the *Morning Herald*, which was then the organ of the ministry of Sir Robert Peel, positively stating that the very resolution mentioned by Mr. Cantwell had been adopted by the leaders of the Whig party, and denouncing them for having entered into what it called another Lichfield house compact with O'Connell, which was to be based on federalism. The statement was commented upon by contemporaneous journals, and there was no contradiction of it in the Whig papers. On the contrary, some of them defended the supposed arrangement into which the Whigs were alleged to have entered.

Mr. O'Connell was released from prison on the 6th of September, and within one month afterwards, early in October, 1844, a most remarkable letter was written by Mr. O'Connell to the repeal association. In that letter he stated that plans of a federal union between the countries had been proposed, and that he was considering whether they should be accepted. I will read you some extracts from that letter:—

"Both parties are agreed that these powers should be sufficiently extensive to enable the Irish parliament to protect the lives, liberties, and property of the people. That it should have the power to enact all the laws to be in force in Ireland), in short, that it should be an efficient parliament for all legislative, financial, and judicial purposes within her Majesty's realm of Ireland. The simple repealers are of opinion that the reconstructed Irish parliament should have the same power and authority which the former Irish parliament had. The "Federalists," on the contrary, appear to me to require more for Ireland than the simple repealers do; for, besides the local parliament in Ireland, having full and perfect local authority, the Federalists require that there should be, for questions of Imperial concern, colonial, military, and naval, and of foreign alliance and policy, a congressional or Federal parliament, in which Ireland should have a fair share and proportion of a representation and power. It is but right and just to confess that in this respect the Federalists would give Ireland more weight and importance in Imperial concerns than she would acquire by the plan of the simple Repealers.

. . . . . .

For my own part, I will own since I have come to contemplate the specific difference, such as they are, between "simple Repeal" and "Federalism," I do at present feel a preference for the Federative plan, as tending more to the utility of Ireland, and to the maintenance of the connection with England, than the mode of simple Repeal. But I must either deliberately propose or deliberately accept from some other person a plan of a Federative Union before I bind myself to the opinion which I now entertain.

2nd Oct., 1844."

Remember that this was the deliberate declaration of Mr. O'Connell in October, 1844. I do not mean to weary you by going through the discussions which led ultimately to his practically receding from that declaration. This is a portion of Irish history which is not yet written. It ought to be written, although it is one which suggests very melancholy thoughts.

I do not dwell on the details of the controversy which followed. I will only ask your attention to one very remarkable document or letter or rather manifesto from Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy, which appeared in the *Nation* newspaper of the 19th of October. It was in the form of a letter to Mr. O'Connell, but it was in reality a manifesto on the part of those who were even then beginning to revolt against his leadership.

In this remarkable letter Mr. Duffy declared his objections to the federal plans which had been proposed. I ask your attention to the principal objections which he urged:—

"Federalism," he said, "as it is interpreted by some of the soundest men of that party, demands local parliaments for the three divisions of the empire, and the imperial one in common. Now, if this principle be insisted upon, federalism is an impracticability; for it implies a reorganization of the British constitution. Apart from any other objection to it, it raises a new and tremendous difficulty which does not exist against repeal."

I perfectly agree with Mr. Duffy. Any plan of a federal union which would involve the breaking up of all the arrangements of the constitution is impracticable. We must not come forward with a proposal to pull all existing things to pieces—in order to reconstruct fantastic baby-houses—or to frame political toys. It is vain to expect that the English people will consent to pull the fabric of government to pieces for the sake of giving us Home Rule. The plan we propose to-day is open to no such objection. It can be carried out with scarcely an alteration—with no essential alteration in the present machinery of the imperial government.

Mr. Duffy's next objection was that all proposed plans of federalism dispensed with the Irish House of Lords.

"Moreover," he continues, "some of the federalists do not contemplate a House of Lords for Ireland. They would give us a legislative council, consisting of one chamber. Here we have a second innovation, and of course a second difficulty. They ask a thing foreign to the British constitution and a thing which, for that very reason (however good it may be intrinsically) would undoubtedly be refused. But is it good? It would leave us a demi-parliament, about as useful relatively to an entire one as half a pair of scissors to the whole; and it would exile the chief landed proprietors in the country, viz., the Peerage. Very bigoted and heartless that Peerage may be; but while it possesses the soil of the country, our business is to keep it under home influences. The section of the federalists who would have no Peers in our domestic legislature, while they would have them in the imperial parliament, contrive to make absenteeism a duty."

Our proposal is, at all events, free from this objection. Lastly, Mr. Duffy objected to the substitution of federalism for repeal, as the national demand, because the country was committed to the demand for repeal.

"The overwhelming majority of the members—clergymen and laymen—joined as repealers; . . . . . .

"Any such general change would weaken the moral weight of the association. In an individual a deliberate preference of a new opinion to an old one may argue courage, candour, and magnanimity; in a nation it is generally a sign of weakness; and in our case, surrounded by enemies at home and abroad, it is sure to receive the worst interpretation."

After an interval of more than twenty years—with all the advantage of the experience derived from the former struggle—the Irish people have deliberately adopted federalism as the demand they should put forward. It would be as difficult now to substitute repeal for federalism, as in 1844 it was to substitute federalism for repeal.

After hesitating and waiting for nearly two months, and repeatedly calling on the federalists to propose a plan of federal union which would secure to Ireland the advantages of self-government, Mr. O'Connell abandoned the idea on the ground that no plan had been proposed which was worthy of acceptance, or even of consideration.

Immediately after this arose the difference between young and old Ireland, which broke up the most powerful popular organization which this country had witnessed in modern times. Then followed the famine which broke O'Connell's heart, as it did the strength of Ireland. Repeal

continued for a short time to maintain a languishing existence. With the failure of the attempt at revolution in the revolutionary period of 1848, the national spirit of Ireland appeared to become extinct. Both federalism and repeal were unheard of for years, and whatever projects of the former had been entertained by the Whig leaders, they were only too glad to abandon and forget them.

After an interval of twenty years, a few gentlemen met in a private room and agreed among themselves that the time had come when Irishmen should unite to seek the restoration of self-government to their country. We came to the conclusion that we ought to seek that through the medium of a federal arrangement with Great Britain. The country was then perfectly free to adopt such a course. Old things and old agitations had passed away. But time was necessary to make the country familiar with a proposal which was a new one—to make the people acquainted with the real nature and character of that proposal. Time and discussion were necessary to enable them to determine on the prudence and propriety of adopting it. A period of very little more than three years has passed since first we placed before the Irish people the proposal, or rather suggestion, that they could best seek, and more probably obtain self-government for Ireland in the form of a federal arrangement between the countries. That suggestion has been received with an unanimity, and an enthusiasm that have exceeded the most sanguine hopes of its originators. The declarations of public meetings—the resolutions of corporate bodies, the addresses of candidates at elections, the result of those elections—the expressions of opinion contained in the manifestos of so many bodies of Catholic clergy, and last, not least, the magnificent requisition by which this Conference has been convened, all justify me in saying that the Irish people have adopted the suggestion, and are ready and willing to accept a federal union as a final adjustment of the relations between the countries.

When federalism was suggested to Mr. O'Connell there was as Mr. Duffy pointed out the enormous practical difficulty of changing front in presence of the enemy. It was not easy to abandon a demand to which the country was pledged—for which the national enthusiasm had been excited, and of the early and certain success of which repeated assurances had been given. It was not easy I say to recede from this demand even for the purpose of substituting another—although a better one in its stead.

No such difficulty exists now in the way of our choosing federalism instead of simple repeal. In truth, after what has occurred within the last three years, the difficulty would be to abandon the position which the country has taken, and to return to a proposal for simple repeal. I, Sir, have not one shadow of doubt that we were right in our endeavours to induce the country to join us in proposing to England a federal arrangement; but at all events we have done so and the country has accepted the proposal. I believe it is the true and right proposal. I agree with O'Connell that a well-devised federal arrangement would confer on Ireland far greater good than simple repeal. I agree with O'Connell in the belief that while it did this it would at the same time offer greater security for the connection between the countries. To this latter

point I attach a great value. I do so because I desire to maintain in that connection. I agree with O'Connell and with Grattan, and the parliament of 1782, that in the maintenance of that connection the happiness and prosperity of both countries are very largely involved. But I value it also because when we come to ask the assent of the English people to any proposal we make, it is of the utmost importance to show them that it involves no danger to the connection of the two countries. I have some little experience on this subject. I have advocated Home Rule for Ireland in England before assemblies largely composed of Englishmen. I am sure the English people are open to reason and ready to be convinced, and I can say that in England I have made many, very many converts to our cause by satisfying men that our plan of Home Rule involved nothing like a separation and nothing like a breaking-up of the unity of the empire in its relations or its aspect to foreign states. Once the mass of the English people are satisfied of this the concession of Home Rule to Ireland will meet with no opposition from them.

But let me guard myself against being misunderstood. I prefer our federal proposal not only because it gives better security for the connection between the countries—better security against the arising of occasions to disturb their amity—but I prefer it even on the grounds that are more peculiarly Irish. I have shown you that it will do that for us which was not done by the old arrangement between the countries: it will give us a voice in deciding those questions of peace and war and foreign treaties in which whenever or wherever they are decided, our dearest interests —our homes, our properties, and our lives are concerned. But there are other considerations that are involved. The United Kingdom of which Ireland is now a part, has vast foreign and colonial possessions. Many of these possessions have been acquired during the period of our disastrous partnership of 70 years. Heaven knows we have paid dearly enough for them. We are entitled to our share in them. They cannot be apportioned between the two countries. It is only under a federal arrangement that we can have any share in that which we have so dearly bought. Remember that simple repeal would hand over all the colonial and foreign possessions of the British Crown to the uncontrolled management of the British parliament, a parliament in which Ireland would have no voice.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this view of the question. No one can foresee all the modes in which an English parliament uncontrolled by any federal arrangement, could use its control over all these possessions to the injury of Ireland. I cannot dwell upon this now. I will only remind you that on this subject the condition of things is wholly changed since 1782 or even 1800. Before the Union all the colonies and foreign possessions of the crown were clearly the possessions of England. Ireland had no share in them, and could advance no title to any share. The case is wholly different now. Since the Union England closed in 1815 the greatest war that Europe had ever seen. Colonies and possessions were ceded or confirmed to her by a peace to the attainment of which Irish valour had largely contributed. In the struggle of fifteen years Irish blood had been freely shed for every victory that was won, and Irish treasure, wrung from us

far beyond our means had been spent to equip every expedition that was sent. In the fruits of that struggle we have a right to share.

Since the Union an English commercial company has surrendered India to the Crown—not of England—but of the United Kingdom. In the terrible contest for the maintenance of English power, for English existence in the Indian continent, Irish blood was poured out, and Irish bravery and Irish intellect kept India for that crown. India belongs to Ireland as much as it does to England. Great colonies have grown up in far off lands, some of which were at the time of the Union unknown or scarcely known—at all events unpeopled by any European inhabitants. Many of these colonies have become the home of the exiles of the Irish race. Multitudes of Irishmen have settled in every land where the flag of the United Kingdom waves. I am not prepared, I do not think Ireland ought to be prepared, by a simple repeal of the act of union to hand over all these territories to the absolute controul of an English parliament. The share we now have in their management we are entitled to retain. I believe, Sir, we are bound in justice and honour, even to our own countrymen who have settled in these colonies not to give them up.

I cannot but feel that one of the elements of the question of federalism is to be found in the vast Irish population which since the Union has settled in the great English towns. This element is a new one, and it is one to which every year even of those which have passed since the days of O'Connell has added new importance.

All these changes which have taken place since the Union, must be included in the review of the history of the relations between the countries. From such a review we cannot omit the events which have grown up in the seventy years of our partnership in all the concerns of Great Britain. That partnership if it has brought to us disasters at home has created rights and imposed on us obligations which have become facts of our national position which it is impossible for us to ignore.

I have gone through the history of the past. The question for the present is, what are we to do? I ask of you to-day, in the name of the Irish people—of this assembly, which is really a parliament of that people—to declare that we seek the restoration of our national rights and our national independence by establishing a federal union on equal terms with Great Britain; and if our judgment honestly resolves that, taking all things into account—the abstract merits, the practical possibility of attainment—the assent that has already been given to the federal proposal by the great mass of the Irish people—if, I say, taking all these things into account, we are of opinion that we ought to ask for a federal arrangement, let us, in the name of heaven, declare so, and place that proposal authoritatively before the English nation.

To me, Sir, it is—to every Englishman I believe it will be—a strong recommendation of that proposal that it involves no change whatever in the constitution of the imperial parliament. The imperial parliament might meet at Westminster next February exactly as it did last February—even if in the interim it had relegated to an Irish meeting in Dublin, the duty and the power of legislating in all the internal affairs of Ireland.

They have relegated to a Canadian parliament the power of legislating for Canada—to Australian parliaments that of legislating for the Australian communities. They have given to these colonies their own parliaments and their own administration. But the imperial parliament met just as it did before. It passed no bills affecting Canada or Australia. That was all. Has this been a disintegration of the empire? Why should it be so in Ireland? The Canadian and Australian parliaments have grown up within the imperial system, and beside the imperial parliament without impairing the unity of the imperial constitution. Why cannot one in Ireland do the same? The conditions are not in the slightest degree altered by the fact that Ireland sends representatives to the imperial parliament. They would not be changed as to Canada or Victoria if those communities acquired to-morrow the right which many persons wish to extend to them, of sending representatives to the assembly by whose decisions, in all imperial concerns, they would be bound. It would not alter in any way their right to their separate legislature and separate administration, or interfere, in the slightest degree, with the practical exercise of their right. Neither can the representation of Ireland in an imperial parliament in any manner interfere with the concession to us of our Irish parliament, and an Irish administration of our own.

The argument to be drawn from the example of Canada is a strong one. In 1839 Canada was with difficulty held by force of arms for the British Crown. Canada was in open rebellion. Canada was at a distance from England—close to a great republic, which was certainly not unwilling to incorporate the Canadian provinces with their States. The experiment was tried of giving Canada Home Rule. It has not disintegrated the empire. Canada had two provinces differing in race, in religion, in language, and in law. Lower Canada contained a great French population hostile to England, alienated from her by the memories of recent conquest, and Catholic in their religion. Upper Canada was chiefly peopled by English Protestant settlers—by Puritans from Scotland, and Irish Orangemen from the Bann. Home Rule was granted to Canada. The two provinces were united under one parliament—with all these elements of distraction, and disaffection, and danger—is the empire disintegrated? Has Canada flung herself into the arms of the United States? Is Canada torn by domestic dissensions? Canada, instead of being as it was in 1839, the most disaffected and rebellious dependency of Britain is now the most attached to English connexion, the most loyal in its allegiance to the British Crown. Provinces that seemed arrayed against each other in hopeless antagonism and discord, are now united together. With the differences, and the passions, and the party strifes that agitate all constitutional governments—the French Catholics of Lower Canada, and the English Puritans, and the Irish Orangemen of Upper Canada, meet in one parliament to serve the interests of that common country, attachment to which is no longer at variance with a true allegiance to the British crown.

If these were the results of giving a domestic parliament to Canada, what reason have we to doubt that similar results would follow it in Ireland? If Canadian Home Rule is no "disintegration" of the empire, why is Irish Home Rule? If the one has strengthened the integrity of the empire, why should not the other do so, too?

I have said that our proposal can be carried out without any change in the imperial parliament. The Irish and the British members would take their seats exactly as they do now. There would not even be a necessity for a dissolution, and when a dissolution did occur all the members would be returned exactly as they are now. I anticipate the objection which I know is suggesting itself to your minds, that Ireland has not her fair share of representation in the imperial parliament. There is, no doubt, that in the arrangement of the Union Ireland was defrauded of her just proportions of members. Mr. O'Connell unanswerably shewed that upon a mean of population and revenue Ireland ought to have had 170 members. If population alone were considered, he calculated that relatively to England we were entitled to 291. But, Sir, this injustice no longer exists. It is the only grievance of the Union, which the operations of the Union has itself redressed, but it has redressed it, not by increase of members, but by diminishing our resources and our population. If the 658 members were apportioned to population according to that which seems the rule of modern politics, Ireland would be entitled to 112 members and a fraction of one. We return at present 103 members. If our vacant seats were filled up we would have 105. Even if we fail in obtaining the additional members to which our population entitle us, even in the present parliament, and under present arrangements—the deficiency is not a very vital one. It seems hardly credible that within seventy years, the period of the life of man, the Union could have so altered the place of Ireland in the imperial confederation, that while in 1800 our relative population would have entitled us certainly to more than 200 members, in 1871 we could only claim 112. I am afraid that in the two years which have elapsed since 1871, our claim is reduced to 110. Yet incredible as this may seem, it is strictly and literally true. In 1800 the population of the whole United Kingdom did not exceed fifteen millions, of which Ireland was estimated to have five. In 1871 it was 31,600,000, of which Ireland had 5,400,000. A few years more of the Union and England will have a pretext for insisting that our number of members shall be reduced to the number to which our diminished proportion of population will entitle us. I could not adduce a more damning evidence against the Union—a more decisive proof that we have reached the point at which the process of national downfall should be stayed.

The imperial parliament may, therefore, continue without any change in its constitution. Whenever I have spoken with Englishmen either individually or in public assemblies, I have found the advantage of being able to say to them "our plan disturbs nothing—we leave your imperial parliament exactly as it is. Ireland shall still send her 105 members to take part in the imperial councils. The only change will be that you will free the imperial parliament from that weight of Irish legislation which impedes its proper business, and which it is wholly incapable of conducting with honour to you or with advantage to us." I believe this is a plain, practical and business-like proposal which commends itself to the common sense of practical men, and I earnestly advise you in any proposal that is made to avoid all unnecessary change in existing arrangements.

I know, Sir, that I may be told that this is not meeting the whole

question—that federalism involves the establishment of separate parliaments for England and Scotland. As to Scotland it is entirely a question for themselves. It is for Scotchmen, and Scotchmen only to say how far the parliament at Westminster secures for them good legislation, and an administration of Scottish affairs in accordance with the sentiments and feelings of the Scottish people. But, as between England and Ireland, or rather Great Britain and Ireland, I will remind the Conference that before the Union the British, or as I will call it, the English parliament was in reality the imperial parliament, controlling all imperial concerns. That parliament remained, receiving the addition of 100 Irish members who took their seats in the old assembly. If I am asked, do I wish Irish members to take any part in the management of English affairs? for the sake of Ireland, I say emphatically—No! But to exclude them from this requires no violent disturbance of the whole parliamentary system. It would be very easy to hold two sessions of the parliament in Westminster in each year, to one of which Irish members might be summoned, and in which alone imperial measures might be discussed. I will not be drawn into a premature discussion of details, but in such a moulding of parliamentary arrangements there would be nothing inconsistent with the principles—nothing irreconcilable even with the forms of the constitution. The absence of Irish members from the session in which English matters could be disposed of would be an improvement, and, I cannot help thinking, a relief. Their presence when imperial matters were submitted would leave the parliament for all imperial purposes exactly the same as it is now.

But as our proposal requires no disturbance of the character or form of the imperial or the English parliament, so it involves no interference with any principle of the constitution. We propose the old constitution of King, Lords, and Commons for Ireland. We take things as we find them—we transfer to Ireland the constitution as it is—we restore our old parliamentary system, modified by the reforms and changes which the progress of opinion, the advance of society, and the course of events have made in that system within the last seventy years. But here we take our stand. If further changes are necessary they must be effected in Ireland, as in England, by public opinion, acting through those parliamentary institutions which are sure, in time, to work out the full growth of the national sentiment and life. To make the restoration of self-government to our country the opportunity of insisting on any changes in the existing order of things would be to enter in a battle for constitutions, not a struggle for national rights—to create at once dissensions and differences—dividing us by our political opinions or our political theories. We cannot, indeed, restore our old constitution without adapting to it the changes that time has made in its details; but it is only by claiming for Ireland the parliamentary system as it is, with its existing orders, its existing franchises, and its existing powers that we can make our proposal for self-government a united national demand.

If for no other reason we must include in our proposal the restoration to Ireland of the House of Lords. Men may have objections to an hereditary chamber; but this is not the time or the occasion for urging

them. We must have a House of Lords, because it is an essential part of the parliamentary system of the United Kingdom as it exists. Those who desire a change in that system will have just the same opportunity of influencing public opinion in favour of their own views as they have now. I say for myself that I do not share their objections. I believe, with Mr. Duffy, that we would make a fatal mistake if we constituted an Irish parliament without a House of Lords. I will not, perhaps, say with him that our parliament would be as inefficient as a pair of scissors of which one half was taken away. But I am sure that by excluding the element of an hereditary peerage we would lower our parliament to the rank of a colonial assembly—we would place it at a disadvantage beside the English assembly. When England determines on getting rid of an ancient House of Peers, it will be time enough for Ireland to think of doing so too.

Let me remind the Conference that nothing could be more explicit than the declarations of Mr. O'Connell and the repeal association upon this subject of retaining the House of Peers. He constantly referred to it as a security against rash or violent measures. I remember well the use he made of it in a discussion which, to me, at least, is a memorable one. But this did not rest on any individual declarations. On the 2nd of August, 1843, in the very height of the power of the repeal agitation, the repeal association, on the motion of Mr. O'Connell, adopted a plan for reassembling the Irish parliament. It was drawn, of course, by his own hand; but from that declaration unanimously adopted by the repeal association, I quote the following passage:

"The people of Ireland acknowledge and will maintain and preserve for ever the privileges, hereditary and personal, of the Peers of Ireland, together with the legislative and judicial authority of the Irish House of Lords, and the exercise of the prerogative in augmenting and limiting the peerage, as same did exist of right before the year 1800."

This was the pledge of the repeal association—"The people of Ireland will maintain for ever the privileges of the Peers of Ireland." I ask this Conference for no such pledge. I ask you to accept the House of Peers with all its rights and privileges, as an institution of the country, subject like all human institutions to changes and chances, which no human wisdom can foresee—but possessing all the elements of stability which can surround any political institution. Of course, the limit which the act of Union has set upon the prerogative of creating peers would be repealed, and her Majesty would have the power of "augmenting the peerage," as in the words of O'Connell, "that prerogative did of right exist before 1800." Additions would from time to time be made in the peerage in Ireland as in England, at the pleasure of her Majesty, under the advice of her responsible ministers. It may be that the circumstances of Ireland and the Irish peerage might require regulations as to the right of sitting in the Irish house of peers still constituted upon the principles of our old constitution. I believe that in a House of Lords so constituted, you would find protection against rash and hasty measures; you would find a barrier against unjust measures but I believe that in Ireland, as in England, the House of Lords would always yield to the deliberative and abiding opinion of the nation. In

this I abide by old traditions—old traditions which have their place in the hearts of the people. I abide by them when they lead in the direction of popular power. I use them equally when they become an element of conservative strength. I am sure we would act most unwisely if in reframing a state we throw away the great element of powers of government which these old traditions give; and in 1873, I trust "The Queen, Lords, and Commons of Ireland," will be as familiar words as ninety years ago "The King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland," were familiar words with Charlemont and Grattan, with the Irish parliament and the Irish Volunteers.

I have, I think, completed my statement of the plan of a federal arrangement, which I ask you to propose for the adoption of the Irish nation, and acceptance by the English parliament and people. I have not presented to you an act of parliament embracing all the minute details by which this plan can be carried out. This would be to give our opponents an opportunity of turning away attention from the great question of our demand for self-government to a cavil at some minute provision. Details must be settled in an arrangement and discussion to which others beside ourselves must be parties. I wish the time was come, it may not be far off, when a few men representing Ireland, would meet in conference with English ministers to discuss the details by which we could carry fairly and honestly into effect the principles upon which all had agreed. But I have clearly and distinctly stated the principles upon which we wish to see our right of self-government restored. The resolutions I submit to you, in more concise form—but with equal—perhaps because they are concise, with more clearness and distinctness declare those principles. Pass these resolutions, and there is no room for any one to cavil or mistake. We do not seek separation—we do not disturb a single principle of the constitution—we contemplate no revolution. We propose a union between England and Ireland to replace the disunion of the last seventy years. We offer an adjustment of the relations between the countries which will settle the quarrel of centuries—upon terms safe and honourable to both—an adjustment which meets all the requirements which O'Connell declared essential in a plan of federalism which would command his assent. It does more, far more, for Ireland than simple repeal, and in doing so it gives far better security for the connection between the countries; and while it confers on Ireland liberty and self-government, it adds at the same time to the power, to the strength, and the stability of the empire at large.

In stating that plan I have, I think, said all that is necessary to say upon the principal resolutions which will be submitted to you. There is only one to which I must specially advert, that which declares our readiness to insert in the federal constitution guarantees against any disturbance of the present settlement of property, or any establishment of a religious ascendancy. As to the first, "The settlement of property" is a phrase familiar to all who are acquainted with the Irish Statute Book. It has reference to the Act passed in the reign of Charles II. confirming the titles of the forfeited estates. Immediately before that statute there had been a great and a very violent

transfer of property from the old Catholic proprietors to the Protestant adventurers who fought under Cromwell. This was, in fact, the Cromwellian settlement of Ireland—a settlement which is the origin of the title to a large portion of the landed property in Ireland. Something of the same kind, but to a more limited extent, occurred in the reign of William III. After the revolution the new proprietors had an apprehension, perhaps not an unnatural one, that if ever the Catholics obtained power, these forfeitures would be reversed. They had, in fact, been so by the Catholic parliament of King James. With every relaxation of the laws against Catholics, with every concession that admitted them to civil rights, an oath was demanded of them that they would not interfere with "the settlement of property now existing by law." That oath was continued until the last few years; and there are gentlemen in this room who have taken it as their title to be members of a corporation. Two hundred years have passed away since those confiscations. Property has changed hands. Catholic gentlemen are themselves the proprietors of the forfeited estates, and it is almost childish to talk of protecting "the Act of Settlement and Explanation." But prejudices remain long after the cause that excited them has passed away, and if there be a person in Ireland who fears that an Irish parliament would pass, with the assent of the House of Lords and the Sovereign, an act interfering, on any pretence, with the title to his estate, I see no objection to the insertion of such a guarantee.

As to religious ascendancy: I believe honestly that the very men who would resist anything in the way of religious ascendency—who would be most interested in doing so—would be the Roman Catholic laity. I would go further, and speaking here in the presence of many Catholic clergymen, I would say that Rome rule, as applied to the temporal affairs of Ireland, would be as strongly resisted as the interference of England herself.

But unquestionably this is a subject upon which we have had to encounter Protestant prejudices, existing, and honestly existing, to a considerable extent. There are, indeed, men in whom this cry about Rome rule and religious ascendancy represents only an unreasoning and unmeaning bigotry, or more frequently that blind hatred and distrust of the people which pervade too many in Ireland—a hatred and distrust, let me say it, which unhappily exists in other than Protestant breasts. Edmund Burke spoke of Protestants in Ireland in his day, who had such a love of power that if they had not a right to oppress the Catholics by being Protestants, they would turn Catholic if it would give them the power of oppressing Protestants. Canning, in a later day, gave an Irish definition of a good Protestant, as "a man who damned the papists and never went to church;" and, in our own day, there are zealous Protestants who atone for the neglect of all other religious observances by occasionally shouting, "To hell with the Pope." With these men we do not condescend to reason. No reasoning can reach the evil passions which are the only things their apprehensions represent.

But it is vain to deny that there are honest and sincere, ay, and right-minded Protestants who are afraid that Home Rule in Ireland would lead to Roman Catholic ascendancy. With these men and their feelings

we ought to deal tenderly. I know well what allowances ought to be made for prejudices such as these. To such men I say, our Catholic countrymen have no such feeling and no such intentions. This is a matter of evidence. On whose testimony will you rely?—on whose judgment is reliance to be placed? On that of men like you who have kept apart from your Catholic countrymen, or upon that of men like myself, who have gone among them as friends, who have been with them in the hours of confidential intercourse, when no man can be a hypocrite to his friend? Will you, my Protestant countrymen, set your prejudices as testimony against our knowledge? For myself I have known the inner life—I have been in the domestic circles of Catholics in hours of social intercourse, on which most assuredly the presence of a Protestant placed no restraint. There are Catholic homes—there are firesides of Catholic priests, to which I would be as welcome as if I knelt at the same altar with the master of the house; and I say to the Protestant who fears oppression from his Catholic countrymen, I say to him, "with a care for Protestant liberty as jealous as your own—with a knowledge of our Catholic countrymen which you have not, I would with implicit confidence trust to their honour and their truth, the liberties of Protestantism —my own liberty, and life." If any power on earth attempted persecution on account of religion, I know that to the Catholics of Ireland I might appeal to defend me, with an assurance that in them I would find my defenders and my friends. But, Sir, if there be men who will not believe us, (the testimony I bear will be borne by every Protestant who has thrown himself on the Catholic people as I have done;) if they will be frightened by the memories of nursery tales—and they are but nursery tales that frighten them—then I say to them, frame any guarantee you can devise—we will make it, as the authors of American independence did, an essential part of our federal constitution, and I venture to say there is not an Irish Roman Catholic who will object to your most stringent guarantee, however he may say and feel that it shows distrust on your part, where he knows in his conscience there is no occasion for distrust. It is in this spirit, and with these feelings that I propose to you the resolution which offers this guarantee.

But I may be told these guarantees and compacts are useless. It rests in the discretion of a supreme parliament to disregard them. No guarantee could be more solemn than that contained in the Act of Union for the maintenance of the Protestant Church. This is true where a compact is made with an extinguished body, as the compact of the Union was made with the Irish parliament to which the Union put an end. A legislative compact is an absurdity where there is no one either to enforce or to release it. I say to release it, for attempts irrevocably to bind men in future ages are vain. A guarantee under a federal system is a wholly different thing. It is a contract between the local and the imperial powers. It might indeed be released by the imperial power, but until it is so the whole imperial power is pledged to its observance. Were such a stipulation inserted in the federal constitution it never could be disregarded without the consent of the other party to the contract, the imperial parliament. In the necessity of that assent there would be just the same security against oppressive legislation as there is now.

I know that there are persons who may be disappointed that in our resolutions there is no declaration of the plan of parliamentary action which ought to be adopted. The omission has been deliberate. I believe it would be rash and premature at this moment to pledge ourselves to anything. I have seen different plans proposed at different times, and I would be just as unwilling to bind myself to adopt any one of them as I would be to bind myself not to do so. I believe it is impossible to foresee the circumstances that may arise and which might justify any one of these plans. And, more, I am sure of this—that if we were to send at the next election—much more, a year, or probably some months before it—men pledged to a particular line of action—it might be a very strong one—and they afterwards took that line of action, and appeared to take it not from the circumstances of the time forcing it upon them as the right and best to take, but from obedience to some pledge given at some distant date, all moral authority would be taken from their conduct, and its whole power would be lost to the world and the empire at large. Select honest men as your representatives—select men whom you can trust—and send them into parliament and leave it to them to act when the time comes as their conscience and duty to their country tell them; and have, outside of parliament, as I hope you will have after to-day, a strong and influential national organization supporting them if right, and controlling and rebuking them if wrong. I am sure that this Conference could commit no greater mistake than that of attempting to anticipate the course of events. The experience of the last three years abundantly confirms me in this. We have succeeded in bringing this cause to its present point. I believe that success is mainly owing to one rule which has guided us in times of weakness and difficulty—we never have gone beyond our depth—we kept ourselves to the business of the day, and made each step secure before we took the next—and I am sure we will now take the wise course if we leave all these questions open for future consideration, without pledging ourselves to anything, determining them when the exigency arises, with force and authority, because they will then appear to be more real and spontaneous acts. By thus acting we will far better consult for the dignity and power of our movement, than if we were to demand pledges that, after all, imply doubts, and discuss and arrange an elaborate programme, which, after all, would only proclaim the consciousness in our own hearts of some weakness in our cause.

I believe, Sir, I have now fulfilled the duty I have undertaken by placing before the Conference, I fear at far too great length, all the subjects that throw light on the resolutions I submit to you. You, Sir, have spoken of that Home Government Association which to-day is about to surrender up its trust. Of that association you and I were among the earliest members. You presided at its first public meeting as you do over this great national assembly to-day. I watched over its origin as I mark to-day its final and its most splendid triumph. At the small and private meeting at which it commenced we came to the conclusion that we ought to propose federalism to the Irish people as the ground upon which Irish nationality should take its stand. It is not easy now in the hour of our triumph to recall all the difficulties

that then seemed to confront us, or all that we have met with in our course. We had to revive an almost forgotten agitation, and revive it in a novel form. We had to encounter on the part of a large class of the people a reluctance ever again to return to those constitutional efforts in which they had been so often disappointed and betrayed. We had to encounter the distrusts, the fears, the divisions which inevitably followed an unsuccessful attempt at revolution and revolt. We had to deal with the alarms of the upper ranks which shrank from every popular movement, and with the sullen discontent of the great masses of the people. We had—I do not like to say to educate—it has become in politics an evil and a tainted word—we had to inform the people of what were the principles of federalism as it differed from repeal. It took time to do all this, and in doing it we were encountered by prejudices, and we had the opposition of government, always ready to take every advantage of Irish prejudices and by every wily artifice to foster Irish dissensions, to damage the national cause. What did we do? What was the result of our efforts? Let this requisition give the answer. Home Rule has become a household word dear to every Irish heart and familiar at every Irish fireside. We have made that question be discussed in every newspaper in the civilised world, and we have actually extorted from the leading organs of English opinion the admission that if Ireland wishes to have Home Rule it is only for England to consider how it can best be conceded. Never did cause advance with such marvellous rapidity as has the cause of Home Rule within the last three years; and now, when I feel that I am in some sense representing that association on the eve of its merging into a greater and, I trust, a better organization—in some sense representing the men who originated and have for so far guided this movement, I may venture to say that an equal advance within the next three years will carry us to success. Success is not so remote from our present position as our present position is from the standpoint of three years ago.

It only remains for me formally to submit these resolutions for your consideration. The resolution with which I will conclude will be seconded by my valued friend, the member for the city of Cork. Although I have thought it right to explain all the resolutious I will only move the first—the resolution which simply affirms that self-government is essential to the peace and prosperity of Ireland. Where shall we turn for proof of that declaration? Where shall we turn and not find it? Is there Peace in the Coercion Acts?—tranquillity in the miserable system of terrorism and repression, by which a forced order, that is in itself the highest species of disorder is maintained. Where can we turn for the evidence of the prosperity resulting from the act of union? Is it the prosperity that has originated in the number of emigrants that each year leave the country? Is its growth, as English viceroys tell us, to be traced in the depopulated farms and desolated homes of the Irish people? I do not argue this question. There is no need. Not long ago the time was when Ireland was given up to repose. What repose was it? Mr. Gladstone called it the repose that was created by the conqueror—the military conqueror. Five years ago he described the tranquillity which his opponents boasted they had created as the peace of a

military despot, who "having trampled all liberty under foot with an armed force, then boasted that order at last existed."

Under our present system of government there can be no real peace in Ireland. Corruption and coercion may produce a forced and unreal stillness. True tranquillity can only spring from the contentment of the people. We never will have that contentment in the absence of free institutions—of that national parliament which is the greatest and best of free institutions, which alone can give life or reality to all others. Ten years ago English statesmen said that Ireland was at rest. May I read for the Conference a passage, which I well remember reading at the time—a Conservative testimony to the character of that stillness which was called rest. I have a melancholy interest in reading it, for I believe this eloquent and truthful description of the condition of Ireland has been generally attributed to the pen of one of my early college friends—one subsequently raised by a Conservative government to a high judicial station, a station which he adorned, and from which an early death too soon removed him.

"Nearly half a century has elasped since the cry of 'Justice to Ireland' was a watchword through the land, and the voices of the men who then uttered it are silent for ever, but still it ascends like a wail above their graves! Then it was for equal rights and liberty, now the Irish nation only asks the bare permission to exist. Nothing indicates more plainly the miserable condition of Ireland than the utter apathy with which the recent attempt to get up a Reform agitation was received. Public spirit is dead, and those who are not looking for a revolution from beyond the Atlantic, sit down in hopeless apathy, despairing of any good result from attempting to reform or move that British parliament which has so often disappointed the country's expectations, and turned a deaf ear to her reiterated appeals for justice."

Is this the peace you desire for our country? A peace that is only the inaction of exhaustion and decay—an inaction that is produced by the corruption of the upper ranks, and the hopeless and sullen apathy of the masses of the people?—a peace that even at its best, means an ignoble acquiescence in the degradation of our country—a stagnation of all political and national life—a quenching of all public spirit, and an extinction of all public opinion.

It is just the peace that is created by an alien power, that, like the vampire, sucks away the life-blood of a nation, and, as it does so, like the vampire, lulls its victim to a ghastly repose. There was a time when Ireland seemed sinking to that fatal sleep. Her unquiet rest was rudely broken. It was broken by an insurrection that startled Ireland into life, and startled England into a knowledge of our true position. It brought home to every one the knowledge and the conviction that the old spirit of the country was inextinguishable, and that the struggle of the national heart was an undying one.

Mr. Gladstone said that fenianism taught him the intensity of Irish disaffection. It taught me more and better things. It taught me the depth, the breadth, the sincerity of that love of fatherland that misgovernment had tortured into disaffection, and misgovernment, driving men to despair, had exaggerated into revolt. State trials were not new to me. Twenty years before I stood near Smith O'Brien when he braved the sentence of death which the law pronounced upon him. I saw Meagher meet the same, and I then asked myself this—"Surely, the State is out of joint

—surely, all our social system is unhinged when O'Brien and Meagher are condemned by their country to a traitor's doom?" Years had passed away, and once more I stood by men who had dared the desperate enterprise of freeing their country by revolt. They were men who were run down by obloquy—they had been branded as the enemies of religion and social order. I saw them manfully bear up against all. I saw the unflinching firmness to their cause by which they testified the sincerity of their faith in that cause—their deep conviction of its righteousness and truth—I saw them meet their fate with a manly fanaticism that made them martyrs. I heard their words of devotion to their country as with firm step and unyielding heart they left the dock, and went down the dark passage that led them to the place where all hope closed upon them, and I asked myself again, "Is there no way to arrest this? Are our best and bravest spirits ever to be carried away under this system of constantly resisted oppression and constantly defeated revolt? Can we find no means by which the national quarrel that has led to all these terrible results may be set right?" I believe, in my conscience, we have found it. I believe that England has now the opportunity of adjusting the quarrel of centuries. Let me say it—I do so proudly—that I was one of those who did something in this cause. Over a torn and distracted country, a country agitated by dissension, weakened by distrust—we raised the banner on which we emblazoned the magic words, "Home Rule." We raised it with feeble hand. Tremblingly, with hesitation, almost stealthily we unfurled that banner to the breeze. But wherever the legend we had emblazoned on its folds was seen the heart of the people moved to its words, and the soul of the nation felt their power and their spell. Those words were passed from man to man along the valley and the hillside. Everywhere men, even those who had been despairing, turned to tha banner with confidence and hope. Thus far we have borne it. It i for you now to bear it on with more energy, with more strength, and with renewed vigour. We hand it over to you in this gathering of the nation. But, oh! let no unholy hands approach it. Let no one come to the help of our country,

> "Or dare to lay his hand upon the ark
> Of her magnificent and awful cause,"

who is not prepared never, never to desert that banner till it flies proudly over the portals of that "Old House at Home"—that old house which is associated with memories of great Irishmen, and has been the scene of many glorious triumphs. Even while the blaze of those glories is at this moment throwing its splendour over the memory of us all, I believe in my soul that the parliament of regenerated Ireland will achieve triumphs more glorious, more lasting, more sanctified and holy, than any by which her old parliament illumined the annals of our country and our race.

I have the honour, Sir, to move the first resolution :—

That, as the basis of the proceedings of this Conference, we declare our conviction that it is essentially necessary to the peace and prosperity of Ireland that the right of domestic legislation on all Irish affairs should be restored to our country.

Mr. RONAYNE, M.P., seconded the resolution. He said—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen—I feel highly honoured by the distinction you have conferred upon me to-day—an honour I did not expect when I came up to Dublin. I did not take part in public life for the last twenty-years, and I hesitated a long time before joining the Home Rule movement. I was a simple repealer, when simple repeal was the form in which Ireland demanded the restitution of her nationality. I was a rebel in '48, and my justification for being a rebel—and my justification for the disaffection of my country against the parliament of England is, that she has taught us for centuries that it was the first duty of Irishmen to evade the laws which she enacted against us and our country, and to resist them if we could. She has taught us for centuries that the only mode of obtaining concessions from her of what was just and right was by disaffection and resistance. I have read the history of my country, and I have been led to this conclusion. I have seen that every concession made to us has been made, not voluntarily, or from a sense of justice and equity towards us, although both the jastice and the equity of these concessions have been admitted after they have been achieved. Redress has always resulted not from justice, but from agitation pushed to the verge of civil war. Now, any country that governs another in such a manner and upon such principles, is a government no people worthy of freedom can exist under, and that no people can respect. Such laws and the executors of these laws "cannot expect and do not deserve the confidence of the people." In the words of Mr. Gladstone such a government as that should never exist in this country. I have stated here the reasons why I was a rebel, and sympathised with every rebellion that has taken place in Ireland. It was not till after twenty-years' retirement from public life that my friend, Mr. Butt, did me the honour of consulting me upon the Home Rule movement. He found Ireland in the last extremity. He thought it was the moment to unite all classes and creeds, and he spoke to me upon the subject. I went into parliament at his request to aid this movement, hoping that the result would justify those who lead the people back once more to the paths of constitutional agitation. What is the state of Ireland at the present day, and after seven hundred years of connection with England? The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the taking away the liberties of the people. Repression on their part, turbulence on ours, turbulence on account of repression, repression on account of turbulence. In this description lies the whole history and aspect of the relations that have continued from first to last to exist between England and Ireland. Sir, I am for peace, I am for law, I am for order, and religion. It is in the interests of all these that I have joined the Home Rule movement. I intend to be loyal to it, and to support it to the best of my ability. I have been greatly shocked with the ignorance even of the most enlightened men in England regarding the legislation and the manner of legislation in the British parliament with respect to Ireland. Let me allude to a circumstance which will give a forcible exemplification of that ignorance. There is a distinguished ecclesiastic in England, and one who for the deep interest he feels in everything affecting the Irish people is remarkable for great ability, respected and regarded by the

Irish people beyond any other Englishman. That is Archbishop Manning. The Archbishop, only a few days since, was describing the action of the German parliament with reference to a measure of law introduced into that assembly by Bismark against the Catholics of Germany. I am not introducing this from a sectarian point of view, but to illustrate my argument. Bismark brought in a law—founded on a suspicion of their treason—against the Catholic clergy. He was taunted with not having procured the evidence of that treason, and he replied that he had no evidence, but that they should take his word for the state of things on which he based his motion. Archbishop Manning remarked in reference to this, that no such thing could take place, no such act could be done in the parliament of England, using these remarkable words:—"I say that for this reason. When the great Minister of the empire, standing up before parliament, was challenged to produce the proof of his accusation, he could produce no documents. Challenged again and again to bring proof of these allegations, he brought none but this, 'You must trust my word.' Brethren, we live under a parliamentary system in which we understand how free men speak in the light of day. No man may be accused unless good proof is brought against him, and any minister, however powerful, who should stand up here and say that you must take his mere word that a large body of your fellow-subjects are conspiring treasonably, and should bring no better proof would not be listened to. The honesty of Englishmen and the justice of free men would absolutely refuse to hear the black charge of treason brought against a body of men without proof of the fact. Nevertheless, without proof of the fact, without document, without evidence, and upon the trust of a word, that in the darkness of official knowledge, hid away somewhere in the recess of a bureau, there was proof which could not be produced, the legislature passed laws of a kind, which I will presently describe."

Now Mr. Butt is my witness that the liberties of the Irish people were suspended in the last parliament under exactly similar circumstances. Yet the Marquis of Hartington came down to the house to move his Coercion Bill. He gave no proofs of the existence of crime in this country. But he stated that he had letters from stipendiary magistrates and others. "When challenged again and again to bring proofs of his allegations, he brought none, but said you must take my word for it." The very fact that one of the most enlightened men in England, who had watched Irish legislation and Irish affairs with sentiment and feeling, more than were displayed by any other man in England, should yet show himself so utterly ignorant of the real state of the country, disclosed a condition of things which furnished the very strongest arguments for the movement in which we are embarked. After the manner in which that bill was carried, and no matter how the laws might affect us, or how they may be carried out under a Viceroy who is the representative of a party, the feeling of every man present must be, that the people of Ireland are treated with contempt and disrespect in the Engish parliament, and that they are unable to secure the assertion of their rights in that assembly. We have no party there to represent us—no press to report us. Our arguments never reach the English people—they are not listened to by

the representatives nor reported by the Press of England. That is not the way to treat us. I have no quarrel with the English people; their sins against Ireland are sins of ignorance, not of intention. Our quarrel is with the government, and against the system which has prevailed ever since England claimed possession of this country. The measure of Mr. Butt will solve the difficulties of the situation. I think we will maintain what is the sentiment of the Irish people—what they contended for with England when England and Ireland were Catholic, as well as when England and Ireland were Protestant and Catholic—that is the nationality of Ireland. And I see no way but that proposed by Mr. Butt, by which this great end can be obtained, consistently with the maintenance of friendly relations between the two countries.

The resolution was then put, and passed by acclamation.

Mr. J. MARTIN, M.P., proposed the next resolution as follows :—

II.—That, solemnly re-asserting the inalienable right of the Irish people to self-government, we declare that the time, in our opinion, has come when a combined and energetic effort should be made to obtain the restoration of that right.

He said:—I am going to support that resolution, which I have read, and I am going to support the whole series of resolutions. But, Mr. Chairman I owe it to my own political reputation—small as it is—to say frankly in this important and representative assembly of my countrymen, that, if my individual opinion were to be followed, my individual opinion would be that of a simple Repealer. I consider that simple repeal, in the present altered circumstances of this country, and of the relations of the two countries, would obtain for us all that we require. But I give my assent heartily and thoroughly to the plan that has been put forward, because, in the first place, that scheme, in my opinion, has already obtained the assent of the great mass of the Catholic people of Ireland; because I believe that it will obtain the assent of the great majority of the Protestant people of the country; and because I am very hopeful that the combined people of Ireland—Catholic and Protestant—will prove able to persuade the English people and their parliament to grant us this measure of home government that we demand under the name of Home Rule; because I believe that this measure of home government—this new arrangement of the relations between the two countries, will operate sufficiently for the interests—for all the interests of the Irish people; because I think, if carried into effect according to the principles enunciated in these resolutions, it will be honourable to the Irish nation; it will be consistent with the dignity of the Irish nation, and it will be safe for all its interests; and also, because, as to so much of the rights and prerogatives of the Irish nation as are by this scheme of Home Rule to be left under the jurisdiction of an imperial parliament, in which we shall be represented; I consider that those are only the same rights and attributes that, under the old system, were practically left together to the control of the English parliament, and the English Privy Council and Ministry.

I have said already, and I will venture to say again, while I most ardently desire that we should be connected with England by the Crown—by the Sovereign of England, ruling as a constitutional Sovereign in Ireland, as he or she does in England, having her constitutional

authority limited and exercised in Ireland as it is in England—while I desire that that connection should be maintained and established, because it would save us from revolution and all the perils of revolution, and because it is that to which, from our traditions and our education, we are accustomed; and while I desire that connection to be maintained, I say, the less of any other political connection that we should have with the English people the better I should be pleased. I say that frankly, as my individual sentiment, but I repeat that I loyally and cordially accept this scheme of Home Rule as being a scheme that is already accepted by the majority of the Irish Catholic population, and that I confidently expect will be assented to by the Protestant population as well, and because I believe we have the means in our own power, if we choose to exert them, of obtaining this great political change peacefully, without war or revolution.

Before I sit down I will make a remark on the 8th of these resolutions. I confess that it was with some hesitation that I gave my assent to this resolution. It is a resolution by which we consent to empower the imperial parliament to interfere in certain important concerns of the internal affairs of Ireland, requiring us, Irish, to bind ourselves that we shall not attempt to disturb the titles to landed property that have been established by the Revolution of 1688, and that we shall not attempt to establish religious ascendancy in Ireland. I confess that it struck me as somewhat of a lowering of our national dignity, that we Irish should volunteer to assent to such a restriction of our own sovereign rights, when, as we know perfectly well, the English people have not established religious equality in their own country. They have religious ascendancy there, and that they will have as long as they please. As to the titles to land, I consider it as practicable, and as likely to be attempted, to disturb the existing titles to property in Ireland as that the titles to property in England that were established by the Norman Conquest would be attempted to be disturbed. But I assent to this resolution because it seems to be required by a great number of my Protestant fellow-countrymen—because it is expected that our fellow-countrymen will have all their fears removed when such a guarantee as this is offered them—a guarantee the strength of which they cannot doubt, seeing that the whole power of England, the whole power of the English empire, will be arrayed against Ireland if Ireland attempts to violate it, and because I know, and feel in my heart and conscience, that there is not a Catholic (if there is, I never have met the man) who desires anything more for his own Church but equality and liberty. After this explanation of a personal kind, and referring to the speech of my friend, Mr. Butt, for the general reasons which have led me to approve of this scheme, I formally propose the second resolution.

R. P. BLENNERHASSETT, M.P. (County Kerry), said he would content himself with formally seconding the resolution. It seemed to him that the Conference had such great and arduous labours before it that it was by no means desirable that their time should be occupied in discussing a resolution on which, he believed, they were unanimously agreed.

O'CONNOR POWER (Tuam), said—I am anxious to avail myself of

the opportunity afforded me to identify myself thus publicly with the principle of self-government for Ireland. It was fit, proper, and just, at this great meeting of Irishmen, that Mr. Martin should deal generally with the series of resolutions submitted, as the Irish people all over the globe are anxious to know his views on this great question, and to hear the clear and unmistakable declaration he has made that he is heart and soul in the movement for establishing a Federal Irish Parliament. It must give the people confidence in this movement when a man like Mr. Martin identifies himself with it, for, as long as one spark of patriotism animates the Irish heart, and one noble inspiration remains prompting the Irish soul, admiration of heroic self-sacrifice to the name of John Martin will live in their hearts. It appears to me that there are some considerations which have been overlooked by the mover and seconder of the resolution, that it would be well for us to call attention to before the resolution is put from the chair. The resolution re-asserts our ancient right, and declares that the time has come for united action, without which that ancient right cannot be successfully asserted. When I read the first part of the resolution, I was forcibly reminded of the last great period of Irish history, when Irish nationalists, conscious of their own dignity, and of the position which was due to their country, asserted the same right which we are assembled here to assert. I think it is worth our while to contrast the circumstances under which Grattan, in 1782, asserted the inherent right of the Irish people to legislative independence, and those under which the Irish leader of the present day, Mr. Butt, comes forward to assert the same right. Remember, gentlemen, when Grattan, on the floor of the Irish House of Commons, moved the Declaration of Rights, he used these very important words, "This is the birthright which we claim for our countrymen, and which we will not yield but with our lives." Why was this declaration made? Simply because Grattan knew he could rely upon the bayonets of the Irish Volunteers. The Irish people are now asserting similar rights, without any bayonets to enforce them, and we will be curious to see in what manner the English nation will receive the demand. It strikes me forcibly that if English legislators cannot be convinced of the necessity of granting this measure, and if the stern voice of justice, raised by the majority of Irish members which we shall send to the English parliament, should be drowned in the clamours of bigotry, and if the English Government should refuse to concede the demand now made without the bayonets of the Volunteers, the Irish people will conclude—and it is the only logical conclusion—that, while nothing can be expected from England through a sense of justice, a great deal can be wrung from her fears. I submit that it is not for the interests of the permanent union of these countries that such an idea should again take root in the Irish mind, and I believe that if the hopes of conciliation which the eloquence of Isaac Butt has raised should be disappointed by English bigotry, I believe it will not be in the power of any man, English or Irish, to stem the torrent of Irish indignation, or prevent the Irish people from taking the very first opportunity that may present itself to assert their rights. I regret the absence of the Irish aristocracy at the Conference to-day. I venture to think that if they would closely examine this question, they would find

that there were considerations connected with it which should induce them to take their stand in favour of the popular cause, in view of the eventualities which might arise if they attempted to oppose the advance of Irish freedom. We know there is another party to the discussion of this great question which it would be a great oversight on the part of the representatives of Irish Nationality assembled here to-day to overlook, and that is the Irish Americans. Five or six millions of the Irish people, who were driven from their homes by aristocratic tyranny, combined with foreign oppression, are anxiously looking across the wide waste of waters at the progress of the Home Rule movement. "They are men of peace," said Mr. Maguire, and he went among them. "They are men of high character," said Mr. Maguire, and he took great pains to inform himself upon the subject; they are men in whom the social virtues, so characteristic of the Irish people, have been developed to the highest possible degree. They are men who, out of the savings of their hard industry in America, have sent millions of pounds sterling to their famished relatives in Ireland; and it is a subject worthy of the consideration of English legislators how they can conciliate the Irish nation in America that is looking so anxiously across the Atlantic to see how this great question will be solved. Therefore, I submit that it is the interest of the Irish aristocracy, on the one hand, and the English people, on the other, to recognise the justice of these demands; that it is the interest of the former to take their natural place at the head of the Irish people and lead them to victory in the glorious cause; and of the latter to concede that our demand is just and right, before the Irish American nation might be tempted to take the adjustment of Ireland into its own hands. And we have a very important reason for asserting this inalienable right of our country to a separate parliament. Mr. Butt glanced at it in reading the declaration of Lord Clare, when he said that he could bring forward a large amount of historical argument to justify the position he assumed. I want no argument from history. When I come to your city, and proceed to examine its architectural beauties, from the old Parliament House which, as Meagher said, lends an Italian glory to the metropolis, to the stately edifices which were once the abodes of Irish gentlemen, and ask when was the time that saw the birth of those noble monuments of Irish genius, Irish enterprise, and Irish industry, I will be told it was when Ireland possessed an independent parliament, and when she had the armed manhood of the Volunteers to guard her. I will conclude with expressing the hope that, as the lyre of Moore sounded the watchword of the national party, that watchword will be taken up by the Irish heart here to-day, and by the Irish race all over the globe :—

> "Erin, thy silent tear ne'er shall cease,
> Erin, thy languid smile ne'er shall increase
> Till, like the rainbow's light,
> Thy various tints unite
> And form, in Heaven's sight,
> One arch of peace."

NICHOLAS D. MURPHY, M.P.—I very much regret that circumstances will not permit me to have an opportunity of hearing the various speeches that will be made upon this important subject, because I

have to attend a public manifestation in my native city to-morrow morning, arising out of circumstances there. I, therefore, trust I will be excused if I prematurely intrude myself upon the deliberations of this meeting. I attend here this day to act with you in common for the purposes for which we are now assembled—namely, to reconstruct our native parliament and our native government here; and as we are all met with the same object, it will be necessary to hear whatever views may be expressed upon the subject, however divergent some of them may appear to be as regards plans. It appears to me that we are met here for practical purposes—for the purpose of business—and, therefore, in referring to the past history of Ireland, not merely to ring the changes upon the confessed wrongs which this country has suffered at the hand of England, but to endeavour to ascertain, by the light of history, the contrast which exists at the present time in the social and constitutional position of Ireland, and that which she held during the years of independence. For I believe it will on such consideration be apparent that although from the date of the Act of Legislative Union down to this moment, the desire for the restoration or, at all events, for the establishment of a domestic legislature for domestic affairs, never ceased to occupy the Irish mind, yet the political and social anomalies then in existence, many of which, however, have since been happily and some but lately extinguished, rendered the success of what we now are seeking for not alone practically impossible, but were the principal if not the direct causes which led to the rebellion of 1798, the abrogation of the constitution of 1782, and the exclusion of the bulk of the Irish people from the political benefits of the constitution itself during the brief period of its existence. Mr. Butt, in his magnificent speech, has referred to this, as, indeed, to almost every branch of the subject; but you will bear with me if I repeat some portion of the topics which he has entered upon. It is asked why the Irish people should ask for restoration of their domestic parliament when they had one already, and that parliament had failed? That is a question that was often thrown in our teeth. But, let me ask, what was the constitution of the parliament of 1782? How were the bulk of the people situated with regard to the benefits of the constitution? That constitution was one which was in the possession of one dominant and governing class, and that class divided into two antagonistic sections, united in one point—namely, the refusal to the bulk of the Irish people of all constitutional privileges. Could it be possible, even if the Union never had been carried, that there could be, with such a parliament, unreformed as it was, constituted as it was, peace and prosperity existing in the country? Parliamentary reform was refused—relief to Roman Catholics was refused. In one of the first meetings of the Volunteers they passed resolutions denying the Catholic claims. Parliament refused parliamentary reform, and hence out of that arose the United Irishmen, with Wolfe Tone at their head. As to approaching the question of tithes and church-rates, much less dreaming of the abolition of the political ascendancy and status of the Established Church, no such thing entered into the wildest imagination under the Constitution of '82. Why? Because there was no reform, because the people were not represented. That being the case, what

was the condition in which the British ministry found Ireland when they passed the Union. They found in the parliament two parties in possession of it—one called the English party, and the other the Irish party. The first sided with the minister, because they thought they would get the upper hand of the other party. The other party were the most strenuous opponents of the Union, and although they would not grant Catholic Emancipation and parliamentary reform, still they sided with Grattan and other patriots—not for improving the bulk of the people, but for preserving their own hereditary power. It is, therefore, perfectly obvious that even if the opponents of the Union had been successful, and that the act had not been passed, yet the parliament of 1782, as then constituted, would not have represented the feelings, opinions, and interests of the great mass of the Irish people, and that while the great question since in the main part disposed of, remained unsettled, neither peace, contentment, nor prosperity could be hoped for in the land. Those who will refer to history, and to the writings and speeches of the day, will find that I have stated the matter correctly. There is a curious pamphlet especially, entitled, "Pro and Con," published in 1800, which I wish to mention publicly, for it contains all the arguments for and against the Legislative Union. It says—

> A review of the origin and progress of the parliamentary system of Ireland will clearly show that, as well as the system of government, it is also in itself radically vicious; that it cannot subsist in its present shape, and can only be remedied by either Reform or a Union with Great Britain. At a time like the present, when the pruning knife of Reform has been changed for the axe of demolition, so that the smallest inlet to innovation admits a torrent sufficient to destroy the fabric, which it was the design to secure, no thinking man will wish to have recourse to the former means. A union, therefore, remains as the sole remedy. The parliamentary constitution of 1782 had the same radical vice with that of James I. It did not embrace the body of the people, and its effects were to render the government of the country impracticable to the executive Minister, unless carried on by a system of corruption commensurate with the extent and power of the aristocracy.

These were the opinions of the day with regard to the parliamentary constitution of 1782. Whether the Irish parliament would have settled the question of reform or the status of the Established Church, it is unnecessary to inquire, but the fact is indisputable, that until those questions were removed out of the range of political contention, the prospect of an union or an approach to an union amongst the various classes constituting the Irish nation was utterly hopeless. Hence it was also that in the absence of such a settlement, a powerful and weighty mass of opinion amongst the Irish Liberal party subsequently stood aloof from the agitation for a domestic legislature in Mr. O'Connell's time, and even as it is now, it will require the utmost prudence and moderation, the most perfect candour, and the absence of all ambiguity, to bring together and weld in one cohesive mass the weight of social influence and educated position with the great body of the people. And now, Sir, why have I referred to that? Because, although the Irish parliament was a failure, the people of Ireland are not to blame for that. The Irish people had no representatives, but give them the parliament now, and they will test the matter. That will be an answer; but it is no answer to refuse Ireland a domestic legislature for the management

of her own affairs because from circumstances which don't prevail at present, the Irish parliament did not do what it might. So far from the parliament of '82 having failed being a reason why we should not look for a domestic legislature, it was the reason why we should, because the people now have vote by ballot and every means by which they can send the men they like to represent them, and if we had the restored constitution of '82 we would be able to work it out constitutionally. I will not trouble the meeting with regard to the fact, which is practically conceded, that the exigencies of the imperial parliament are not capable of attending to Irish affairs. No honourable member who has had any experience of the working of the English parliament can pretend to say it is capable to manage our affairs, nor has it that amount of information which is necessary for a parliament to have in dealing with local matters. Curiously enough, in my researches on this subject I came across a matter which may not be generally known. In 1800 the statesmen of the day in dealing with this question found staring them in the face the very objection which we have met here to-day to consider—namely, the incapacity of the imperial parliament to attend to Irish affairs, and the grievous wrong that would be done to the Irish people by having them relegated to Westminster instead of having them transacted in Dublin. In the Castlereagh correspondence I found a most remarkable letter from the Duke of Buckingham to Lord Castlereagh. The Duke of Buckingham was twice Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and therefore no man could have a better knowledge of the inconvenience that would be caused by the proposed union. Writing on the 26th of December, 1799, he says :—

> But a doubt, equally prominent, is that respecting your trials of contested election, which cannot with a semblance of justice be brought from the county of Donegal to Westminster. Nor do I conceive it essential to the unity of parliament that those trials should be holden in Great Britain, or even by a committee of the House of Commons, when the cry of justice and expediency is so strong the other way. I do not lean equally heavy on the appellant jurisdiction being transferred to Westminster, because evidence is never heard upon causes of appeal.

That is a very remarkable letter, for I think it admits the principle that home legislation is necessary to carry out local affairs. What does the Duke of Portland say? In the Cornwallis' papers there is a letter of his of the 24th December, '98, which he repeats in *totidem verbis* the words of the Duke of Buckingham, but he goes further and suggests a remedy which never has been carried out—some regulation of the civil bill court, and taking evidence before the assistant-barrister. I repeat again that this shows the English statesmen saw the objection to the project, but, in their fear lest any new impediment might be brought in they abandoned it. It shows the attention of the British minister was directed to what we are now complaining of, and certainly the time has now come when the people of Ireland are in a position to ask legitimately for the restoration of their constitutional independenee. We have now growing up —and let no man deny it—a great middle class, men who were the backbone of Ireland as they were of England; and will it be said that they are capable of knowing under what circumstances they are able to legislate for themselves, and how and in what manner the thing should be

done? Though abstractedly I cannot agree with the idea or definition of Federalism in the way I understand it as applicable to the relations of Ireland with Great Britain, yet, being altogether against repeal pure and simple, I wish to bring the advantages of Federalism into unison with the constitution, and to carry out the plan which Mr. Butt has formed. As I understand it, Federalism is this—"that two or more states, each being, as it were *sui juris* and competent to contract, each being in a measure independent of the other—each in the enjoyment of its own autonomy, as it is termed—deem it expedient for their mutual advantage, and with a view to their common protection, to enter into an agreement, whereby a supreme governing power, embracing the general interests of all, is constituted, and that an authority is delegated to or conferred on such supreme power, to watch over, regulate, and guide such general interests; but that the particular or internal independence of each such state is not to be interfered with, save so far as it may be necessarily subordinate to the general interests of the whole."

Well, Sir, if I am correct in this, my idea, what is the very first element or groundwork of a Federation. Why, a state of things which as regards Ireland and Great Britain, does not exist, and never since the time of legal memory has existed. In fact in order to carry out the scheme, it would be necessary to pre-suppose a state of things which is in existence, and therefore, in my opinion, the proposition is untenable. For this reason, principally, I declined to sign the requisition for this meeting, but my presence sufficiently testifies that the object in view is the same as that sought to be obtained by the form of a Federal Union. But I don't want to go into the abstract question. I agree with the objec twhich we are met to carry out, but my idea is that it can be carried out by reconstructing the Act of Union, embracing all the object which so-called Federalism can embrace, and that we should in fact have the Constitution of '82 revived, so far as regards domestic legislation. Another matter arising out of that regards the royal assent to bills. I don't think there is any objection to reviving that principle, if it was thought it could in any way facilitate the question, and on that subject I think I will quote for you the authority of one of the greatest opponents of the Union—one of our greatest constitutionalists—namely, the last Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, John Foster. He, in his speech against the Union, adverted to this very principle, namely, the absolute necessity of preserving the political connection between Ireland and England, with a view to preserve the constitutional independence of Ireland. He alluded to the Act of '82, and to the constitutional veto given to the Sovereign, and said :—

"Under that act (1782) no bill shall pass into a law in Ireland till it be returned under the great seal of Great Britain, not leaving the connection or bare junction of the two kingdoms under one Sovereign, as it is said, but making the British Minister answerable to the parliament of Britain for any law passed in Ireland injurious to the empire, or tending towards the separation of Ireland. This act does, indeed, certainly create a theoretic difference in the constitution of the two kingdoms which renders that of Ireland inferior to the other—yet it is a difference not injurious, but necessary from the situation of Ireland in the empire."

These are the words of the Right Hon. John Foster, but I do not think this meeting would be disinclined to hear the words of Mr. Butt,

who is the most prominent leader of this movement, and whom you heard address you in such a magnificent speech this day—words not spoken at a great public meeting, but emanating from the quietude of the study, and which, coming from the enlightened and experienced mind of my hon. and learned friend, will claim your most earnest attention. I think they completely support me in the position I have taken up. In his work on "Federalism," page 58, Mr. Butt says:—

"I have observed that no act of the Irish parliament became law until the royal assent had been signified under the great seal of Great Britain. If our position is to be the same, this same assent might still be required under the imperial great seal. If any one sees any security in retaining such a provision, I, for myself, would have no objection to its being retained."

I think Mr. Butt and the Speaker of the old House of Commons appear to run on all fours with regard to that. My own opinion is that, in explaining practically and fairly with regard to the English people what we are looking for—namely, the restoration of our constitutional independence—it is expedient to run in the old lines of the constitution; and if we find the great Speaker under the constitution of '82 laying it down, and Mr. Butt, the leader of this movement, taking it up, ought we not adopt it, as Curran, Grattan, and the old constitutionalists adopted it? At the same time, by the constitution of the English House of Commons, as it at present exists under the Reform Bill, with the franchise thrown open, with the power which the House has achieved in modern days—everybody knows the effect of that House upon the assent of the Sovereign. What is the assent of the Sovereign? The assent of the Sovereign is nothing more or less than this—the advice she receives from her responsible ministers through the Prime Minister. And who is the Prime Minister? He is nothing but the emanation of the will of the majority of the House of Commons. He dare not give an advice against the opinion of parliament. Therefore, I have no doubt in my own judgment that in any scheme you adopt you should adhere to the expression of opinion by Grattan with regard to the assent to bills in the Irish parliament by the Sovereign under the old *regime.* I conceive that if the same principles agreed upon and adopted by Grattan and the framers of the Constitution of 1782 for the preservation of the connection between Ireland and Great Britain be now applied to Legislation for the domestic affairs of Ireland, and that the nature and extent of those domestic affairs are properly defined, the power to make laws thereon should be vested in the Queen, Lords aud Commons of Ireland. I believe if an arrangement carried out on this principle is frankly accepted as a final arrangement by the Irish people at large—that if what, with all due respect and without the slightest intention to offend, I may venture to call mistaken patriotism ceases to preach the doctrine that this or any other arrangement of a like nature, will be accepted or considered merely as a means to an end; that no *arriere pensee* or suspicion of such shall be permitted to exist, and that the just influence of all classes, and each of them respectively according to its legitimate weight, and the undue preponderance of none, shall be proclaimed and accepted as the desired result; then, I believe, that an important and influential

portion of the community who have hitherto stood aloof and without whose cordial participation this movement cannot hope for ultimate success, will be ready to take their place and state their adhesion to it. It is useless to disguise the fact that a considerable proportion of what are termed the well-to-do and moderate classes in this country and in England have been, for the time, antagonistic to the idea of what they conceive to be meant by "Home Rule;" and I must be pardoned for saying, and I say so frankly and above board, that it is not difficult to account for their feeling. Although the programme of theHome Rule Association expressly disclaims the idea of separation from England, and although its members can point to that programme, and say they are bound by that and not by what people say, yet the fact is notorious, that from the commencement of the agitation of the subject and down to a comparatively recent period, great masses of the people at public meetings, and some prominent writers and speakers as well, gave expression to ideas which, if they meant anything, necessarily pointed to a separation from England and an unconquerable aversion to that country. I believe no men felt more annoyed at this than the guiding men, generally speaking, of the Home Rule Association itself; because they felt, as all must do, that nothing was so well calculated to do mischief and prevent sound public opinion from actively aiding the movement. However, I sincerely hope and trust that the result of this Conference and interchange of opinions may be, that a practical result will be arrived at and that it will be unmistakably shown, that while our desire is to have Irish opinion, through its representatives, empowered to frame laws for its internal affairs and interests in a native parliament, it is ready to uphold and sustain the integrity of the United Kingdom.

As regards the proposition for a simple Repeal of the Union, and the restoration of the same legislative powers, as existed prior to 1800, I, for one, cannot consent that Ireland should be deprived of her voice in imperial legislation; believing that she is entitled to share in the benefits as well as to accept the responsibilities of the empire. I therefore, now simply, ask this question. Ought there to be any difficulty, if the voice of Ireland so demands, in remitting to its own hands the legislation for, and management of its domestic affairs, and can there be any rational doubt or danger to the integrity of the united empire under an arrangement as to domestic legislation founded on the principle of 1782? What would be the result? The constitutional independence of Ireland in domestic legislation, and the firm political union of the United Kingdom. I quoted to you the words of the last Speaker of the last Irish House of Commons. Permit me, if not trespassing too much upon your patience, te quote for you a few words of the great Irishman, philosopher, and statesman, Edmund Burke. He was writing in 1795, when the principles of Republicanism and separation were abroad. He says: "Ireland constitutionally is independent—politically she never can be so. It is a struggle against nature. She must be protected, and there is no protection to be found for her, but either from France or England." Well, at the present day many may add "America." Be it so. Still it would be protection, and therefore not independence. It would be complete isolation or a separation from England, and a de-

pendence on a foreign power. Now, Sir, I have given my views, whatever they may be worth, as a contribution, in part, towards the deliberations of this important representative assembly. I have felt it my duty, although not a signatory to the requisition, to be present at, and so take part in these deliberations, and I have done so with the greater readiness, because I assume I believe that the earnest object of this Conference is to find a *modus vivendi*, and to arrive at some practical result in carrying into effect and embodying in substance a principle upon which we are all agreed.

Mr. BUTT, in replying to certain observations of Mr. Murphy, expressed indebtedness to that gentleman for having raised a discussion on the question before the Conference, for it was by full discussion that correct conclusion was secured. There was no important difference between Mr. Murphy and himself. If he understood Mr. Murphy aright, that gentleman thought it would be well to adopt a declaration that they were willing to insert in the federal constitution a provision that Irish bills should be approved of under the Great Seal of England or rather of the United Kingdom. In the tract which he published three years ago at the commencement of the movement for federalism, he stated on this subject: "If any one sees any security in retaining such a provision, I, for myself, would have no objection to its being retained." He need not point out that under the plan of a simple repeal that power must be reserved to the English Privy Council. Under a federal system, if reserved at all, it would be reserved to an imperial privy council. He retained the opinion he had formerly expressed, but he thought it would be unwise in the Conference to make any declaration on the subject. He thought the question was not one for discussion in the present assembly. He thought it was for England to put that proposition forward, and he hoped it was with the English parliament they would ere long be negotiating it. If the English prime minister were to say, "I will give you Home Rule, provided you accept the action of the Privy Council," that would be the time for considering the matter. Now, Mr. Murphy appeared to be of opinion that the Volunteers had resisted any concessions to the Roman Catholics. He (Mr. Butt) would venture to read for the Conference resolutions adopted by the Volunteers' convention which met in the church of Dungannon, on the 15th of February, 1732. They met to declare that no power on earth but the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland could make laws for Ireland—but they added to this two resolutions:—

"Resolved—(with two dissenting voices only, to this and the following resolution).

"That we hold the right of private judgment in matters of religion to be equally sacred in others as in ourselves."

"Resolved therefore,

"That as men and as Irishmen, as Christians and as Protestants we rejoice in the relaxation of the penal laws against our Roman Catholic fellow subjects, and that we conceive the measure to be fraught with the happiest consequences to the union and prosperity of the inhabitants of Ireland."

What the Irish parliament would have done if it had not been destroyed Mr. O'Connell had emphatically told them. In the debate in the Dublin

Corporation in 1843, one of the charges he brought against the Union was that it had delayed the passing of Emancipation for thirty years. These were his words:—

"The next ground on which I object to the Union is this, that it delayed the achievement of Catholic Emancipation for nearly thirty years."

"But for the Union we should have been emancipated by our Protestant fellow-countrymen long before. In 1778 they restored the Catholics to the equal enjoyment of all the property they then held, and enabled them to acquire long terms for years in lands. In 1782 the Irish Protestants restored the Catholics to the capacity of acquiring every species of freehold property, and to enjoy it equally with Protestants. In 1792 and 1793, the learned professions were, to a certain extent, opened to Catholics —the grand jury box—the magistracy—partial rank in the army—were all conceded by the Irish Protestants to their Catholic fellow-countrymen. But, greatest of all, the elective franchise was restored. Under these circumstances but for the Union, full and complete Emancipation would have been conceded before 1803."

This was the testimony of Mr. O'Connell in 1843; and let them remember that Mr. O'Connell was not speaking as they were, of matters of history, which they knew only from reading. He knew what the Irish Protestant parliament was. He had grown to manhood under its protection; for two years before the Union he was a member of the Irish Bar. While living in the personal experience of the action of that parliament, he expressed the same sentiments that he did in 1843. In 1799 Mr. O'Connell attended a public meeting of the Catholics of Dublin to protest against the Union. He (Mr. Butt) had heard him quote his own words from a report of that meeting, after an interval of more than forty years. These were the words spoken by Mr. O'Connell in 1799, when the Irish parliament was still in being:

"It is my sentiment, and I am satisfied it is the sentiment, not only of every gentleman who now hears me, but of the Catholic people of Ireland, that, if our opposition to this inglorious, insulting and hated measure of Union were to draw down upon us the revival of the penal laws, we would boldly meet a proscription and oppression which would be the testimony of our virtue, and sooner throw ourselves once more on he mercy of our Protestant brethren than give our assent to the political murder of our country. Yes, I know—I do know—that, although exclusive advantages may be ambiguously held forth to the Irish Catholic to seduce him from the sacred duty which he owes his country—I know that the Catholics of Ireland still remember that they have a country, and that they will never accept of any advantages as a sect, which would debase and destroy them as a people."

He (Mr. Butt) earnestly wished that the Protestants of Ireland would lay those words to their heart, would remember that they had a country, and resolve never to accept of any advantages, as a sect, which would degrade them as a people.

There was another point to which he would allude. He did so with the most sincere respect for Mr. Murphy. He thought that gentleman had done wrong in speaking of meetings at which "separation" had been advocated. He (Mr. Butt) knew of no such meetings. He had attended more meetings than any man here. He had spoken at meetings of advanced politicians, and he could say with truth that he had talked to these assemblies the doctrine of friendship to England, of taking a message of peace to England, and he had never encountered a sentiment of opposition to these views. Over and over again, at great popular assemblies of five, ten, or twenty thousand people, he had enunciated these sentiments of peace and friendship with England, pro-

vided only England did justice to the Irish people, and there was no occasion upon which he was not received with cheers as loud and as enthusiastic as had greeted him to-day in that room. Very recently a full conference of the societies, composing the English Home Rule Confederation—a conference largely composed of men who held what were called advanced opinions, had refused to listen to and had excluded from their combination—men who had refused to adopt the scheme of federation, as defined by the Home Rule Association. These were the sentiments of the great masses of the Irish people. They were not responsible for what any individual might say in any place. It was a monstrous injustice to the nation to mistake the maniac declaration of any man for the voice of the Irish people. He defied any advocate of separation to stand up in any popular assembly and dare to utter his doctrines without being promptly and peremptorily discountenanced. He deliberately said this, and he might go to-morrow among ten thousand of his fellow-countrymen and be received none the less enthusiastically because he had made such a declaration. Indeed, he might say, as regarded the topic his friend, Mr. Murphy, had alluded to, that it was magnifying into importance the insignificant ravings of individuals. The men who felt strongly that any alternative would be better than the continuance of things as they are, felt also that, in offering an honourable settlement, and offering it in perfect good faith, the Irish people had not abandoned the natural rights of the nation. But they had united, as one man, in a peaceful and constitutional struggle. Men who had despaired of success by any constitutional means, and thought they could only reach it by revolt, were ready to go with the Home Rule movement peaceably and constitutionally.

It might be, that there were many Irishmen who would adopt the language of Lord Plunket, and say,

"For me, I do not hesitate to declare that if the madness of the revolutionists were to tell me, you must sacrifice British connexion, I would adhere to that connexion in preference to the independence of my country. But I have as little hesitation in saying, that if the wanton ambition of a minister should assail the freedom of Ireland, and compel me to the alternative, I would fling the connexion to the winds, and clasp the independence of my country to my heart."

He (Mr. Butt) earnestly trusted and confidently believed that no such alternative would ever be presented to the heart and conscience of any Irishman. They were struggling to put an end to this for ever. Home Rule sought to reconcile the British connexion with the freedom of Ireland. That was possible. The whole Irish nation united in the effort peacefully to attain it, and not the least ardent and zealous in that effort were those who had been willing to risk their lives in despair of all hope for the peaceful succour of their country.

Mr. Butt read the following letter from Lord Ffrench :—

"Elm Park, November 18th, 1873.

"DEAR MR. BUTT,—Allow me to thank you sincerely for your very kind communication, and to express my regret that in consequence of the effects of illness I am unable to attend this Home Rule Conference, although the object is certainly in accordance with the sentiments which I conscientiously entertain. I trust that you and the other highly respected gentlemen referred to will have the kindness to accept this assurance of my regret, that, though it would be much more agreeable to my feelings

to comply with any request coming from them or from yourself, I am still unable to meet the wishes so kindly expressed on this occasion. I have no doubt that public opinion in England as well as in Ireland will be very considerably enlightened and favourably influenced by the important proceedings of this great National Conference. There is now in my opinion every reason to expect that the result of the next general election will insure success of the movement for an Irish parliament on a federal principle, which would include all the benefits which could be reasonably expected from an unqualified repeal of the statute by which the legislative union was so unjustly enacted, and at the same time afford Ireland the great advantage of being duly represented on all imperial questions. With best wishes for the successful result of this occasion, believe me, very faithfully yours,

FFRENCH."

He (Mr. Butt) added, a letter had been received from Lord Francis Conyngham, regretting that he was unable to attend the meeting. Lord Robert Montagu, who, as is now publicly known, when a member of the conservative government, had actually prepared a plan for a federal union between the two countries, had written privately to him expressing his hearty good wishes for the success of the movement.

Mr. MURPHY, M.P.—One word of explanation. Mr. Butt completely misunderstood what I said with respect to some parties at some meetings talking of separation, and thereby preventing a number of people from joining the movement. I expressly stated that so far as the Home Rule Association went there was a fundamental rule against it. I never for a moment dreamt of such a thing as that at any authorised meeting of the Association, or where there was a delegated chairman, or anything of that kind, separation was discussed, but I said that at the inception of this movement at some places the idea was thrown out, and I believe one of the good effects of this Conference will be to effectually dissipate all such insane notions.

Mr. RONAYNE, M.P.—With regard to a meeting alluded to by Mr. Murphy, a meeting, where, it is said, some dissent was expressed towards the Home Rule resolutions, I wish to state that there were on that occasion twenty thousand people assembled. The principal speakers on the platform advocating the Home Rule programme, had risked their lives for Irish nationality. There were a few amongst the people there who would not have the Home Rule resolution, not because they were opposed to it, but because they wished that Amnesty should be the only question of the day; but the twenty thousand people there would not listen to any disturbance when Home Rule was in question, and they carried the Home Rule resolution unanimously. But I would be sorry to say, as Mr. Butt has already said, that the Irish people gave up their rights on this Home Rule question. I know, Sir, they have reserved to themselves the right, if this Home Rule question is not honestly carried out by the leaders who have charge of it—if it is not received fairly and justly by the English people—if it is healed in the manner foreshadowed in the English Press and the speeches of English statesmen, they reserve to themselves the right, as Grattan did, to seek redress by other means. Referring to the 6th of George I., rendering the Irish parliament dependent on England, Grattan said, "If I had lived then I should have made a covenant with my conscience to seize the first moment of rescuing my country from the ignominy of such acts of power." Now, I am sure

that the act which not only left Ireland dependent on England, but actually annihilated the Irish parliament altogether, is a far more ignominious act, and I hope that all here, and those Irishmen whom we represent will make a covenant with their consciences if England does not do justice to us on this question "to seize the first moment of rescuing their country from the ignominy" of the act of union.

The Rev. Mr. QUAID, P.P.—There was a resolution come to at the commencement of the meeting, that no gentleman, except he had an amendment to propose, should put himself forward, and that the amendment should be put in writing. Now, gentlemen have come forward and taken up the time of the meeting not exactly with the purposes of the meeting, and alluding to matters that really have no connection with it. Nothing should be said here likely to create a sentiment of dissatisfaction, or lead to divisions, and I don't envy any gentleman who would do or say anything to promote such results. I say the people of this country have a perfect right to reserve to themselves the means by which they will gain their independence, if it be not fairly granted to them.

The chairman then submitted the resolution, which was passed unanimously.

The MAYOR of Cork said—Since I came into this room I have been asked to move the third resolution. I do so with pleasure. The resolution is in these terms—

> That, in accordance with the ancient and constitutional rights of the Irish nation, we claim the privilege of managing our own affairs by a parliament assembled in Ireland, and composed of the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons of Ireland.

This, gentlemen, is an eventful occasion. I can only say for myself that, in common with every Irishman I see here, I accept the responsibility entailed. I have come to this meeting at some personal trouble and inconvenience. It was only on Sunday night I arrived from a country that, like Ireland, is struggling for its constitutional liberties—I mean France. I left the people there much disturbed and in great commotion in reference to the future of their fair and afflicted land. Now, as to the resolution I have proposed, it would be idle for me to advert at length to it after the exhaustive treatment it has received at the hands of Mr. Butt. It is not my intention to refer to past history to show the base means by which our liberties were wrested from us. To do so would be a waste of time. I prefer taking up the subject as it would present itself to an intelligent foreigner arriving on these shores. What will he find in the record of the 70 years that Ireland has been ruled by the English Government? Will he not find during this long period the alternation of the struggle against the lash, and the lash reimposed? Will he not find, in sad detail, the seasons of famine and misery and depopulation? Further, will he not see, at certain decennial periods, that Ireland is deprived of the constitutional liberties of which England is so justly proud? Irishmen have no right to that which ought to be the birthright of every free man in a free land, the right to carry arms. The Irishman has no right, as the Englishman has, to the privacy and sacredness of his dwelling; at the word or warrant of

the English Executive, his house may be entered at any time by the police; in a word, what would raise a rebellion if attempted in England, must be submitted to in unhappy Ireland.

We are now engaged in this noble effort to obtain the privilege of managing our own affairs, by a parliament assembled in Ireland. Now, Sir, is there anything unreasonable in that claim? We seek not to injure England in any way. We seek only to benefit Ireland. Has not Ireland the right to be governed by constitutional ministers for Ireland, advising her Majesty the Queen? Has not Ireland the right to have Irish measures discussed in Ireland, and by Irishmen? Is there no reason for that beyond Ireland's indefeasible right? We have heard from Irish members to-day a sketch of how we are governed—of the times at which Irish measures are discussed, the manner they are dealt with, and the general indifference and apathy of the English people towards Irish questions. I would put it to any unprejudiced man whether, having regard to the existing state of things, it can be said Irishmen have in the Imperial Parliament as fair a chance of having their grievances redressed as Englishmen? It is impossible to say so. The details we have heard to-day prove that. The organs of public opinion in England are misled, or reject the utterances of Irish opinion, not daring to let them be heard, and the English ears are closed. Now, Mr. Murphy has alluded to some differences that agitate the national mind. I would ask does he or any one else remember a movement in which there were not some shades of opinion? But it is clear what our duty as Irishmen will be. Every man working with a party is bound to follow that party as long as it does not interfere with his own honourable convictions, and our duty as Irishmen to-day is, no matter what shades of opinion we represent, to fuse them in one whole for Home Rule. There may be matters of detail which I could not personally accept; there may be other matters that others would not accept; but it is, I repeat, our sacred duty to sink these minor differences, and to march forward in the cause of our nationality. I do believe myself that it is when years are gone by that the importance of this meeting will assert itself. I have taken some little part in the politics of my native country, and I feel that there never yet was a time that needed more than at present the perfect calmness, prudence, and forbearance of Irishmen. I have in my time seen some struggles to right Ireland by physical force. I see men here to-day, men of honoured names, whose idea at one time was to remedy the grievances of this country by physical force. I am glad to see these men now joining this constitutional movement, because I have always held the opinion that any effort to separate or disturb the connection between England and Ireland could only end in misfortune to Ireland. If I had held a different opinion I would have joined an armed movement for the separation. I did not join it because I thought it hopeless. In relation to Home Rule, two questions have to be considered. Hitherto we have been divided into a great many sections. Our effort should be to unite these sections. I am a Roman Catholic by conviction, and every one belonging to me has been brought up in the Roman Catholic faith; but I have not lived the time I have in Ireland without being perfectly conscious of the excellence of my Protestant and Dissenting fellow-country-

men. I look to the past history of my country, when the Protestants held power, and I acknowledge with gratitude the boons they conferred upon my co-religionists. And I ask my Protestant fellow-countrymen to accept the belief that even if, in the representation of Ireland, there was a numerical superiority in the Catholics, good feeling and harmony would prevail. Many things that formerly existed to excite animosity have passed away; and I would ask them confidently to rely that no effort would be made to promote Catholic ascendancy, one aspiration alone animating all—namely, the common benefit of Ireland. Another point to be considered is the effect on Home Rule of English opinion. I am an Irishman to the core of my heart, but I have not been so long connected with Englishmen without appreciating the excellence of the English character. I do believe we should convince Englishmen—and I see no difficulty in the task—that it would benefit England to accord to us this federal union which we seek, and if we do that, I believe that Englishmen will support us, seeing that we ask only what is our due—the right to manage our own affairs, and do the best we can for the interests of our country, increasing its trade, developing its manufactures, encouraging its enterprise. I will not detain you longer. I have no doubt that the question of Home Rule is merely one of years, and I say of years because in every great effort of this kind time is needed to remove prejudices, to combine opinions, to work conviction. That the question will triumph cannot be doubted. I have great pleasure in moving the resolution.

The Hon. CHARLES FFRENCH, M.P. for Roscommon, said he accepted with very great pleasure the high honour which had been conferred upon him by asking him to second the resolution. After the eloquent way in which it had been proposed, and considering the speakers who were to follow him, he would not detain the Conference by any remarks of his.

The Rev. T. O'MALLEY.—I wish to say that in my opinion the resolutions on the paper are not sufficiently distinct. There ought to be before the country something more concise. In general phrase there lurks some fraud, and the more completely we put our mind, and all the thoughts of our mind before the country, and the more completely you put out of the mind of the people that in what you put forward there is any *arriere pensee*, the more fully we impress upon the public mind every essential particular of the purpose we aim at, the more surely we shall secure for ourselves the grain while the chaff shall be scattered to the winds. Bearing this in mind, I think that we ought to put before the country a very distinct programme. Though I say a programme, it would, perhaps, be better to adopt the word "platform" on a very large basis. It has occurred to me that the very best and most accurate form into which we put that platform would be a parliamentary bill. I have prepared such a one, I will not read it in full, but I will give a short description of it. The title of my bill is—"A bill to amend the political relations of the sister countries, Great Britain and Ireland," and my preamble is as follows:—"Whereas, the Irish people put forward a claim to a separate Irish parliament, the management of their own affairs, and

urge that claim with such force, and upon such solid grounds, as it would be imprudent to disregard." I have added another "whereas," it is "whereas it is apparent that the single imperial parliament cannot discharge, with due efficiency and the necessary dispatch, the legislative functions accumulating upon it from year to year; it is expedient that some measure be adopted to lessen the pressure upon parliament, and so facilitate the public business; be it, therefore, enacted."

Then, gentlemen, I go on to say what shall constitute the English parliament, the Irish parliament, and the Scotch parliament, and what is to constitute the third estate necessary to complete the legislative power of the national parliament in England, Ireland, and Scotland. I then go on to constitute the imperial parliament, and point out of what exactly the latter is to consist. After that, I constitute national administrations. Then, I show the legislative powers of the federal imperial parliament, a restraining clause, and the federal imperial judicature. You all know that the *Times*, the leading political organ, when the question of Home Rule got well under weigh, put its opinion. The *Times*—the political barometer of England—said, "It is quite impossible that any of the friends of Home Rule, lay or clerical, can have formed any conclusive or intelligible scheme for Home Rule. They fail to give a special, or even a plausible form to this too familiar craving. They do not even hint at the necessary correlative, Home Rule for England, or for Scotland, or, still less, Home Rule for Great Britain." The *Scotchman*, the political barometer of Scotland, of October 8th, says—"Whatever kind or amount of Home Rule be given to Ireland must of necessity be given to England and Scotland. If Irish questions are withdrawn from imperial parliament, so must Scotch questions and English questions. It would be to have Irish questions dealt with by some sort of exclusively Irish parliament, and Scotch and English questions by a parliament in which Irishmen stand with Englishmen and Scotchmen." A later utterance of the English political barometer of the 29th of October was—"If the demand for Home Rule proves really to be the demand of the Irish people, we shall be compelled seriously to consider in what way it may be yielded to them with least mischief, and to devise the various checks and safeguards on which it would be necessary to insist." I believe my bill does what is required, I will propose the following amendment:—

That this bill, with the resolutions, be referred to a committee issuing out of this Conference, to consist of members of parliament and ex-members of parliament here present, with liberty to add to their number as many other members as they may think expedient.

Mr. RONAYNE, M.P., said in order to give an opportunity for its discussion he would second the amendment.

Mr. PETER GILL, of Tipperary, said he was one of the deputation representing a hundred and fifty thousand men from a county which never was backward when patriotism required its services. They regretted exceedingly that their members were not present to represent the feeling of the people and constituency of Tipperary. He understood, and it was believed in his county and throughout Ireland, that this great and important meeting was called together to know whether the Irish nation had confidence in the Home Rule Association, and to give expression

to opinion on the subject. He himself was here to give expression on behalf of the men of his county to their entire confidence in Isaac Butt. They knew of necessity that there were many matters of detail which it was impossible for a Conference like this, congregated from every county in Ireland, holding various political opinions—some advanced, according as they lost confidence in agitation, others beginning to hope out of the future—to go into these matters of detail. There was one great fact known to Ireland, whether they called this movement one for Home Rule, self-government, or the restoration of their plundered rights, they were unanimous in the main point, and he would ask them to waive all petty matters of minor detail, and he would ask them not to give the English press and the sneering aristocracy an opportunity of venting their ill-will against them. The history of Ireland was too well known to the humblest peasant in the country to need reference here. The great and gifted O'Connell implanted it in the breasts and hearts of his countrymen, and showed them the innumerable wrongs inflicted on them by the accursed act of union. On this great question which brought them together, the feeling of the men of Tipperary, and of Limerick, and of the country was that they should not now go into the details. They should prove to the English people, the aristocracy, lords, and commoners that the voice of Ireland is unanimous for the restoration of her native parliament. The first ingredient for a Home Rule parliament was to send 105 Home Rulers in at the next election. What man could look round here and not say that this was indeed an Irish parliament. He would pronounce the noble gathering, the first sitting of the Irish parliament, with Mr. Butt as the premier. As to the resolutions, the three first were the fundamental ones. The feeling of the country was to get us home legislation, and avoid any subject on which there could be even the least misconception, or which would cause what the enemy would designate a division. They should in receiving those resolutions be united like brothers, for it was time for them to unite in the name of their fatherland, in seeking the noble object they had in view. They asked not entire separation—they asked only to be England's companion—her sister—an object of love, and not of fear.

The Hon. E. R. KING HARMAN.—I do not rise to detain this meeting for any length of time, after the very able and eloquent speeches, and after the last gentleman, who has touched upon a very fundamental point. I rise in the spirit of the principle which that speech contains, and not in the character of an opponent of Father O'Malley's, but simply in the hope that there will be no species of division amongst us. I am the more emboldened to address myself to the Rev. Father O'Malley to ask him to withdraw his amendment, not only from the deep respect with which, as a man, I regard him, but also because he is a thoroughpaced Home Ruler. Any one who knows him must know the respect due to him, both from his high-mindedness and clear-sightedness; and when I ask him to withdraw his amendment, I do so, not because I think his bill is objectionable, but because we do not think it expedient now to go into these matters of detail with which it deals. We have come here to say that Home Rule is a matter of vital necessity, not only for this country,

but for Great Britain; and let us put it forth to the world that we are not split up by any small matters of detail. Let me remind him of the old story of the bundle of sticks; it was impossible to break them in a bundle, but when the little twigs were separated it was easy to do so. Let us stand together, and I defy the world.

Rev. T. O'MALLEY.—I am sure there is no person in the room but will give me credit for being the last man to occasion any discord. In obedience to the wish of my worthy friend, if my motion is supposed to lead to any discord, I have no objection at all to withdrawing it. Only, gentlemen, with this understanding, that I presume that my bill will appear in the newspapers as part of the proceedings.

Mr. KENELM DIGBY, M.P.—Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to make a speech on this matter. I rather ask for information, because I think that we have now arrived at an important stage in the proceedings, when the third resolution is proposed, which I consider to be the most critical of all—that which speaks of the restoration of the Irish House of Lords. I wish Mr. Butt would kindly inform this Conference, with greater detail than he was able to do at the conclusion of his very eloquent and lucid speech, the plan of action upon which he thinks a restored House of Lords would work. We have to consider that they are a power—I speak of those of them who are not absorbed in the English House of Lords—that they are powerful through their hereditary right of legislating. We are living now in a democratic age. There are prejudices against even the existence of the English House of Lords, be they just or be they not; but I do think that the public opinion of England—and I will say the public opinion of a great many Irishmen—would be against restoring the hereditary privileges of legislation to irresponsible men. Such would be my opinion; but, as a true Irishman, I certainly would yield my own opinion to that which would be decided by the majority of my countrymen. But I would want this explanation from Mr. Butt—Does he intend, in his proposed scheme, that the restored House of Lords should have a dual action—that they shall be in the same position here as the members of the Irish House of Commons—that they should legislate here and legislate in England also?

Mr. O'NEILL DAUNT.—In imperial matters.

Mr. KENELM DIGBY.—I ask for that explanation; and I ask also, supposing that that is Mr. Butt's scheme, has he considered the immense preponderance of one party in the Irish House of Lords. I think, roughly speaking, they would number 100 men of one body against not more than five or six of the other. I apologise for troubling you at present, but these remarks I have not offered in any captious spirit.

Mr. BUTT—Mr. Chairman, I rise, so far as my friend, Mr. Digby is concerned, with great pleasure to answer his question, and I confess at once that this question of the Irish House of Lords is one of the difficulties attending any proposal for a parliament in Ireland.

For myself I am not now called on to consider this question for the first

time. In the tract on federalism to which I had occasion to refer in my opening statement, I entered upon a very full discussion of this question of the Irish House of Lords. I have within the last few days carefully read over, and I abide by the opinion which in that tract, published three years ago, I expressed. I admitted then, that "if there be a part of the plan in which there is a temptation to propose new constitutional provisions, it is in relation to the upper legislative chamber." But I think now, as I thought then, that it would be most unwise of us to omit from our proposal of an Irish parliament, the essential ingredient of a House of Lords, or to propose in the constitution of that house any substantial departure from the principles upon which from ancient times it has been framed. Let us consider this subject, as I think we ought to consider it, without reference to the opinions we may entertain upon the abstract question, whether a House of Lords ought to have a place in the constitution. We are not framing a new constitution, but asking for the restoration of an old one. It follows from the very nature of that demand, that the less change we propose in the existing order of things the better. We abide by things as they are—we seek to bring back our old constitution as it still exists in the united parliament. To seek any essential alteration in that constitution, is in reality to propose organic change. We ought to decline to entertain the question on the ground that the making a demand for our ancient constitution is not the fitting occasion even for the discussion of organic changes. We are asking for a national parliament, and of that parliament a House of Lords is an essential part.

In this I agree with Sir Charles Duffy in that memorable letter from which I quoted in my opening statement. If we propose changes in the British constitution, we at once invite the opposition of all those in England and Ireland who desire to maintain that constitution as it is. More than this, we divide ourselves. My friend, Mr. Digby, objects to a hereditary chamber. There are those who entertain strong opinions in its favour. Are we to determine this question between them before we join in a national demand. This is to engage us in a contest between ourselves for constitutions, instead of uniting us in a claim of national right. The only way to avoid this is to abide by things as they are. If it be found that the House of Lords is an institution unsuited either in Ireland or in England to the progress of events, nothing we can do now can prevent in either country, the accomplishment hereafter of a change. But again, I say this is not the time or the opportunity for the proposal of organic change.

But furthermore, we must not forget that we are resting our claim upon historic right. But the only parliament to which historic right gives us a title is one of which a House of Lords is an essential part. We cannot say either to our own countrymen or to Englishmen, that we will rest our claims upon historic right as far as it pleases us, and no further. We must either abandon the ground of historic right, or we must include in our claim of right, the restoration of the Irish House of Lords.

I do not hesitate to say, that apart from these considerations, my own individual opinion, if I had a choice, would be in favour of retaining the House of Lords. I would resist any proposal to abrogate it, even if that proposal were made at a proper time. All questions of this nature are

to be determined not by abstract theories of government, but by a regard to all the conditions which make up the fitness or unfitness of institutions for the country with which we have to deal. I do not enter upon the argument of this question, I say we are not to decide it. But one observation I cannot help making. If you had an Irish parliament without its House of Peers, whilst the English parliament retained its ancient chamber of the Lords, believe me that in the present state of feeling in these countries, your Irish parliament would be looked on as an inferior assembly. If there were no other reason, at all events, while England retains the institution of an hereditary peerage, Ireland ought not to give it up.

In thus restating my opinion upon this question, I am not answering the question very fairly put to me by Mr. Digby—which is this : by what means do I expect that our Irish House of Peers will be brought to work harmoniously with a popularly elected House of Commons ?

I might, perhaps, wish that this discussion had not been raised, but it has been most fairly and properly raised, and I am bound to reply most fully to the question that has been put.

I will ask Mr. Digby to remember that with the re-establishment of the Irish parliament the ancient prerogative of the Crown of creating peerages would be restored in all its integrity. Among the unconstitutional innovations of the act of union was a provision restricting the exercise of this prerogative. Three Irish peerages must become extinct before her Majesty can create an Irish peer. This restriction would no longer exist. I hope the uecessity would never arise, but my friend, Mr. Digby, cannot forget that in 1832 the existence of this prerogative, without its actual exercise, was found sufficient to reconcile the great conflict between the English people and the English peers.

But with reference to this we must look to the actual state of the Irish peerage. It does not follow that all Irish peers could make out any claim to sit in the Irish House of Lords. Many of them were not created to be peers of parliament, or with the remotest intention that they should ever sit in an Irish House of Lords. This is plainly the case with all the peers whose peerages were created since the Union. At the time of their creation there was no Irish House of Lords in existence. The only right conferred by these patents was the right of voting at the election of peers to represent Ireland in the imperial parliament. That right would remain ; so would the rank and the title. But no claim exists which would call on us to give these patents an effect which it was never intended they should have. No peer whose peerage has been created since the act of union would have any right to sit in the Irish House of Lords, unless her Majesty in the exercise of her prerogative created him a peer of parliament.

The same principle clearly applies to the peerages which were created at the time of the Union to reward the men who destroyed the Irish parliament. The act of union received the royal assent on the first of August, 1800. But the Union under its provisions was not to take place until the 1st of January, 1801. In the interim the royal prerogative as to the creation of Irish peers remained unaffected, and it was used—sorely against the will of the king—to fulfil the promises of peerages, which had been made to bribe the men who voted for the Union. These peerages were not

conferred to give any right to sit in a parliament which was not intended to be reassembled. I trust no man will ever take his seat in an Irish House of Lords by virtue of one of those titles of infamy and shame. In point of constitutional and even legal claim they are in no better position than those whose patents have been granted under the provisions of the act of union. It was never intended they should sit in an Irish House of Lords.

But even of the peers created before the act of union there were many whose representatives would scarcely make any claim to be allowed to sit in the Irish House of Lords. They were peers created merely to reward English services. Take, for instance, the peerages represented by Lord Hood, Lord Hotham, or Lord Clive. The original grantees of these peerages had no connection whatever with Ireland—the present holders have none. The peerages were granted to reward distinguished services of men in whom it was thought undesirable to confer an English peerage—they were granted not to enable these men to sit in the Irish House of Lords, but simply to give them a title. If we limit the right to those whose ancestors had seats in the Irish House of Lords, we would exclude the Union peers and their descendants, the peerages created since the Union and thoes men who had been created Irish peers without any connection with Ireland. This being the case, and taking into account that since the Union 97 Irish peerages have become extinct, there would be not more than 70 or 80 Irish peers. I do not hesitate to say that this state of things at once not merely leaves it open to the Crown, but calls upon the Crown to fill up the ranks of the House of Lords by new creations, and that those new creations would be made upon the recommendation of the first Irish ministry—a ministry virtually responsible to the Irish parliament, the representatives of the feelings and wishes of the people. Therefore, I say that, without any straining of the prerogative or any undue exercise of it, you could at once place in the House of Lords a large number of men perfectly fit to be there—men of liberal opinions, and with sympathies with the majority of the Irish nation.

But, Sir, I answer further that I believe it would be impossible for an Irish House of Lords, even were it less liberally constituted than it will be, to set itself in opposition to the will of the Irish nation, while you had an Irish ministry controlled by an Irish House of Commons. The conflicting forces of the constitution in Ireland, as in England, would harmonize themselves. And let me say as to the unhappy antagonism that now exists between different classes in the country, that I believe it would be greatly removed by a home parliament and free discussion, and you would not have in the upper classes the same estrangement from the people you have at present. I believe this would result from Home Rule.

It is impossible to estimate the effect upon the character and conduct of all classes of the nation which would be produced by the consciousness that the nation had its destinies in its own hands, by the feeling that we must adjust our differences by arrangement between ourselves, and not by an appeal to the arbitration of an alien power. An aristocracy taking its place in a national parliament would soon become influenced by feelings and motives very different from those which may be indulged in by men

placed in the miserable position in which the Irish aristocracy are now. Those who for the first time felt that they had a real power of action would also feel the real responsibility of its exercise. In the very necessity of vindicating their acts in an Irish assembly, even of their own order, the peers of an Irish parliament would learn to respect that public opinion to which, in every such vindication, they must really appeal. And brought thus into daily contact with the public opinion of their own country they would, of necessity, become sharers in the national sentiment and feeling. I have no fear that an Irish House of Peers will ever mar the working of an Irish constitution.

I am unwilling to refer again to my own published views—but yet to borrow from what I have formerly written is the most excusable of plagiarisms, and it may at least show that I am not speaking upon matters of which I have not carefully thought. I am quoting from that tract on Federalism, to which I fear I have already too often referred. In this it will be seen that I made other suggestions. After referring to the peerages conferred before the Union upon persons unconnected with Ireland, I continued :—

"But even of the remaining peerages a large number are represented by absentee proprietors. It would not be an unreasonable law which would prohibit any peer from taking his seat who had not been resident in Ireland for a certain period before he did so. We should, of course, restore to the Queen that old prerogative of creating Irish peers, of which by the Union the Sovereign was deprived. It would be essential, considering the circumstances of Ireland, that no objection should be offered to the granting to the Sovereign the power of creating life peerages, with the privilege of sitting in the House of Lords. I am sure that we could thus form an Irish House of Peers, in which the resident nobility of Ireland would take their place in the council of the nation, which would, as a deliberative assembly, maintain the fame and character of the country, and in which the Irish aristocracy could learn, as the English have done, to sympathise with us, or, at all events, to yield to the enlightened and deliberative opinion of the country while they exercised the powers of control over rash legislation, which it is the province of a second chamber to possess."

I entertain those views still, and I have not the slightest doubt that an Irish House of Lords would work harmoniously with the other orders of the State.

If I rightly understand the other question put to me, I answer it by saying that as I propose to leave the constitution of the imperial parliament in all respects undisturbed, the whole body of the Irish peerage would be represented in that parliament exactly as it is now. It appears to me that we would be entirely departing from historic precedent, and giving up the strong vantage ground upon which we stand, if we shrank from meeting this subject boldly, and saying we must maintain an Irish House of Peers. (If you omit this from your parliament you are not going back to '82, you are giving up your ancient rights. If you do, you would set against you all the advocates of an hereditary chamber) ; and thirdly, I say you would be introducing the very difference of opinion which ought not to be introduced into our demand for our national rights. I say our demand should be for our old Irish parliament, so far as it exists. We ought not to change that. If we entertain an objection to this portion of our old parliamentary constitution we cannot refuse to canvass other portions or to discuss each of the thousand crotchets that may arise, but I ask the Conference boldly to say that we abide by our demand

for our ancient rights. We enter into no discussions upon other matters at present. This is not the time, this is not the occasion for raising them. I have already said that if there was any part of the constitution which would invite us to propose new things, it was exactly the House of Peers. Still I believe it is necessary, to avoid doing so, and I hope the Conference will be of opinion, that in view of the enormous disadvantages arising from discussion upon this subject—remembering that no person here in assenting to this resolution, in the slightest degree compromises any opinion he may have, or is bound to abstain from giving to that opinion any effect he can—we ought to advocate the maintenance of the British constitution as it exists at present in Ireland—Sovereign, Lords, and Commons—it is the old constitution and our ancient right—modifying it as far as we can within the limits of the ancient landmarks. I have pointed out some modifications which are forced upon us by circumstances—modifications which I believe are entirely consistent with the principles of our old constitution. I have shown you that all these circumstances make it absolutely necessary in order to meet the requirements of the constitution, that one of the first acts of an Irish Ministry would be to advise her Majesty to exercise her ancient prerogative by making a large addition to the Irish House of Peers. I hope, however, the Conference will think that this is the wisest course for us to adopt at present, and leave it to the wisdom of Irishmen in our own parliament to find out the means of bringing the constitution to a harmonious working. I am not afraid of it if the difficulty should arise.

Mr. NAGLE (Queenstown), said—I consider this a matter of detail, to be arranged hereafter. We should lay down the broad principle in the Conference and leave the details open for future consideration. With that view, I move as an amendment that the resolution end with the words—"manage our own affairs by a parliament assembled in Ireland."

Mr. C. G. DORAN, T.C. (Queenstown)—I beg to second the amendment, and my reason for doing so is that I learn from Mr. Butt that such a body does not exist, and it would be futile in us to attempt to restore the body that deprived us of our liberty. Those who are acquainted with the history of the Union know the part that the Irish House of Lords played in depriving us of our liberties. I believe the first thing we should do is to secure Home Government for Ireland, and let the details of the government be managed by the people of Ireland afterwards. I have confidence that in this assembly sufficient intelligence and power should be brought together to manipulate and to create any form of government that would be found most useful to the people of Ireland. By the conduct of the hereditary peers our country has been deprived of its population. Within our own memory thousands and millions of people have disappeared from our land, and the hereditary lords of Ireland did not come forward to keep them in the country. I believe you should stand upon your own dignity. You have created an opinion, and you are sustaining that opinion against the lords of Ireland, because if they had it in their power you would cease to exist as a national assembly in the Rotunda. You had it before, and you ought not again have anything to do with an hereditary upper chamber in this

country. If you must have a second chamber, let it be the same as in Canada or Australia. We want local government. If we have that, we will find in time that it will itself regulate whatever else is necessary. At all events, let us not define any course of action which we might take in regard to the constitution of the House of Lords afterwards. I therefore beg to second the amendment.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN said—Sir, very reluctantly I rise at this late hour to take part in this discussion, because it has been the anxiety of the members of the committee of management that our friends from the country should be heard as fully as possible upon this subject. But the amendment moved by the respected chairman of the Queenstown Commissioners is one of vital importance. I rise reluctantly, because we had better meet it at once, clearly and decisively. It is a legitimate amendment, and one worthy of being considered. It raises a topic which excites considerable interest throughout the kingdom, and I am very glad it has been raised here, in order that we may thresh the matter out finally, and have done with it. Mr. Digby, the member for the Queen's County, in his query, raised exactly the same consideration. Are we, or are we not, to claim our ancient constitution, consisting of a House of Peers? or are we to consider ourselves what Thomas Davis has declared we are not—a sandbank thrown up by the waves of yesterday, and not an ancient nation claiming its historic rights? Now, if we were a new community, starting with a clean page to open—if we were a new territory like the United States of America, having to shape our own constitution and our organization, I, for one, would sympathise with Mr. Nagle. I am not a believer in the abstract theory of hereditary wisdom, when we have surrounding us proofs of hereditary folly. But observe the unwisdom, I had almost said the fatuity, of allowing yourselves to be attracted off by those theoretic considerations to an attitude fatal to your national demand. Wise men engaged in a serious conflict like this will narrow down to the narrowest possible dimensions the points of controversy, and you should narrow the question down to this head—what we once had we must have again. Now, gentlemen, look at the unwisdom of overloading your programme and cumbering your hands by incorporating with your demand every theory of political organization that the spirit of the age may have thrown out. For instance, there is a strong desire, both in England and Ireland, to alter the present constitution of the electoral districts in the country. Men ask why Portarlington, with eighty or ninety voters, returns a member, and Kingstown and Queenstown, with their great populations, remain unrepresented. But should we cumber our national demand with this question of electoral districts? And just as wisely might we cumber it with a demand for a democratic upper chamber. The English nation would greatly desire to see us led away by many of these attractive philosophical and political theories. The very men who would use against us the excuse that we were going in for destroying the aristocratic feature of the British imperial constitution are the very men who would be delighted to hear us say we would not have our ancient constitution in the shape in which it roused the admiration and fealty of Grattan and the Volunteers of 1782. I have

not risen to make a speech, but to offer a few arguments, We do not want set speeches on Home Rule and nationality. This is a business meeting for the interchange of practical suggestions, and not for the purpose of declamatory eloquence. In reply to Mr. Doran's first argument that the House of Lords does not exist at all, I would say neither does the Irish House of Commons. His second argument was that the Irish House of Peers voted in the majority for the Union, but so did the Irish House of Commons; and if we are not to have the restoration of our liberties, because corruption did its work among the Peers and Commons, then are we condemned to stand by in perpetuity. Mr. Sullivan concluded by earnestly calling upon the Conference to demand the restoration of the national legislature, as it formerly existed.

Mr. Nagle said Mr. Sullivan had taken up his amendment rather too warmly. He simply wanted them not to pledge themselves in reference to the future parliament of Ireland. He assumed that the Conference was merely for an interchange of views. He merely made the suggestion that they ought not to be precluded at a future time from making a suitable second chamber, or upper chamber for Ireland; but if it in any way militated against the object of the meeting, or created misconception, he was quite willing, with the consent of Mr. Doran, in whose judgment and zeal in the national cause he fully confided, to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. Ronayne—I would like to know does Mr. Doran intend to have an Upper House of the same constitution as they have in Canada. If I recollect aright the constitution of Canada provides that the senate shall be appointed by the Governor-General, and I do not think that would be an improvement here.

Mr. Doran—I have great pleasure in withdrawing the amendment. For this reason, that by seconding it we elicited the opinions of the Irish nation upon the subject. Such discussions must lead ultimately to our independence. I feel great pleasure in withdrawing an amendment, which I have seconded merely from the best possible motives.

The Chairman stating that the amendment having been withdrawn, the resolution was put and carried unanimously.

The Conference was then (about 5.30) adjourned to eleven o'clock next morning.

SECOND DAY,

19th November, 1873.

The Conference re-assembled at half-past eleven o'clock, and the Chair was taken by

W. SHAW, M.P.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the business of the day, announced that the Conference would adjourn for refreshments for half an hour at half-past two o'clock, after which the afternoon sitting would be commenced, when it was hoped the business of the Conference would be finished. The Conference had already gone through some most important resolutions, in which the principles of the Home Rule movement were to a great extent embodied. They were now coming to the consideration of resolutions of equal moment, and he hoped the meeting would discuss them in the earnest and orderly manner whtch had marked the proceedings of the day before. The Chairman continued—There was a remark in yesterday's issue of the leading organ, the *Times*, which I feel it my duty to contradict. That remark was to the effect that we canvassed for signatures for our requisition during the past two months. Now, I am in a position to give that statement a most decided contradiction. The circular was sent out in the ordinary way to the gentlemen of the country. I can say for the county Cork that if we had canvassed in any way, instead of 2,000, we could have got, I am sure, 20,000 of the bone and sinew of that great county to sign the requisition. We are also told, as usual, that the respectability of the country is not in the requisition. We know, as I said yesterday, that the respectability of a country never leads in any political movement. They are waiting and watching; they are not against us. It is quite a mistake to assume, as these writers do, that, because their names are not down upon the requisition, they are against us. Nothing of the kind. Few men have had more opportunities than I have had of seeing and speaking to gentlemen of the middle and better classes of the country. I never lose the opportunity of discussing the national question with them, and I can say emphatically that they are as fully convinced as we are of the necessity for some great and vital change. They admit our plan to be sound, wise, and prudent; but they are frightened, as Mr. Butt said, by a fantastic imagination of what would happen if such or such an event comes to pass. Now, any one who knows the people as most of us do—and I speak from the conviction of a life-long intercourse with the people of the south of Ireland—must know how utterly unfounded any alarm of this kind is. I have been honoured with early and lasting friendships with Roman Catholic gentlemen, and I would never think for a moment that they would be capable of taking any advantage

Rev. J. A. Galbraith, F.T.C.D., in proposing the fourth resolution which you will find in the printed list that you have in your hands yesterday. It is as follows:—

at I love that empire. I [illegible]
urce of future danger is [illegible]
on which all men [illegible]
; hear it from every speaker, [illegible]
angemen in the North—[illegible]
the *Irishman*—there is [illegible]
greed, and that is [illegible]
pound a dangerous sentiment because [illegible]
here are many men [illegible]
e for making this public statement [illegible]
themselves every day and every hour. [illegible]
sume that it is a fact agreed [illegible]
is the foundation of our desire [illegible]
in the present state of the relations [illegible] We
come forward, honestly and [illegible]
feasible plan—by which these [illegible] as a con-
sequence of which Ireland, [illegible]
will become a solid, steady [illegible] prospe-
rity. Sir, the resolution I hold in my hand [illegible] new. For three and a half years the principles we now advocate have been before Ireland—before the world—in the hands of every Irishman, whether he may be in Australia or the far West of America. In every part of the world it is a notorious fact that Irishmen, when they leave their country, do not leave the love of it behind them. Now, it is a remarkable fact that, as far as we can learn, no instance can be pointed to in which any section of our countrymen, in Ireland, Scotland, England, or in any other distant portion of the world have dissented from those principles. It is unnecessary, therefore, for me to inform them of these principles—they do not require it. I will therefore just lightly touch on one or two other topics. I heard yesterday in this room—we have all heard it in other places—the difference between simple repeal and federalism. Nothing pleased me more, and it must have struck the mind of every one present with pleasure, that, although conscientious difference of opinion, arising from old traditions and associations, naturally affect the minds of some gentlemen here, they were all ready to give up their special opinions and throw in their lot with this movement, expressed as it is in this resolution. What finer example of patriotism could be witnessed than that which we saw in Mr. John Martin yesterday, who came forward saying that he could not give up any single conviction of his life, and though he did not and could not, he would do all he could to help our noble movement. A respected Irishman, whose name when I mention it will be received with acclamation—I mean Mr. P. J. Smyth—upon a very public occasion expressed himself exactly in the same terms—I allude to the Waterford banquet. He stated on that occasion, as Mr. Martin stated yesterday, his conviction that if he was called upon to give a preference he would select what some people called simple repeal, but at the same he said, "I will not obstruct this great movement; I will join with you, I will help you, I will throw my lot in amongst you." I believe that as far as this question is concerned the case is settled. I believe the simple

of the future as against our property or liberties. No; I could not think it for a moment. No man who knows the Catholic people of Ireland could believe it. I am certain they would not take such an advantage—if such as this could occur—at the dictation of any power in the universe. Gentlemen, we are not going to carry this movement at a bound. We will take some time to accomplish our great work. Meanwhile gentlemen who have not yet joined us will, I hope, see that their co-operation would be for the general good, and that they would be perfectly safe in joining the movement.

Rev. J. A. GALBRAITH, F.T.C.D., in proposing the fourth resolution, said—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Conference, I think that business will be best forwarded by speakers on the different questions confining themselves as briefly as possible to the subject entrusted to them. I have been honoured with a resolution, which I shall now read. It is the fourth resolution which you will find in the printed list that was put into your hands yesterday. It is as follows:—

> That, in claiming these rights and privileges for our country, we adopt the principle of a federal arrangement, which would secure to the Irish parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, while leaving to the Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the empire with foreign states, and all matters appertaining to the defence and stability of the empire at large, as well as the power of granting and providing the supplies necessary for Imperial purposes.

Sir, I confess that if I were called upon to expound to an assembly such as this the principles of the federal relation that we propose, I should decline the task, because I believe that many others with whom I am associated could do it better than I could. Happily for me the task is unnecessary. The principles of the federal relation which we propose have been placed before you yesterday by Mr. Butt in so clear a manner that it renders it quite unnecessary for me to follow him in detail. We are all thoroughly agreed and satisfied that the present state of relations between this country and England ought to be altered—altered, not only for the purpose of increasing the future prosperity of this country, but also with the view of ensuring the future safety of the British empire. I have no right, Sir, to obtrude any particular opinion of mine upon a meeting like this; but I candidly and openly avow that, over and above that strong and unflagging love of country, which I believe every man here will give me credit for, that the chief reason that induced me to throw my poor efforts into this movement was the consideration of the safety and the stability of the British empire. No captain can safely lead his ship into action unless he feels that every man in that ship is determined to fight the enemy. There can be no more unsafe experiment than for a general to lead an army into action unless he is satisfied of the goodwill and affection of every man in it.' If he approaches a contest with the miserable feeling that some of the men that he leads are not with him, and may leave him in a critical moment, his efforts are paralysed, and he approaches not victory but defeat. Now, I love the British empire—not as well as I love my own country. Not as well. If I am called to make a difference I promptly do so, but while I openly avow

that I love that empire, I cannot conceal the opinion that its most serious source of future danger is Irish disaffection. If there be any one subject upon which all men in Ireland are agreed, we find it in every newspaper, we hear it from every speaker, whether he be a Fenian in the South, or an Orangemen in the North—whether it be the *Daily Express*, the *Nation*, or the *Irishman*—there is one thing on which all men in Ireland are agreed, and that is that Ireland is disaffected. Let no man say that I propound a dangerous sentiment because I boldly and openly state this. There are many men outside this Conference who will severely blame me for making this public statement, who, nevertheless, are circulating it themselves every day and every hour. Therefore I think I may assume that it is a fact agreed upon by all men in Ireland, and that it is the foundation of our desire that there should be an alteration in the present state of the relations which unite us with England. We come forward, honestly and sincerely to propose a plan—a rational and feasible plan—by which these alterations may be effected, and as a consequence of which Ireland, instead of being a rotten, disaffected branch will become a solid, steady stone in the foundation of imperial prosperity. Sir, the resolution I hold in my hand contains nothing new. For three and a half years the principles we now advocate have been before Ireland—before the world—in the hands of every Irishman, whether he may be in Australia or the far West of America. In every part of the world it is a notorious fact that Irishmen, when they leave their country, do not leave the love of it behind them. Now, it is a remarkable fact that, as far as we can learn, no instance can be pointed to in which any section of our countrymen, in Ireland, Scotland, England, or in any other distant portion of the world have dissented from those principles. It is unnecessary, therefore, for me to inform them of these principles—they do not require it. I will therefore just lightly touch on one or two other topics. I heard yesterday in this room—we have all heard it in other places—the difference between simple repeal and federalism. Nothing pleased me more, and it must have struck the mind of every one present with pleasure, that, although conscientious difference of opinion, arising from old traditions and associations, naturally affect the minds of some gentlemen here, they were all ready to give up their special opinions and throw in their lot with this movement, expressed as it is in this resolution. What finer example of patriotism could be witnessed than that which we saw in Mr. John Martin yesterday, who came forward saying that he could not give up any single conviction of his life, and though he did not and could not, he would do all he could to help our noble movement. A respected Irishman, whose name when I mention it will be received with acclamation—I mean Mr. P. J. Smyth—upon a very public occasion expressed himself exactly in the same terms—I allude to the Waterford banquet. He stated on that occasion, as Mr. Martin stated yesterday, his conviction that if he was called upon to give a preference he would select what some people called simple repeal, but at the same he said, "I will not obstruct this great movement; I will join with you, I will help you, I will throw my lot in amongst you." I believe that as far as this question is concerned the case is settled. I believe the simple

repealers, as they were called in the days of O'Connell, and in the debates that occurred at the time, have all resolved, without exception, on throwing in their lot with us, and working for a federal union with Great Britain. Now, when I mention the name of O'Connell, I mention it as a Protestant Irishman, with the sincerest respect and veneration. There is not a man whose name in the page of Irish history can excite more admiration in my mind than the name of O'Connell. He did not emancipate me, but he emancipated those that I love. His whole conduct as an emancipator was that of a noble and brave man struggling with herculean energy against a difficulty which he finally overcame. As a repealer he failed; a second triumph, and of such a magnitude, was too much for the lot of one man; nevertheless, he led forward a movement which was only short of success, and which it did not please Providence to allow him to pursue to the end. I hope it may influence the minds of simple repealers living at a distance to know, as Mr. Butt showed them yesterday, that this great man looked upon the federal arrangement with Great Britain not only with favour, but with distinct approbation, very publicly expressed. I shall take the liberty to add one quotation to that which Mr. Butt used yesterday. It is from a letter written to the *Kerry Examiner*. That paper opposed O'Connell when he publicly approved of federalism. He wrote in reply:—

"You say," said O'Connell, "we have been robbed of nationality, and we, repealers, demand its restitution in all its pre-existing amplitude. A parliament sitting in Ireland, and not daring to think on matters of imperial policy, would be converting Ireland into one great borough, and constituting our parliament a municipal corporation on a large scale. This is not the sort of parliament secured to us in 1782." "Now see," said O'Connell, "how you mistake the fact. That was precisely the parliament secured to us in 1782. It was, as you say, a parliament sitting in Ireland to govern only the affairs of Ireland. As to its not daring to think on matters of imperial policy, thought is free, but it certainly could not, and, therefore, did not, dare to *act* on matters of imperial policy. It had no kind of power or control over, or interference with, the colonies, or with the treaties between Great Britain and foreign powers, or with the appointment of British ministers—that is, in point of fact, with the nomination of the executive powers in the country."

Is that not the very doctrine that Isaac Butt proclaimed in his noble speech yesterday? In a letter to the Repeal Association of the 8th November, 1844, O'Connell says:—

"I will never take less for the Irish nation than what it had before the Union—that is, final legislation and judicial authority in Ireland. But if I can, in addition to her legislative independence, procure for her by means of a federal arrangement, a direct interference as to foreign treaties and a direct unequivocal power in colonial management, I will not refuse the advantages and authority which may be tendered to Ireland, as additional links in the connection with Great Britain."

Therefore, no one need tell me that Daniel O'Connell, whose name is revered by every Irishman, differed in one jot or one iota from the proposition we now make to the Irish people. We always derive encouragement in any plan we prosecute from the approbation of great men. If we find, as in this case, that Daniel O'Connell approved of our plan, what greater encouragement can Irishmen have than to go on with the plan that had such a sanction? I could, if time permitted me—but I will not venture to occupy you long—go through a long list of names

and authorities which ought to satisfy reasonable men that under present circumstances a federal arrangement with England would be best for both parties; but I now wish to bring before the meeting a quotation which possesses peculiar interest. It is the opinion of an Irishman of great genius and character who has lately departed from amongst us—I mean Charles Lever.

It may not be known to the members of this Conference that he took a deep interest in our movement, and was from conviction and love of country a genuine Home Ruler. I hold in my hand a paper, it is labelled on the back, "Home Rule; author's proof." It was written and revised by Charles Lever for *Blackwood's Magazine;* but he went so far in expressing this sentiment that it was suppressed. It was too much for *Blackwood.* It came into my possession by his desire. I never publicly read any passage from it before; but I am sure that there is no gentleman here that will not be glad to hear a few honest words in favour of Home Rule from Charles Lever. The paper is a long and interesting one—one of the series so well known as the "O'Dowd Papers," in which, with brilliant wit and choice words, he touched upon all the political topics of the day as they passed before him, and amongst others Home Rule. I should also tell you this—that in many private communications with my respected and revered friend, Charles Lever, I found that he was thoroughly with us. Now his opinion was worth something, as there were few men in his time who had a larger or more varied experience of life, not only in this county, but on the whole continent of Europe. Lever says:—

"When Mr. Gladstone proudly asks, Why Irish interests cannot be discussed and debated in an English parliament? the simple answer is this, that, when so discussed they must always be subordinate to the fortunes of party, and considered far less with reference to Ireland than to the benefit of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli, and thus the small and local measures which are so vital to national prosperity, but so insignificant to party success, meet with little attention and no respect."

There are members of parliament here, and they must recognise the accuracy of this picture. They must have often heard this expression—"Ah, what's all this about? It is a mere Irish row. What have we to do with it? We wish it was swept off the face of the earth, and you with it?" I believe this is a common sentiment—a common form of speech of English members in the assembly in which our vital interests are dealt with.

In the following passage he describes the utter incapacity of an English parliament to deal with our affairs:—

"Mr. Gladstone sneeringly tells us that of Home Rule all he knows is the statement, 'That there is a vast quantity of fish in the seas that surround Ireland, and that if they had Home Rule they would catch a deal of these fish.' Now, all I say is that if we had a parliament in College-green such a contemptuous summary of our national grievances would not have proved so perfectly safe as a burst of contemptuous eloquence as it proved at Aberdeen.

"The grievance alleged by Ireland is the same as that declared by Hungary—that local questions are treated by an imperial parliament with reference to the exigencies of party, and not the necessities of the land they pertain to. Mr. Deak never protested against the ability or the competency of his Austrian rulers; all he said was, 'You have enough to do of your own. To carry many things you desire, you are forced to do, or to omit to do, much that Hungary requires. We, who live lower

down the Danube see a variety of things to which we attach importance and value that, measured by your imperial standard, could not be so estimated. Leave us then to deal with our own concerns, and, so far from being angry at the request, bless your stars that you have so much the more time to give to the objects that are dear to you.' This was the Hungarian contention. We are the smaller people and the poorer; but we have a number of interests that we understand better than you can, and, above all, we have a people whose sympathies, and even prejudices we shall consult in legislating for them in a mode that all your superior knowledge and imperial intelligence would never arrive at. Will you not see, then, that we know where the shoe pinches—the remedy we ask is not to try how we can walk in an old pair of yours! What we want is to suit our own feet, and not to march in a step that does not become us."

In another passage he defends the Irish parliament:—

"The favourite arguments against Home Rule in Ireland are—first, those derived from the traditions of an Irish parliament; and secondly—more flattering—from recent Irish incompetence. Now, of that House of Commons, in which were Flood, Grattan, Hely, Hutchinson, Parsons, Ponsonby, Yelverton, Curran, and Plunket, with scores more only inferior to these great men, it is hardly necessary to say that in eloquence, debating power, general knowledge, and patriotism, it would not dread a comparison with that greater assembly whose debates are our daily reading. The very worst thing I know of that parliament was that you were able to corrupt it. And when one remembers the number of poor and needy men there were—men of high abilities and narrow fortunes, with all the conscious power of intellect, and all the present penury of small means, whom you could not corrupt, and who clung with the fidelity of despair to the sinking vessel of their country—it is to their eternal credit that they resented your offers and refused your seductions."

Now, Sir, it is a pleasure to me, and to every one here it must be a great satisfaction to read these words of our illustrious countryman when we find ourselves surrounded with puny whipsters who get up in public places and speak of this parliament in dishonouring terms. It is a satisfaction to our minds to find a man like Charles Lever speaking approvingly of that parliament, which, if it contained the infamous Trench of Woodlawn, contained also Bully Egan who came up number one hundred and eleven, and pitched Kilmainham to the Devil. And what is it that the Irish parliament is charged with?—with corruption. I am sorry to say that the charge must be admitted; but who is it that makes the charge? It is the vile seducer, and ill it comes from the lips of the seducer when he speaks of the fallen condition and the lost state of the victim he has ruined. But they speak as if they were never corrupted themselves. They speak as if those things were never known in the English parliament. I will not trouble you with a list of their corruptions, for it would keep you here a long time. I think it would keep you to the hour for luncheon. Parliamentary corruption in the way of buying votes, I suppose, always existed, inasmuch as human nature is much the same in all places and at all times; it was first reduced into regular practice in the English House of Commons in 1690, under the great and good King William the Third. The man found himself in a great difficulty—he was very near going to leave the country—as King Amadeo did Spain the other day—and the Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir John Trevor, went to his Majesty, and said, "I will settle the difficulty if your Majesty will give me a purse of £100,000," and the king consented. That is the beginning, or at least the earliest instance I can lay my finger on, of what I call regular, systematic parliamentary corruption. Who will be so audacious

as to tell me that that system has not more or less defiled the English parliament ever since. Do they forget the evidence of their own historian, Macaulay? What does he say? I think I remember the words exactly, "It was as notorious," he says, "as that there was a market for cattle in Smithfield, that there was a market for votes in the English Treasury."

What did Sir Robert Walpole say? That he knew the price to a sixpence of every man in parliament, and that that was the way he intended to manage them, and did manage them. Who was the man that helped, in the most laborious, and, I am sorry to say, efficacious way his friend William Pitt, to carry the resolutions through the English House of Commons, the object of which was to rob us of our nationality? —Dundas, the first Lord of the Admiralty. In 1804, three years after this, when he occupied the post of First Lord of the Admiralty under the title of Lord Melville, his name was struck off the Privy Council, much to the regret of his friend Pitt, who could not, however, help him. Why? Because he robbed the public money. Mr. Whitbread had him impeached, and his bosom friend, Mr. Pitt, was obliged to advise His Majesty to expel him from the Privy Council, for what? for putting the public money in his pocket. Let no man, therefore, tell me that we are corrupt above all men. I am sorry to say that there are bad men in Ireland as well as in England, in Scotland, and elsewhere; but my opinion is that human nature is much the same everywhere and at all times, and that if we had a parliament in Ireland, which, I trust to in God, we soon shall have, it will be necessary for every man standing about me to take very good care that none of their representatives shall be corrupted. The purity of parliament depends, not on the men in parliament, but on the men outside of parliament. Sir, I hold in my hand a book, from which I shall read. It gives me peculiar satisfaction to draw the attention of this Conference to one or two passages. In the year 1843 our respected friend, the leader of this movement, Isaac Butt, held a great controversy with Daniel O'Connell, and, as is usual, he acquitted himself with great ability. It is a curious thing that even then there were latent in his mind the very ideas that he propounded to you yesterday. The very objections that he made against simple Repeal were the very ones that influence him now in bringing forward a scheme of federal arrangement which is free from objection. Now, one of the signal failing points of the old system of '82 was the want of a constitutionally appointed ministry. What do I find here? Mr. Butt, thirty years ago, stated, by way of objection to O'Connell's plan as a solid and irrefragable objection—

"In England (said Mr. Butt) the Sovereign had no power of refusing her assent to any measure passed by both Houses of parliament, but she did this under the advice of ministers responsible to that very parliament, by the advice of an English Cabinet, and this was the practical check upon the exercise of the Crown; but by the boasted Constitution of 1782 the Sovereign of Ireland exercised the right of assenting to or rejecting bills passed by the parliament of Ireland, not by the advice of any ministry responsible to, or in any way dependent upon, the Irish parliament, but by the advice of a minister solely responsible to, and solely dependent on, an English parliament."

Now, is there any difference between the doctrine Mr. Butt proposed before you yesterday and the doctrine he held thirty years ago when he

was combating the great Liberator, O'Connell, on this point? After the division was taken in the Dublin Corporation—and they were all for Repeal at that time, God bless them, as they are all for it now—after the division in the Corporation, there was a meeting of the Repeal Association, and O'Connell gave them a pleasant account of the whole business that had occurred in the Corporation the day before. Doing this, he could not well pass over the views of Alderman Butt. I will read to you what O'Connell said, for it shows that O'Connell, like Moses, was not only a great leader of the people, but a prophet. In reference to Alderman Butt's speech, O'Connell said :—

"I watched to see if he would say anything that would commit him against being the friend of Repeal hereafter, and I have the satisfaction to tell you that Alderman Butt is as free to support Repeal, if he should think fit to do so, as I am."

Then he pays Mr. Butt a compliment :—

"A man of his genius must have had some yearning for his native land; and though the word Ireland may not sound as musically in his ear as in mine, depend upon it that Alderman Butt is in his inmost soul an Irishman, and that we will have him struggling with us for Ireland yet."

So you see that O'Connell was not only a great leader of the people, but also a true prophet.

It is well, gentlemen, that the first series of resolutions should be moved and seconded as briefly as possible. I have done the work I intended by reading the few passages I have submitted to your notice, and in making some comments upon them. I have only now to add that our strong and fervent desire, and as I believe the strong and fervent desire, notwithstanding the numerous contradictions to the contrary of the whole Irish people, is to be friends with England, to take our full share in the support of the Empire, and to stand by England, if she be in difficulty, as we expect England should stand by us, supposing we were in difficulty. But we do not want to stand in an unequal position with England or any other nation in the world. If they make us friends we will be to them good friends and strong friends. If you want to make good friends try and make your neighbours your friends—the men who live next door. Do not look for friends in distant places, for they may fail or they may forget their opportunities for rendering service; they may cease to be friends or they may lose the power to help. Make friends of your neighbours. Now, we are by position and tradition neighbours of England. We have helped them. There is not a field in which a British victory was ever gained in which Irish blood was not shed on England's side. We will help them again. But it cannot be, I solemnly and emphatically say, it cannot be until justice be done to Ireland. What is the fatuous policy of England's ministers? They run through the world to make friends. At present they are endeavouring to make friends of the Fantees—a set of black fellows on the Gold Coast. Would it not be better to make friends of the 150,000 Tipperary men, with every one of whom, my friend, Mr. Gill, declared he had a personal acquaintance. With those 150,000 Tipperary men I would be satisfied to go with Mr. Gill and clear the world before me. I say the safety, the stability, and the integrity of England and her empire depends essentially upon her making friends of gallant Tipperary and the other thirty-one counties of Ireland.

Rev. THOMAS O'SHEA:—I say truly this is the proudest and happiest day of my life. I feel honoured in being associated with my rev. friend, Professor Galbraith, on the same platform, and supporting the same resolution. You see there are some things upon which Maynooth and Trinity College can go together. I was put to another resolution, but they transferred me to this because I have been in the habit of acting with ministers of other religions. I have stood on the same platform with gentlemen of the Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches. At Newtownards, Bronshane, Banbridge, and Downpatrick, we stood together —as we did at Limerick, Kilkenny, and Cashel of the Kings. And the climax of all was when under the shadow of that obelisk on the historic Boyne—monument of the triumph and defeat of Irishmen—drowning our feuds in its waters, with clasped hands and hearts we drank to the union of Irishmen—O'Connell used to say: "This is a great day for Ireland" —*poor* O'Connell! yet not so, for he is not dead. To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die. His spirit animates us—it is enshrined in your hearts—yea, more (pointing to Mr. Butt), the mantle of the great political prophet has fallen on our leader, who in every thing, save name, is O'Connell—possessed of his spirit, patriotism, and eloquence, herculean figure, and colossal genius. We are making history; when the gentlemen who attend this meeting go home they will long remember this day, and tell of it to their children, whose children's children will in time to come, cherish the recollection of what took place in this historic room, the scene of so many of the glories of Ireland. Our success will mainly depend on our union—the union of North and South —the union of Protestant and Catholic. I have not the least doubt of the success of our movement. There are two points in the resolution. One is that we have a right to a parliament in Dublin, leaving to the imperial parliament the right of managing all foreign affairs, imperial and colonial concerns, the administration of the army; the making of peace and war. Well, we have a right to that parliament, and of that right I give no proof. I have only to indentify. *Res clamat Domino suo.* I claim my property. It is my own. It was filched from me; it was more than filched—it was not stolen, but it was taken by violence, as a purse is taken by a highway man, with a pistol and bullet at the forehead of his victim. What did they do? They came to the household—intending to plunder—they bribe its guardians and its servants. The master was himself sick—sick after the unfortunate rising of '98, which they fomented. They bribed the servants, and they did more—they paid the servants they bribed with the master's money. They did more. They brought a revolver—a six-barrelled revolver—and placed it to his temple, and told him to surrender the jewel dearest to his heart. Is not this what they did? While they were bribing the Lords and Commons and corrupting them, they had 130,000 horse, foot, and artillery at the heart of Ireland. It is under these circumstances we lost our parliament, and if anybody asks me what we ought to do, I say we have nothing to do but to identify that property, and thank God we have thousands still living who remember that parliament. We remember the parliament, and we have a right to it—it is our own and we ought to get it. Well Sir, they did more than that. They found the servants were not base

enough directly to rob the master. What did they do then? They bribed the servants to give up the keys to others, and the men who were ashamed and who shrank from laying a parricidal hand upon their country and upon their fatherland, surrendered the keys to Scotchmen and to Englishmen, to captains and to majors in the army, and these were the men who actually slew Ireland. Bad as these men were they would not do the job themselves, but gave the instrument to others to do it. Gentlemen, the next thing we require is that we shall deal and deal exclusively with Irish affairs—that with the internal affairs of Ireland the English parliament shall have nothing to do. We shall have our prosperity in our own hands. We shall have the reclamation of the waste lands in our own hands. We will have our fisheries in our own hands. We will have in our own hands the deepening of the beds of the rivers, which badly want it this year at all events. We will have the embankments of the shores of those rivers in our hands; and another thing we will have in our hands is that we will be able to purchase the estates of the absentees, and to give them the full value of them. There are other things that can be done in England—the Irish parliament will have nothing to do but look after the affairs of Ireland, studying her happiness and prosperity, and thinking and examining how best they can promote all the interests and wishes and supply the wants of the people whom they do understand, and for whose prosperity and happiness they do feel interested. Mind the subjects will be discussed before the Irish people —in the presence of the people of Dublin and the people of the provinces who will come up, it may be on return tickets, to hear the debates. Oh! how different these debates will be from what I witnessed one night in the British Commons, when the extravagant conduct of a not over upright Judge was under discussion. There your representatives have to address a cold, unwilling, prejudiced, and hostile audience, who are four to one against them. In College-green they will be addressing a warm-hearted sympathising audience in the genial atmosphere of their native land, and the approving plaudits of their fellow-countrymen. The imperial parliament, according to the resolution, is to have the exclusive management of all imperial questions, colonial questions, and questions touching all foreign matters. Well, I think that is right, and I tell you I gave the subject all my judgment. I devoted to it all my heart, and after giving the question as much consideration as my poor ability enabled me to give to anything, I have come to the conclusion that federalism is decidedly better, more permanent, more substantial, more honourable, and more feasible, because more acceptible to Englishmen, and evidently better calculated to consolidate the union of the two countries, than Repeal.

Now, as to Repeal, you have heard the statement of O'Connell, read by my reverend friend. Let us remember that if an English minister proposed to go to war with the best friend of our country, Ireland would not have a single voice in the matter, nor would she, in fact, have a voice in any question of peace or war, or indeed, in any topic nearly touching the interests and glory of an empire of which she would yet form an integral part. I want her to have a voice in all these things. I ask you, by whose ability and by whose genius were the great glories of which

England boasts—by whom were they won? Have they not been won by the money, the blood, and by the generals of our country? I want to know is the country which gave birth to Gough, and the still greater Arthur, Duke of Wellington—is the country which gave birth to him who conquered the conqueror of the world—to have no voice in the question of peace and war? Are our countrymen to be shut out from all situations of honour and emolument—and I think that these situations are very good when they are not procured at the price of one's country—are we, I ask, to be shut out from all situations in the colonies and in India? I think we should not be so shut out. I would remind you that while we had the genius of Grattan, of Flood, of Curran, and Plunket in the Irish House of Commons, we could glory in Burke and Sheridan in the English Commons, whose genius did not pale before that of Fox and Pitt, and we can still produce as brilliant a galaxy of genius. I am entirely in favour of federalism, because I want to have a government which will be responsible to the Irish people. I want to have an Irish administration, and not to have a Lord Lieutenant or a Chief Secretary who does not even know the geography of our country—who does not know whether Galway is in Kilkenny or Kilkenny in Clare, and whose first speech was to express his incompetency. We do not want a man who is good enough for Ireland, but fit for nothing in England. I would have an Irishman wherever an Irishman will suit, and have every position which he could fairly fill open to him.

Well, gentlemen, this is a great question. It is an arduous and difficult question. But you have put your hands to the plough and I hope you will not look back. I am almost delighted that it is an arduous question because the greater the difficulty the greater will be the glory in surmounting it. It is an arduous question, but it is the grandest question that ever engaged the heart of a country. No question so vital to the country's happiness and prosperity and loyality could be submitted to the Irish nation, than that of a parliament in College-green. I hope that every man here will go home and be a missionary and an apostle of Home Rule. I hope every man will be a recruiting-sergeant making recruits for Home Rule. I hope that the Protestants and Presbyterians on the north of the Boyne will do what I will try to do on the south of the Boyne, and that there will be a patriotic and holy rivalry between the north and the south to see which will do most to forward this question. Look to what the country was and to what it is. In the time of O'Connell the population was nine millions, and now it is scarcely five millions. Did the decrease take place under a parliament in College-green or in St. Stephen's? It was said there was a famine. There was a famine, but there was as much corn in the country as could feed double the population. There was a cotton famine in England during the American war, but did the people perish or starve? As Archbishop Hughes said, they starved upon beefsteak. No, they took care of their own; but they ought to have taken care of our people, too, when they took upon themselves to govern and legislate for us. We have had a positive loss of four millions of our people. Can you realise what four millions of people are? It is a larger population than most of the independent States in

Europe—than Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and Portugal. In addition to that, we have lost what would have been the natural increase of population, for if there had been more people there would have been more marriages, and with more marriages there would have been more people, and instead of five millions we would have at least a dozen millions of people, and there would have been sufficient food in the country for them all. Where are these four millions we have lost? Many of them lie in graves, coffinless and shroudless; but, though shroudless, they will rise in a garb of glory yet. They are scattered over America, and they are going there still in a greater ratio than ever they did before. They are going away at the rate of 80,000 a year, and in the first seven months of this year we have lost more than last year. We must do something to stem the tide, or the landlords themselves will have, instead of tenants, only a few herds, or they must become herds themselves. At present agriculture is dying out, and we will soon be at the mercy of other countries for corn. I do not believe there is a single man in the country who is not a Home Ruler in his heart. Every man must be so. It is one of those things that is engrafted in the human heart, the love of country—the spirit of freedom is ineradicable, indestructible, and inextinguishable: *naturam expellas furcâ tamen usque recurret.* As to there being disloyality, I say disloyality and disaffection cannot be put down effectually until the yearning for Home Rule is gratified. In every new generation of men you will have people springing up as they did in '48 and in '66. You will have Fenians, because youths cannot see far before them—they don't see the sinews of war are wanting, but they are willing to lay down their lives for their country. They become resolutely discontented. Now, they would not join any disloyal movement if they had a parliamant in College-green. They would then be glad to form part of a great empire. England would be a great guardian of our interests, and open a great field for our talent and for our young men. This is a glorious country. It is a country worth struggling for—worth making a final struggle for—making a struggle in which we are determined "No surrender!" Look at our harbours, where all the fleets of the world can ride in safety. They were never intended by God but that one day or another they should be utilised. I believe that Ireland will be yet the emporium of trade between the old world and the new. Look at our rivers capable of turning the machinery of the world—the coal fields of England may fail, but the water-power of old Ireland shall last as long as the dews and rains of Heaven. All the trade and commerce of the world will pass through Ireland. Have hope. Look at the state of the nations of the world. Look at the state of France and Spain and of the new empire of Prussia? They are all in a bad way. Look at the state of Italy. These States are going to the bad, as the nations did at the breaking-up of the Roman empire, and I firmly believe Ireland will civilise them yet, and I believe more than that—I believe it is Ireland that will evangelize them yet, and God knows they want to be evangelized out of some of the Communism which is amongst them. They say we are not fit for self-government. Not fit for self-government! The nation that produced Grattan, and Curran, and O'Connell, Plunket, and Canning

—the nation that gave O'Donnell to Spain and MacMahon to France! Hope on, hope on.

> "The nations are fallen, but thou still art young;
> Thy sun is but rising when others have set,
> And, though slavery's gloom o'er thy morning hath hung,
> The full noon of freedom shall beam round thee yet."

THE O'CONOR DON, M.P., said:—Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, it would have been unnecessary, so far as I am concerned, for the gentleman who has just interposed between me and the meeting to have made any observation on the desirability of our confining our remarks within a small compass, for I felt to-day in coming to this meeting, looking to the large number of resolutions which had to be proposed, and to the serious inconvenience which delay might cause to gentlemen who had still to address you, that it would be incumbent on me, in anything I had to say, to confine my observations within the very smallest compass. Fortunately or unfortunately, as the case may be, it is not necessary for me to trespass on you at any length, because on a late occasion I had an opportunity, in addressing my constituents, of expressing at some length my views on the great question which has brought us here to-day; but, as one of those unfortunate individuals whose woes Father O'Shea has so vividly pictured to you, it may not be considered inappropriate that I should say at least a few words; and I feel it the more an obligation on my part to do so, because, to a certain extent, the observations which I made at no remote period to my constituents have been in certain respects misunderstood. I do not mean to say there has been any wilful misrepresentation of my views. I have no complaint to make, indeed, of the comments that were offered on the observations which I thought it my duty a few weeks ago to make public. But still, as I have said, misapprehensions have arisen as to the views which I then propounded. Now, if these misrepresentations existed regarding me in my private capacity, I would consider myself guilty of most unwarrantable intrusion in asking the attention of this great Conference to any comments made on my remarks. But holding the position I do, as a representative of an important constituency, I feel it a duty to them, if not to myself, to address you to-day. On the occasion I have alluded to I felt bound to call attention to some of the difficulties which existed in the way of the proposed plan of a federal arrangement for Ireland. I felt it my duty in an especial manner to call attention to some of the difficulties connected with the restoration of the Irish House of Peers. Let not gentlemen rush to the conclusion that I am about to raise again the discussion we had yesterday evening on the reconstruction of the Irish House of Peers. I would have been glad yesterday to have had the opportunity of addressing you on that subject, but at the time the other speakers had done with it, I felt that, if I intruded then, I would have prevented any progress being made, and therefore, as really in this fourth resolution, and in the third which we had before us last night, the real essence of this plan consists, it may not be inappropriate that I should say anything I have to say at this stage of our proceedings. I do not admit that I created or unnecessarily raised any difficulties, the difficulties I alluded to were there before I spoke—they are there still—but I

pointed out certain difficulties with respect to the reconstruction of the Irish House of Peers, and those difficulties were difficulties not altogether arising out of the particular opinions held at present by the actual possessors of the Irish peerages. They seemed to me to be difficulties inherent in the position of our hereditary legislative house under a federal arrangement, especially under a federal arrangement to which the great classes from which the peerage is selected, as well as the individual peers themselves, were not very favourable, repudiating, in fact, the great powers and privileges which it was proposed to confer on them. But since I spoke in Roscommon I have seen it represented in the public papers that, on account of this difficulty, I recommended that the Irish people and their leaders should sit down with folded arms and do nothing until they got unanimity amongst the Irish peers and Irish aristrocacy in favour of this movement. It is hardly necessary for me seriously to repudiate such nonsense. I never dreamt of our waiting for unanimity, on the contrary, the great difficulty that I feared was the very existence of unanimity. Unanimity in a representative form of government is never expected. I do not expect it in an Irish House of Commons. It does not exist in the imperial parliament. I would say that the very essence of constitutional representative government, and that which gives it stability and health, and strength, is the wholesome rivalry between parties which produces those results which have led me to believe that constitutional representative government is the best form that has ever been tried in the universe. It was not the want of unanimity amongst the members of the Irish peerage, or the classes from which they are selected that I thought would be our difficulty. It was, in reality, the existence of unanimity; for, in spite of a letter which our respected friend, Mr. Butt, read to us yesterday from a certain Irish peer, I may still say that unanimity appears to exist amongst them against receiving the privileges which this scheme of federalism would confer on them. But I have not, as I said in the commencement, alluded to this subject with the view of raising again a discussion which might occupy a great deal of time, and which was dealt with last night; I have alluded to it for this reason—that I was told that because I raised objections to the plan of federalism that had been laid before the country it was my duty to propose an alternative scheme, and whereas, I did not altogether agree to the programme laid down by the Home Rule Association, I was bound to propose another. Now, gentlemen, I deny that obligation. First, because I deny that I have stated I am in opposition to the programme laid down by the Home Rule Association. I have shown difficulties, but I have pointed to the weak places as a friend, not as an enemy. I have done so in no captious spirit of criticism, but quite the contrary. But, supposing that I did disagree with the whole of your programme, and that still I were favourable to the principle of self-government for Ireland, would I be bound to propose an alternative scheme? I say that if I did so in the present stage at which this movement has arrived—if I did so I would be acting the part of a traitor. I can imagine no course more hostile to this movement than the raising of amendments or the proposing of alternative schemes; and I believe any one in favour of the general principle of self-government, though

he cannot concur in all the details proposed, would act the part of an enemy if he were to put forward his individual views and move amendments to resolutions, or raise difficulties, which would give the enemies of the general principle of Home Rule an opportunity of saying we were divided. I, therefore, decline to move any amendment to this or any other resolution that has been placed before this meeting. I cannot concur in the sentiments I heard expressed by the Rev. Thaddeus O'Malley yesterday—that the fault of the programme laid before this meeting was that it was not sufficiently detailed. Now, if I were inclined to criticise it, my criticism would be exactly in the opposite direction. There are in many of these resolutions forms, terms, and expressions that, if I wished it, I might perhaps severely criticise. There are some of them, perhaps, drawn up in a form which if submitted to me for my individual signature for approval I would not be able to give it. But am I on that account to get up and raise dissension here? No, certainly not. I look beyond the mere form and terms that appear in the resolutions. They will be forgotten in the course of a very short time; but the principle that this great national Conference met here to-day to affirm—the principle that the existing form of government is unsatisfactory, and that some form of self-government for Ireland is demanded—that principle will remain. And, being a supporter of that principle, having held it many years ago—in fact, from the moment that I entered into public life—having held the belief that the imperial parliament, as at present constituted, was in many ways unfitted for the discharge of the duties that were imposed upon it—I have no notion to-day to ride off upon a matter of form, upon details, or even, if you will, upon the absolute question of federalism as a remedy. I listened with great attention to my most respected friend, Mr. Martin. I may say that there is not a single Irish member for whom I entertain a higher respect than Mr. Martin, and I have listened, as I have said, with great attention to his speech yesterday, and I find that he, like many others, is in favour of simple repeal. I know there are many who are in favour of simple repeal, and some who believe that, even as a means towards federalism, simple repeal ought first to be granted, and that an independent Irish parliament, and an independent Ireland would be better able to arrange the details of a federal system than we are at present. But I heard Mr. Martin express his readiness to give up his own individual opinions, and not insist upon them, because he was in favour of anything that, according to his views and opinions, would give some form of self-government to Ireland, consistently with preserving the bulwarks of the constitution, and consistently with preserving all recognised and proper rights. Well, I am in favour of the same principle. I am in favour of any scheme which will secure to my countrymen a more extended power over the laws which regulate their own affairs, any system that will secure that further control—consistently, of course, as we all here admit, with the preservation of law and order, and the rights and security of property. These are my opinions. Holding these opinions, as I said before, I will not move any amendment on the present occasion. I will not raise any other hostile scheme. I think we have not arrived at that stage in the pro-

the scale of Home Rule his ancient historic name, his position as the representative of a great county, and, what is no mean thing at this present moment, the experience which he has derived from his earliest youth in parliamentary warfare. Well, gentlemen, I was glad to hear him say to-day that he shared in principle with the movement; that, if he had criticised it in his speech to-day, or if he had criticised it at any time, it was as a friend—in fact, that if he looked for the chinks of our armour it was that he might repair these, not that through these he might injure our cause. I did not know from his speech exactly how far he feels committed to these resolutions, but I think that in any case the declaration that he approves of the principle with which they deal is of the greatest importance. As to myself, I will say I feel with respect to the resolution now before the chair that it expresses all my own sentiments. As to some of the others—for example the third—I perhaps shared the doubts which I heard Mr. Digby yesterday express, but I am ready—as I have seen that Mr. Smyth, Mr. Martin, and many men far more eminent than I are ready—to merge my views in the common interest of this meeting. I consider myself fully and entirely pledged to the resolution now before the chair. I have observed that some speakers, here and elsewhere, have suggested doubts of the feasibility of carrying this movement to a successful conclusion. I look upon these as perhaps our best friends. When a man wishes to build a tower it is but prudent on his part to estimate the cost, and to know whether he can finish it—at least we have the very highest authority for so saying. I think, therefore, we should regard what is our power. Some say the wealth of the country is not with this movement. To a certain extent I admit the truth of that proposition, but only to a certain extent; but supposing it to be true, what is the history of all great movements? What is the history of the Reform movement of '32? What is the history of the Corn Laws? What of the Ballot Bill? Have not all these movements been commenced by a few great thinkers—have they not become associated with the feelings and instincts of the people—and have not the men who own property only come over to those movements at the last moment? Necessarily the last moment, for when they come over the movement has ceased to be a movement, and becomes the law of the land. Well, I think in the present case we have ample reasons for hoping for success. We have got undoubtedly the masses of the Irish people with us. I see no reason why we should not have, too, the English people with us. At the present moment power has been transferred to an enormous extent to the hands of the working classes in England, and I may say to the manufacturing working classes. Is it not their interest that we should have Home Rule? I will not weary you now upon this matter, because the point has been but too often discussed as to whether Ireland would or would not be improved in industrial respects by having a federative legislature to watch over its development, but I want to point out of what enormous consequence it is to the working man in England that it should be developed. At the present moment a large proportion of the people go every year abroad. They flow in a large stream to America, but a portion of that stream finds its way to the English manufacturing districts. I speak ad-

visedly of the manufacturing districts, for every day I have been told by labouring men in England and in Ireland that the Irishman gets less agricultural work in England, and is obliged to go into the foundries and factories, or on the railroads of England. That is a fact, and has become annually more and more so for the last two or three years. He there competes with the Englishman. Now, a very small proportion of Irishmen competing with Englishmen increases the supply over the demand for labour, and effects very largely the rate of wages. We have seen how a small increase in the demand for coal over its supply has increased the price to an almost inordinate extent. On nothing is the Englishman so sensitive as on points affecting his wages, and I fully expect that when it is explained to the English working man how the development of the industrial resources of Ireland will free him from an almost unfair competition, that we will then have the whole bone and sinew of the working classes with us—that they will join us, and help us to carry our cause—with the aristocracy, if possible; if not, without them.

Mr. A. M. Sullivan.—I consider it of vital importance that the meeting should be recalled to the resolution actually before the chair, and that we should all distinctly understand that this is the federal resolution of the series; that it raises, now and for ever, in this movement the exact platform upon which we are undoubtedly to go forward with the national demand. This is the time and this is the place for any man to speak now or be for ever silent. To speak now, or, if he be present here, to be for ever silent if he refuse to speak out in Conference with the Irish nation upon this question; for let no man in this hall think that it is permitted to him, after this resolution passes without his honest, outspoken, manly dissent, to think that he has reserved to himself, by any ambiguous speech, the right to go outside this meeting and take up a dubious attitude towards the national claim of this country. We welcome the expression of honest dissent. We invite criticism; we welcome it. We call that man a friend who points out a danger which may lie before us. But, while we thus welcome and invite criticism, we demand—Ireland demands, and Ireland will exact it with a public penalty—that the man who criticises shall satisfy the nation that he raises the point in good faith.

Now, gentlemen, it is necessary, lest the spirit in which I speak should be misunderstood by the meeting; but, above all, lest it should be misunderstood by the honourable gentleman who rose early in the sitting—it is necessary, I say, that I should refer to him by name, and set myself right with him. I allude to the honourable senior representative of Roscommon, who bears a name honoured and loved in Ireland. I have myself for him the most unbounded respect for his personal high character, and because he is the owner of a Celtic title older than that of the Guelphs and Bourbons. If The O'Conor Don has had to complain that criticism or misunderstanding waits on his remarkable and most able speech, let him know that it is because of the eminence of the position his countrymen have assigned to him, and because they expect from him a hearty support that no mere policy of negation will

satisfy them. They look to him, and properly so, to take the place The O'Conor Don should take—to speak with no uncertain voice, and to leave no one individual in doubt as to what he does believe and what he does not believe. And, Sir, I will say it was his duty then, it is his duty now, to leave no man in this room under any doubt as to how far he endorses the resolution which is now before the chair. The O'Conor Don has pledged himself to assist this Conference; his word is his bond; it is a pledge of honour stronger than that of many English politicians. I accept it implicitly and unreservedly. His high personal character and the traditions of his family are well known, and what he has said he will loyally observe. But in this he falls short, not only in his speech, but on the present occasion, in not letting us know where exactly he stands on this present question.

Now, Sir, I will read for him and for the meeting exactly the resolution to which we are speaking. First, then, he adopts the principle of a federal arrangement. Surely, he adopts it or he does not. I have no doubt he does, from the declaration he made, just as Mr. Martin or Mr. Smyth did, in sinking his individual preference for another form, and declaring his plan to be one which the country may, with honour and advantage, accept as the satisfactory settlement of the question. The O'Conor Don is bound to an acceptance of the resolution so far, at all events. The next proposition of the resolution is, "Which would secure to the Irish parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, while leaving to the imperial parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the imperial crown and government legislation regarding the colonies and other dependencies of the crown," and so forth. We are confronted with a danger which it is essential to deal with, and at this table. It is no secret to The O'Conor Don that we are taunted with being revolutionists in disguise; that it is hurled against us every day that we meditate the overthrow of the throne, and are merely disguising, under constitutional language, objects hostile to our hearts. Consequently, this is the time to constitute a platform sufficiently distinct as to preclude even the possibility of such misunderstanding, yet sufficiently broad as to include men who may differ from us in matters of minor detail. It is essential that we should settle this point, and we cannot allow it to go forth that we are not one—that those whom we represent are not one with us in every proposition—in each of our four propositions. You must say yea or nay to them, for, as men of honour, you will each be bound to accept these propositions as they stand, as they leave this assemblage, and no man is free, unless he makes an amendment, to say he does not loyally accept the resolution. Now, there is not a man in all the land whom I, for my part, am so heartily ambitious to see at the head of this movement as the Chief of Roscommon; and I put it to him to take his place, and throw in his lot with the Home Rule movement. The Irish people reverence social distinctions and historical distinctions; and, when they are honourably won, there is no people in the world so proud to see their natural leaders, if I may use the expression, in their natural places as the Irish people.

Will you bear with me if I go a little into the argument upon this

federal scheme? I undertake to demonstrate anywhere—I must speak briefly, for we invite ample discussion—but I say that it is as demonstrable as any proposition in Euclid, that the federal scheme proposed in this and the next following resolution offers to Ireland a better constitution, infinitely better than the constitution of 1782. Now, Sir, it was my lot within a few years past, in looking at some historical records for some historical purposes, to come upon documents and letters regarding the Union period, which startled me with this fact, just then little known in Ireland, that the liberties of Ireland were lost in 1800 because we had not federalism; and I undertake to show that it was because we had not the scheme which Isaac Butt has proposed that the Union was accomplished in 1800. The settlement won in '82 by the armed Volunteers carried within it the seeds of its own destruction. No great moral reform, accomplished by force, has been accomplished properly. What is won by force on the one side, and conceded by weakness on the other, carries with it a reservation on the part of the conquered party, when its hour comes round, to reverse the scheme, and take back, in the moment of power, what was wrung from it in the moment of weakness. I am not afraid to say, dearly as I love the armed men who met here in 1782, that it is to be regretted that it was under the pressure of their arms and bayonets the national liberties were restored, and that, for this reason, that it was, under an English minister, irresponsible to the Irish parliament, and irremovable by the Irish parliament, that this country was governed. Now, gentlemen, ask yourselves what would be the case in England to-morrow if the English people had merely a national parliament, with an irresponsible and irremovable ministry? Could the liberties of England be considered safe for a single hour? Suppose the English people had their parliament to the fullest extent, but with the minister sitting in Berlin under Bismarck, and subject to him, and unaffected by any vote in Westminster, could the liberties of England be safe under such a body? Now, Sir, because the Irish parliament had no Irish minister responsible to it, the liberties of our country were in constant peril; and I will tell you what was in peril also—the connexion between the two countries, and the safety of the empire. Perfect dualism in government exists, I believe, only between Sweden and Norway. Ours was an imperfect dualism. Perfect dualism has two things—independent and separate parliaments, and independent and separate administrations. Now, Sir, no doubt the Irish parliament had a power which this resolution does not propose to commit to the new Irish parliament. Let that be known and accepted, or rejected. We desire to conceal nothing, and we wish considered what some of you may think a drawback in Mr. Butt's scheme. The Irish parliament had power to stop the supplies, which Mr. Butt's scheme does not propose to give to the new Irish parliament.

Mr. Butt—For imperial affairs only.

Mr. Sullivan—For imperial affairs only. That is the only difference between the old Irish parliament and the new, as is now proposed. I speak on this point for an important reason. As long as the English feel that it depended on a chance majority in the Irish parliament bring-

ing them to a dead-lock and stand-still, they saw it was necessary for the security of the empire to destroy that parliament, unless there was such a safety valve for the danger as Isaac Butt proposes. If I were an honest Englishman I would say that the connection between the two countries could not possibly exist while power remained in the Irish parliament to stop the supplies for imperial purposes. The two parliaments came into collision in the year following the independence of 1782, and there were men in it who saw that the solution—the honourable and safe solution of the question—was not the one taken by the English minister, the annihilation of Irish liberties, but some such scheme as is now proposed by Mr. Butt. Mr. Fox saw the plot and the danger of not having a responsible Irish Minister responsible to the parliament in College-green, and in a private letter, written on the 13th April, 1782, he said :—

"He (the Duke of Leinster) describes the want of concert and system which comes from the want of such a thing (a Cabinet) to be very detrimental in every respect, and particularly in parliamentary operations, where those who wish to support Government often do not know till the moment what is the plan proposed, and, consequently, are wholly unable to support it either systematically or effectually. Another great inconvenience, which he attributes to this want, is that the Lord Lieutenant, not having any regular ministry to apply to, is driven, or at least led, to consult Lees and such sort of inferior people, and by that means the whole power is (as it was here) centred in the Jenkinsons and Robinsons, &c., of that country. Nobody is responsible but the Lord Lieutenant and his Secretary. They know they are to go away, and, consequently all the mischiefs ensue that belong to a Government without responsibility. I have not talked with any body upon this, nor, indeed, had time to think it over myself, but it really strikes me as a matter very well worth weighing, and I wish the Duke of Portland and you would turn your minds to it, especially if, as I take for granted, this idea was suggested to the Duke of Leinster by other considerable men on your side of the water. I have only stated it to you as it strikes me upon first hearing the thing broached."

The same great man, writing to Lord Holland, 19th January, 1791, against the Union, said :—

"You know, I dare say, that my general principle in politics is very much against the one and indivisible, and if I were to allow myself a leaning to any extreme, it would be that of federalism."

Sir, we are come to-day to redress and remedy the evils and to make security against the dangers that wrought the destruction of our liberties in 1800. Even yet, with 500,000 armed men to win your liberties back again, they would not be safe unless we had a minister responsible to the Irish parliament. To have an English cabinet in London controlling the Irish national legislature, while that legislature had the granting of supplies, and as the only safeguard against the despotism of a London minister, the adoption of a course never resorted to in a well-governed country, save once in half a century—the stopping of supplies—such a principle would destroy the strongest constitution. By our proposal we give the power of voting supplies for imperial purposes to the English parliament, and receive from it the incomparably greater advantage of a responsible Irish minister, removable at the will of the Irish people, and assert that the legislation of that parliament shall be final and conclusive as regards internal Irish affairs. In conclusion, I will say one word as to the objection raised against federalism twenty or twenty-five years ago. There is federalism and federalism. The federalism that alarmed and repelled the judgment of the patriots twenty-five years ago was a federalism that would allow the imperial parliament a veto upon the conduct of

affairs in College-green. That is a federalism we would resist to the last. We will have no federal scheme that will call upon the Irish parliament to subject its decision to the revision or control of anybody. And in the face of the fact that there are members of parliament who have attempted to hold, I say, a dubious and hostile attitude on this question—who have won their seats from too confiding constituencies by talking about local government, when what they mean is a sort of enlarged grand jury —in the face of such a peril this resolution must not leave it free to any such men to delude the nation. We must know exactly how far he proposes to go with self-government. Is he for having Irish legislation in College-green final in local affairs? That is the measure of our cause; and in the face of the great lawyer, and in the face of insinuations that we are rebels, I conclude, as I began, by calling on The O'Conor Don to step forward and avow what he means.

THE O'CONOR DON then came forward, and said:—Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen—After the appeal with which Mr. Sullivan has concluded, I am sure the meeting expected I would rise again to address them. Let me say in the first place that I made no complaints of the comments that appeared on the speech that I delivered in Roscommon. I have no reason to make complaints of these comments. They took a hostile view, to a certain extent, of the sentiments I gave utterance to; but I frankly confess there was nothing in them of which a public man had any reason to complain, and I thank the writers of the articles for the complimentary manner in which they spoke of me personally. But now I am called upon by Mr. Sullivan to state distinctly whether I accept, at the present stage of the progress of this movement, *seriatim*, this proposal of federalism. I am not a man who ever endeavours to conceal his opinions. When it has been unpopular to express them, I have not dreaded that unpopularity. I say, then, that if you propose at the present moment, with the feeling which exists in Ireland amongst the upper classes—amongst the class which possesses the wealth and property of the country and to which, through means of a House of Peers, absolute control over all the laws of the country would be entrusted, if you propose at the present moment to establish the federal constitution aimed at in these resolutions, and that I were asked did I believe that, this would tend to the peace, prosperity, and tranquillity of Ireland, I would feel in my conscience obliged to answer, no. It is not my fault if any discussion arises here to-day upon this point. I did not raise it, but being raised I do not shirk it. I am not prepared to say that I would force on the Irish aristocracy rights and privileges which they repudiate, or that this federal constitution which conferred these privileges could ever work until their co-operation was in the first instance gained. I am perfectly ready to accept this scheme of federalism as soon as the feeling of the country will be such as to permit it to work. I am ready to assist in promoting the cultivation of that feeling. I am ready also to express my decided opinion in favour of Irish self-government, and I am ready, if the expression of it is of the slightest value, to say that I believe the great majority of my countrymen have accepted this particular proposal. If you go beyond that, and tie me down at the present moment to say that I

believe the adoption of it under present circumstances would lead to the peace, prosperity, and tranquillity of the country, and if I were to answer, "I do, I join in that belief," at the same time seeing the difficulties which I do see, and if in private conversation these difficulties were raised, and I were obliged to answer to my friends, "Oh, after all I do not see my way to meet these objections," I say if I were to adopt this course, I would be adopting a treacherous course, and it is a course certainly I never will be guilty of adopting. I don't care whether this statement is popular or not. I never will court popularity at the expense of my convictions, and when Mr. Sullivan tells me that I am bound in honour if it differ from this resolution to say "No," or if I agree with it, bound in honour to say "Yes," with the greatest respect for him—and I have great respect for him—I thank him for the complimentary manner in which he referred to me—I say I am the judge of my own honour; and I say that as long as I am in public life I will never attempt to deceive. I don't want, when I may differ on certain points from my countrymen, to raise dissension and disturbance by going into all the points of difference. I am ready to go with them as far as I possibly can. I have told you what I am ready to support, but beyond that it is impossible for me, holding the conscientious convictions I do, to go; and no attempt to gain any passing popularity would induce me to say what I do not feel.

Major O'REILLY, M.P.—Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen—My friend, Mr. Sullivan, said that frankness in this assembly of Irishmen is a duty which we all owe. I have never shrunk from expressing my opinions elsewhere, where Irish opinions were unpopular. I shall never conceal or palliate them here or elsewhere. Therefore, agreeing with him that this resolution raises in substance the very question that we are here to consider I wish to state as shortly as I can the opinions which I hold on the matter. As the opinions of an individual, they are of no value whatever. As I have the honour of representing an Irish constituency, and must, to the best of my ability, speak for them elsewhere, it is right that I should give those opinions free utterance here. I am not going to argue the question. I think our time is too short, and I shall have to argue it elsewhere. I merely wish to state briefly and clearly my own individual convictions. In the first place, agreeing as I do, fully and thoroughly in the substance of this resolution, and I believe it to be a vital one, I agree with my friend, Mr. Sullivan, in his preference for a federal arrangement, and am no advocate for simple Repeal; and I may say in great measure for the reasons which he has given. Now, Sir, I have weighed as carefully as I can, to what I am bound when I assent to the substance of this resolution. I wish to raise no caviling on words, but I hold by the substance and meaning of it, not, perhaps, by every tittle of the letter. In the first place, it is right that I should remark that, as Mr. Sullivan has well said, there are "federal arrangements and federal arrangements," and the word conveys every degree of combination between separate governments, from that which exists between Norway and Sweden, and that which exists between the different portion of the United States, and that which exists between the different portions of the

Dominion of Canada. In that long scope my meaning tends to the latter part of it. I look to an arrangement similar in principle to that which exists in the two last instances that I have quoted. Now, Sir, I do claim for the Irish parliament what is advanced here, and I will not tie myself down any more. I think my friend, Mr. Butt, will not tie himself down to a particular constitution of the future House of Lords of that parliament. I do claim for that parliament the exclusive right of lesislating; and when I say legislating, I mean legislating finally on matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland. If I wished to raise a verbal criticism, I would only say that I would limit it; I believe the resolution intends to limit it to matters concerning Ireland exclusively. Now, Sir, again I hold that the second part of the resolution means substantially this, that the imperial parliament, in which Ireland shall retain her full representation and her full share, shall legislate exclusively and imperially, and in the last resort on all matters which concern the empire, shall provide for the government, for the maintenance, for the defence of the whole empire, and shall by its authority and power raise the means, whether financial or otherwise, for the government and for the defence of the empire. That is the plain ordinary meaning which attaches to the substance of the resolution. In that I agree, neither further nor less far. I agree with my friend, The O'Conor Don, most fully, that when we agree in substance it is undesirable to raise discussions on details. I abstained from speaking on some of the previous resolutions, which appear to raise, if they do not really raise in too stringent language, the question of the constitution of the future assembly. I did so advisedly, and it is only necessary that I should repeat for the moment what I have said, that I do not bind myself to a restoration of legislative power to the present body of Irish peers. Now, Sir, I have said, as shortly as I can, what I hold to be desirable, and what I shall aim at. I fully agree with my friend, The O'Conor Don, that there are immense difficulties in the way; that those difficulties will not be lessened by ignoring them, but are rather best met by those who bring them forward, who point them out, and who try to seek the remedy for them. I shall endeavour to do this. I shall not endeavour to hasten or precipitate the solution of the difficulties. It is better calmly and leisurely to examine them, to trust to time—I mean no lengthened time for their solution; and to join with all who agree in principle in aiming at a common goal, though we may differ as to the means, though not in substance, as to the road by which it is to be attained.

The Conference here adjourned for luncheon.

On re-assembling,

Mr. FERGUSON, of Glasgow, spoke in support of the resolution. He said that every gentleman should be the judge of his own honour, but the people should be the judges of their own duty. He had listened with satisfaction and pleasure to the speech of the hon. member for Roscommon, who was fairly and properly brought before the assemblage by Mr. Sullivan, and he was happy to say he thought it was the speech of an honest man. But there were many honest men who were not up to the point of Nationalism which this great occasion demanded. If they

required proof of the necessity for Irish members meeting their constituencies as Mr. Butt had done at Limerick, Mr. Mitchel Henry at Galway, and Mr. Lewis at Derry, they had a proof of it that day. It was a fine thing to bring these gentlemen before their constituencies, and before assemblages of Irishmen, to teach them, not what their honour should be, but what the people wished. He held it was not possible to allow the question of honour to militate against this great movement, and thought that any of their representatives with whom such considerations weighed should retire from their positions in favour of those who would be more the exponents of the wishes of the people. Honest men, chiefly in the humble walks of life had been preparing for this great occasion to make it possible for all lovers of their country to proclaim in favour of Home Rule, which really arose out of the necessities of the poor man. He maintained that the Association offered a platform for reconciliation to all parties in this country. In accomplishing this purpose were they to have the reproach cast in their faces by hon. gentlemen that because "the wealth and intelligence of the country" had scarcely condescended as yet with kid gloves to delicately touch this question, they, forsooth, must pause until the thing had become a success, and then at the eleventh hour they would condescend to join them? They welcomed, at the eleventh hour even, all honest Irishmen who joined the movement. Most welcome, said they, to any man who came in even at the eleventh hour to join them. Some there were in this movement who worked quietly, while others worked more publicly; but he believed there were none of them that would not be willing to step back and give proper place and position to the gentry of Ireland if they came forward. What was his right to address the meeting? Simply the right of an Irishman possessing the esteem and confidence of many thousands of his countrymen in Scotland, and yielding to none in intensity of devotion to the dear old land. He regarded the discussion that had just taken place as the most important expression of public opinion that had taken place in the meeting since it commenced, for outside that assemblage were thousands of men beginning to talk of their being nothing but a whitewashing establishment. He would not detain them longer, but he could not master his feelings of indignation at any attempt there brought forward to show that because gentlemen of intelligence, wealth, and position had not chosen to touch this movement they could not look forward to success. The people's day had come, and they would find the people's men. He hoped that amongst the foremost in the Nationalists' ranks would be the name of the gallant young gentleman who had shown honesty, ability, and courage to-day by telling what were his opinions, even though they were unpopular. There were other gentlemen besides The O'Conor Don who should take this into consideration. There were men in the national movement who would fight at the hustings against those who first held back and then came forward, and indicated that it was the force of Home Rule outside, and not of conviction, that changed their opinions.

Mr. BUTT, M.P., said the discussion had come to a point at which he ought not to remain silent. They had by the first resolution affirmed

that it was essential to the peace of Ireland—not that they should be at rest—but that their ancient right of self-government should be restored. They then affirmed—and every man at the Conference assented to it—that solemnly re-asserting the inalienable right of the Irish people to self-government, they declared the time, in their opinion, had come when a combined and energetic effort should be made to obtain the restoration of that right. If any man believed that the time had not come, his time for saying so was before the Conference solemnly pledged themselves that it had. With the greatest respect for the honourable member for Roscommon, he ought not to have been a party to that pledge if he believed the time had not come for the effort. He (Mr. Butt) could understand gentlemen saying Home Rule was a very good thing, but the time for it had not come. He remembered that when a greater thing than Home Rule was presented by an inspired apostle to a heathen governor, he trembled when he said—"Paul, I will hear you when a more convenient time comes," and all the theologians had marked that the more convenient time never came. He (Mr. Butt) did not understand that patriotism was to be for ever in the *paulo post future* tense. The real question was, should they make the struggle for their rights now? The Irish people had determined they shall, and it was his duty to the country to say that no matter what ancient ancestry—no matter what exalted character—no matter what great ability any man could bring when he sought the suffrages of a constituency—the real question would be—"Are you ready to aid the Irish people in their grand struggle for independence?" He believed The O'Conor Don would be ready to aid them, and if he did, the value of his adhesion would be increased by the courage and the manly honesty he displayed in avowing his views that day. At the same time he asked the Conference to remember that they were pledged to the principle that the time had come for making the effort for the restoration of Ireland's rights. Any man who dissented from that ought to retire. He ought not to have come there at all. The only question really before the Conference now was whether in making the effort on which they had already resolved they should adopt the federal proposal or not. That question, indeed, might be said in strictness to be concluded by the Requisition which sought a Conference of those who were favourable to the principle as to the best means of carrying the project into effect. He was proud to say there were present friends like Mr. Martin and Mr. Smyth, who, if left to their own opinion, would say it was wiser to make a demand for simple Repeal, but who in the belief that circumstances had committed the country, acquiesce and co-operate in the demand for federalism. If any person thought those who maintained that demand were leading the Irish people astray, and that Repeal should be claimed, that person should not have signed the requisition and attended the Conference. At the same time he thought it well to have the question discussed. He would therefore advise the meeting to waive the terms of the Requisition, with the object of affording an opportunity for the discussion of that question if any one desired to raise it. A suggestion was made by Alderman Nagle, of Cork, that the discussion should be hurried over, as the delegates wanted to go home. If men wanted to go home, instead of preferring to wait and take their part in a

great discussion like the present, it was a bad omen for the country. He (Mr. Butt) might perhaps venture to say that there was no one attending there at a greater personal sacrifice than himself. And if to elicit the opinion of the Irish people, if to have the principles of the measure discussed, and the honest objections of a single true heart fully considered—it were necessary for him to remain there a week, he was cheerfully content to do so. He asked the meeting whether they were prepared to rescind the second resolution of the series. Did they agree with those who owned that the condition of Irish affairs was very bad, but argued that my Lord This or my Lord That was not in favour of the project, and it would be better to wait a little—till the parish priest or some other gentleman who had influence with his lordship should have tried to bring him over?—till the men who said that when the whole of Ireland was united, then they should be very happy to join also? If that were the opinion of the meeting he was satisfied that the resolution should be rescinded. But it was the instinct of all present that they should seek for emancipation from slavery. Then they should stand by the resolution, and yield to no man who should tell them they ought to wait, and that the success of their movement would not contribute to the peace of Ireland at present. The peace of Ireland! The peace of Ireland was the peace of slavery and death. Ireland was wasting, dying before their eyes; her public opinion was demoralized. The grasp of the robber was on her throat. Let her rise now or be for ever fallen. Let them listen to no man who told them that the hour of slavery was not the hour when freedom should be sought. Irishmen were slaves while they were denied the right of managing their own affairs. If any man were content with this let him leave them.

"Who so base as be a slave,
Let him turn and flee."

And was there ever a more favourable hour than the present? They saw three English members of parliament stand up in the face of their constituencies to declare to them that the time had come for giving Home Rule to Ireland.

Mr. Butt dwelt at length upon the favourable aspects of the day, and, observed that in proposing the resolutions, he had endeavoured to point out the differences between simple Repeal and a federal arrangement. He said that Mr. Sullivan was incorrect in saying the latter scheme originated with him (Mr. Butt). It was not so, for federalism had been proposed in various forms before he had brought it forward. He and his friends merely simplified the project into a formula in which it might be submitted for acceptance by a practical, business-minded people like the English. But he would say again, if any person present were to contend that, under the circumstances, the federal scheme ought be abandoned in favour of Repeal, that person should be heard; and, inconvenient as it might be to recede from the opinions he had expressed, to go back to England and tell them that, in the proposal which he had submitted to them, he was wrong, yet, if any man could convince him that the cause of his country would be better served by undoing all that had been done, and beginning anew by substituting Repeal for federalism, he (Mr. Butt) would be ready to adopt that course.

Mr. Butt said it was absurd to pretend that any discredit was sought to be thrown on the illustrious men who had wrung from England the constitution of 1782; and said that up to that time Irish freedom was but gradually forming itself. He had no doubt that, had the parliament of 1782 lasted, a federal arrangement, which was hinted at by Fox and spoken of by the Duke of Leinster, would have been carried into effect. The only point upon which the present resolution asked the Irish people to surrender any right possessed by the Irish parliament, was the right of voting supplies for imperial purposes. He thought his friend, Mr. Sullivan, had exaggerated that right, because the refusal of supplies by the old Irish parliament would not, in former times, have stopped a single war with England, nor would it now. Could they refuse to contribute to imperial expenses? O'Connell thought not, and in one of his projects of Repeal (he did not think it necessary to read it), it was a part of the Repeal arrangement that there should be fixed the contribution of Ireland to all imperial expenses. It was impossible to escape it. How would they determine what share Ireland would pay of the National Debt? How did they expect the English parliament to deal with them, or leave it to an Irish parliament to determine whether they should contribute anything to the payment of that debt? The things that had passed since 1800—the seventy-three years of partnership—inevitably required that they should have some kind of partnership continued, even to wind-upt he affairs of their partnership, disastrous as it was. Apart from every other consideration, simple repeal was impossible. When he said that simple repeal was impossible he did not advert to any difficulty or supposed difficulty in the way of carrying such a measure. He meant that it would be impossible to re-establish the Irish parliament by a statute simply repealing the act of Union. The effect of this would be to send them back to the state of things that existed the day before the Union was passed. This might have been done for some years after the passing of the Union. It could not be done now. The lapse of time prevented it. The bodies that returned members to the old Irish parliament had passed away—there was nobody now to represent them. The old parliament of Ireland to be elected under the old law, could not, by any possibility, be convened. Some new provisions must be enacted to enable the Irish parliament to meet. Even if it were possible, no one would propose to convene a parliament returned by the old nomination boroughs. They must go to the imperial parliament to settle their constitution and their new House of Commons.

It was vain, therefore, to say that, in practice, they could treat the act of union as a nullity, and ignore the authority of the imperial parliament. If the question were to be argued as a matter of right, the position that the act of union had no authority could be easily maintained. He (Mr. Butt) believed, with Lord Plunket and Mr. Saurin, that the act of union had never any authority—that tried by the rules of international and constitutional law it was void. If ever it had authority, when the Protestant Church was disestablished, that authority was ipso facto extinguished. The articles of union expressly represented that the maintenance of that Church should be an essential and fundamental

condition of the Union. Upon the very terms of these articles, by the very statute which enacted it, the moment that condition was broken, the Union was dissolved. All this would be unanswerable if the question were one that could be treated as a question of law, and be submitted to an legal tribunal to be determined by legal principles. If the act of union could be dealt with as a deed between parties—if the question could be brought before the Common Pleas it would unquestionably be held that, by the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the Union was cancelled and dissolved; in the Court of Chancery it would be set aside as obtained by coercion and fraud. In both courts it would be held to be beyond the power of the parliament which professed to pass it. But whatever might be the grounds of impeaching the validity of the Union, necessity compelled them to say—

"Fieri non debuit factum valet.

They must accept the constitution of the Irish from an act of the imperial parliament. If they did this there was no difficulty in carrying out in the same act of parliament the terms of a federal arrangement between the countries. But one thing was plain, that to have an Irish parliament at all, they must, as a matter of practical sense, do something more than simply repeal the act of union.

If he (Mr. Butt) were asked by what means he hoped to carry a federal arrangement such as he proposed, he believed it would be carried if Ireland at the next election, sent eighty true men faithfully to press the demand of the Irish nation for Home Rule. There would be a moral power in such a declaration of the national will—in the support which that demand would receive from the Irish people wherever they were scattered over the face of the globe.

Coercion was out of the question when backed by physical force. English ministers—he would not say statesmen—might flatter the pride of some bungling constituency by saying that they would meet the Irish people by drawing the sword. He (Mr. Butt) would not be provoked to answer that by threats; but there was no minister ever yet charged with the responsibility of English interests who would advise his Sovereign to draw the sword upon the Irish race. But by that power he believed they could settle their terms as well as if they had an Irish parliament to settle them.

The Conference must now, definitely and clearly, choose whether they would accept, as their demand, the federal proposal which was now submitted to them, or adhere to the old proposal which was termed, not quite accurately, simple repeal. It was simply impossible to go forward without settling the question one way or the other. They were taunted with having no programme. He believed he had written nine letters to the *Times* explaining what he did mean, but nine times over the *Times* went back to the old story that they did not understand it. With reference to the draft of the bill suggested by the Rev. Mr. O'Malley on the previous day, he (Mr. Butt) confessed he could not understand it; and they might as well propose to the English parliament to assent to a railway to the moon as to assent to it. The value of the plan now proposed was that it scarcely changed anything. He thought a House of Lords, even with hereditary titles and power, was a wise element in the con-

stitution, but he did not wish any man to take that opinion. If the House of Lords was an obstruction, public opinion would change it in Ireland, and they might trust to the parliament they had modified by time. It would no longer be a parliament of the minority—it would no longer be a parliament of borough-mongers. Having said this, he would ask them, was it not essential that they should pass some resolutions as to what plan they would adopt? What did they want? asked the Englishman. Did they want, it was inquired, a federal arrangement or simple repeal? How could he return to tell Englishmen that he did not know? and could they call this a Conference of Irishmen, and not come to some decision as to what they wanted? Without violating confidence, he might say that he knew that, when O'Connell indicated a leaning for federalism, even after his imprisonment, both among the Whigs and Tories in the Castle of Dublin, the movement was considered far more formidable than Repeal. They formed a plan—and the fact came to his knowledge in a curious way—to circulate tracts in the spirit of extreme nationality, inveighing against O'Connell for lowering the Irish flag. If they took up the English newspapers of the day they would find they contained bitter taunts against O'Connell for having deserted Repeal; and he (Mr. Butt) knew, for he had the elements for forming an opinion, that these articles were written to sow the seeds of distrust amongst the Irish people, and drive O'Connell back from his position of federalist. Federalism came to Englishmen in a different form from Repeal. He was quite sure it had attracted many Irishmen who would never have consented to Repeal. The question raised, in O'Connell's day, was really never decided; and, though O'Connell abandoned federalism, it was because the schemes proposed were mock schemes, and his (Mr. Butt's) conscientious belief was that if a scheme, such as they put forward now, was then advanced it would have been accepted. There was scarcely a Corporation in Ireland but had received it as federalism, the resolutions of the clergy had received it as such, and the most illustrious in the Church of Ireland, the great Prelate of the West, had given his assent to it as federalism. He proposed now to them to pass this resolution. It was a necessary corollary of the second one. What the people of Ireland wanted was a parliament of their own in College-green. Nothing short of that would satisfy them. He was bound to say—his duty to his country required that he should say it—that men who could not go honestly with them had no business there. The man who joined them, and was not prepared to go with them, was not of them; and, he would say, was not of the Irish nation. Let that man stand by, and let them do what they could without him. Even though he might have the position of a patron, let him not realise Dr. Johnson's definition of a patron—"He is one who saw us struggling in the water without helping us, and is one who when we had saved ourselves without him, comes forward and encumbers us with his aid." In conclusion, he asked every man present to remember that he solemnly joined in pledging his country before the civilized world to the demand for the restoration of her ancient rights; and if, having agreed to the second resolution, he could not now give them something better than the federal arrangement, let him retire or dissent.

Sir JOHN GRAY, M.P., said he rose with great reluctance to claim their attention for a few minutes. Every man, no matter how humble he might be, no matter how insignificant in the body politic he was, had a character to sustain, and dear above all things, in that character should be his political consistency and political honour. After the speech which had just been made by Mr. Butt, he found it impossible, great as was the disadvantage of following him—to sit silent and not offer a few observations in reference to the statement he had made. But let him not be misunderstood. He desired to vindicate himself, and not in any way to controvert what had been said. Mr. Butt had drawn a distinction between simple repeal, as he called it, and federalism, as defined in the resolutions. There could be no doubt that federalism has not hitherto been defined with the clearness, distinctness, and accuracy, and, as he believed, with the same correctness as it was in the resolution before the meeting. But, as one who had been a repealer nearly forty years ago, and who continued to be a repealer from that hour to this, who was a repealer that day, and would be a repealer until Repeal was carried, he felt bound to vindicate his own consistency and vindicate the honour of him who was his teacher, at whose feet he sat for many years, and who now lies in Glasnevin, by saying that he was never opposed to federalism, and that it was from the lips of O'Connell he learned federalism. He believed if O'Connell were alive to-day he would be a most ardent advocate of federalism for Ireland. His (Sir John Gray's) chief reason for trespassing upon their attention at that moment was that he had been asked by many persons in that hall why he who had so long been a repealer could be a federalist, and he wished to give them the reason why he was a federalist by stating that as a repealer, he was always a federalist. What does simple repeal mean? He feared very few of those who sought to draw a broad distinction between "Repeal" and "Federalism" clearly understood that the act of 1800, which merged the Irish legislature in that of Great Britain, should be "repealed" before a federal constitution could be established. Federalism included repeal of the Union, but simple repeal did not include federalism. Repeal was but a first step to secure to Ireland local legislative independence, and federalism was in his opinion the form of the settlement sought after in order to render Irish legislature perpetual. At the very best, with all the difficulties put before the chair by Mr. Butt with clearness and force, simple repeal would simply mean a return to the *statu quo* in 1800. Was that what they wanted? Was that what the Irish people wanted? Was that what they had any chance of getting? He agreed with Mr. Sullivan when he said that if he were an Englishman he would say no to such a proposition. As an Irishman anxious to render an Irish parliament free, and potential, and anxious to render the Irish parliament perpetual, he would object to it if it were offered him to-morrow, because he believed that simple repeal would give them the weakness of '82, would give them the dangers experienced in '85, and would give them all the risks of a regency question should it ever occur again, and would give to an English minister, whenever his hour of strength came, the power to strangle their liberties and destroy their national legislature as he did in 1800. Mr. Sullivan had quoted some writings of the great Fox to indicate that

he, with some of the patriots of '82, thought that perfect federalism would be better for Ireland—far better and far more clear and permanent than the settlement of '82. He, too, had been looking over the records of those times, and he was sure there were many there who had read the debates on the Union with better effect than he did—but he believed there was no subject dwelt upon with more force and more effect by Castlereagh and Clare than the fact that in the constitution of '82 Ireland had no provision against a possible and probable rupture with England. The wisdom and prudence of the statesmen of that day, who looked deeper than the mere surface of an act of parliament, showed them that it was almost impossible, whenever the likelihood of such an occurrence arose, to avoid a rupture, except by some arrangement that would separate imperial from local business, and give to Ireland a perfect, absolute, independent control over her own affairs, and a potential voice in the affairs of the empire of which she formed a part. No doubt, bribery, corruption and force, had their effect upon many members of the Irish parliament at the time, though he believed there were many honest men among them; men who acted for the protection of the empire, because with them nothing weighed so much on their minds as the danger impossible to be avoided by the state of the constitution we then had, of a rupture with England. One word dropped from Mr. Butt which he was sure was not meant as a taunt against the repealers who were also federalists.

Mr. Butt—Not at all.

Sir John Gray said he was sure of that, but he felt it necessary to state so, lest it should go abroad that the repealers had given up something. They gave up nothing. They would achieve a great gain by getting Federalism instead of simple repeal. They would get strength in the empire, and power to influence its councils, and get a ministry of their own which the independent parliament could control. He regretted having occupied so much of their time at that late hour by these observations, but the consciousness of what was due to his own consistency induced him to ask permission to state that upon federalism he had never altered his opinion.

He had conversations on the subject with O'Connell, which he could not repeat; but he knew what the views of the great Liberator on the subject were, and what it was that caused him to give up the discussion of federalism at the time he ceased to discuss it. O'Connell wrote much and spoke more in private upon that subject. On the very first occasion that probable future ministers began to meddle at local legislation for Ireland, when approaches were made he entered into the details included in the one word "Repeal," and would have followed them out, had not federalism been decried as a project for subordinating the Irish parliament. He would not dwell upon the discussion raised, and the way the eroneous idea of a subordinate parliament was pressed upon the public. He could, however, state without any violation of private confidence that it was not the difficulties of true federalism, but because of the sand strewn in his path that O'Connell ceased to publicly advocate federalism. He (Sir John Gray) hoped they would have no sand thrown in their path in carrying their project to a perfect success.

The Very Rev. DEAN O'BRIEN, D.D., V.G., said he had determined to be a listener, and no more, until in the course of the afternoon some things had been said, and perhaps over-said what the speaker meant, and some statements had been made regarding the manner in which great public movements acquired success. He believed federalism was a thing that had been on the lips and in the hearts of many who had never spoken of it, simply because the resolutions of men's minds were brought forth by time, and the thing that was not going to be practicable was not discussed. Mr. Butt would bear him out in saying, at all events, that they had 1,600 witnesses to the Irish views on that subject five years ago. In what was called the Limerick Declaration, 1,600 priests stated that until Ireland had the restoration of her legislature, peace, concord, and happiness became utterly impossible; and this legislature was defined to be a federal arrangement, by which Ireland, instead of being England's weakness, would commence to be her strength. He thought they had a tolerably good representation of the Irish people in that large number of clergymen, not after the Home Rule movement began, but long before, when they gave a stimulus to the Home Rule feeling, out of which the Home Rule movement grew. It was very well said here yesterday and to-day that, after all, action was the representation of feeling, and far more true what Mr. Butt said, that there never could be true legislation unless it represented the convictions, the passions, and the feelings of the people, whose sentiments were more potent than their reason. As a witness to the feelings of the Irish priesthood at that time, he thought himself bound to rise and declare their convictions, as representing the millions of Ireland, that federalism was the settlement which they ambitioned, and which they believed would have the result of making Ireland what she ought to be. Every one would regret the position taken by The O'Conor Don, if it really was his position. If the happy results of nationality could not be obtained until all classes joined in demanding it, that union of hearts was to be effected only by discussion, earnest labour, and constant exposition of our views. The union of classes was to be obtained by labours like the present, patient, tolerant, and intelligent; and, in fact, success presupposed such union—so that The O'Conor Don's scruple ought to resolve itself into the necessity of universal effort at present, to secure future moral unanimity—not into a reservation which seemed to deprecate all work whatever now.

What principally induced him to rise however was that his friend, Mr. Butt, asked him to say a few words on this resolution, and some accidental circumstances rendered him, perhaps a good witness to the principles of federalism. He recollected thirty-five years ago, he was in Canada, and every one knew that rebellion was the normal state of the Canadian mind at that time. He recollected the rebellion of Papineau, and amongst its greatest men he heard the declaration that that state of the public mind was to be universal unless Canada was allowed her own autonomy, to govern her own destinies, to have her own nationality. The Very Rev. Dean O'Brien pointed out that the difference of religion between the inhabitants of Upper and Lower Canada did not prevent them from now cordially working for the good of their common country, and, as a result of the altered state of things which now existed, he stated

that Howe, the arch-rebel of 1838, and one of his (Dean O'Brien's) most devoted friends, recently died Governor of Novia Scotia. He pointed to his watch, which contained an inscription stating that it was presented to him by a few repealers in America, in 1845, and concluded by declaring that his sentiments since then had undergone no change, and that he he hoped to see the triumph of the national cause before he was called to his Maker. He had been edified not only by the intelligence and good temper exhibited, but by the manliness with which speakers withdrew sentiments when they found them incompatible or inconsistent with the movement. It was well said that those they sent to parliament were not to represent themselves, but their constituents. Seven hundred years had not been able to destroy their aspirations for liberty. They were making public opinion, and, he believed, making it well. In this, the nineteenth century, they may well wait the power of mind over mind in the battle of ideas, until those now against them should grasp their hands, and all Irishmen should stand together.

Mr. SLATER, of Longford, apologised for coming to enunciate his opinion as a simple country gentleman. They desired to give no uncertain sound of that which they felt within them. That movement, beginning with small things, had now reached a climax. It had gone abroad through the length and breadth of the land, and had found response in the heart of the nation, which would not be satisfied until it is thoroughly successful. He was glad to find that there were some members of Parliament there who are what they ought to be. When they came there it was not to speak a few words of doubtful meaning. They never had such freedom of election as now, and it will be the people's fault if they do not at the next election put in good representatives. He believed this to be a reasonable, rational, and feasible movement. They did not desire separation from England. The arrangement respecting the House of Lords was a matter which could be left over until they had their own legislation in their own hands. That is the principle they contended for, and which he desired to support, for, he believed this country has not been justly governed. A public board in this city had, by economy, accumulated £100,000, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ordered it to be transferred to the British Treasury. The expenditure of this country in London for the last year in promoting railway bills and legislation of various sorts was upwards of £600,000. That money had not been spent in encouraging the industry of the Irish people. He had been informed that the first item in the bill of expenditure for the construction of a small railway was no less than £7,000, to be spent in that overgrown Babylon—London. Was not that a state of things calling for redress? But these were only a drop in the ocean compared with their difficulties. They should put into practice the French motto, "Aide-toi et Dieu t'aidera;" in other words, "Help yourself and God will help you."

Mr. JOHN MARTIN, M.P., said before the debate closed he wished to say a few words. It seemed to him that the simple repealers had been too hardly dealt with. To him the explanation of The

O'Conor Don was entirely satisfactory. As he understood The O'Conor Don, what he conveyed was that, if the question was in his leading —what was the best form, what the best conditions under which to unite the Irish nation in the demand for self-government—his idea would point to something different, not only in detail, but as to convenience and opportunity, yet not different in principle from the series of resolutions submitted. Expressing this difference, The O'Conor Don fairly and wisely declared that he desired to go with his country. That was exactly his (Mr. Martin's) feeling. He was a repealer, but he felt that to raise now a discussion on the relative merits of Repeal *v.* Federalism would be worse than useless: it would distract attention and waste time. He came there to unite with his country in a scheme that his country would accept, and which he believed would be honourable and safe for Ireland. Not changing his opinion as to Repeal, he was still ready to accept the Federal arrangement as safe and honourable. The present movement must succeed by being supported by men of all opinions. A man can join the movement and yet hold his own opinion. Several speakers had alluded to the likelihood of assistance being given to the movement, once we were able to put it on a large national basis, by friends in America, Australia, and other parts of the world. He was glad to say that he had that day received a letter from Cleveland, Ohio, United States, from a person who represented himself as a member of a numerous society in that city, asking for information how that association could aid the cause by money or otherwise. In conclusion, he begged to declare that, holding his own opinions, as he dared do, he cordially accepted the fourth resolution.

Mr. BUTT here rose to explain. He said either he must have expressed himself incorrectly or Mr. Martin must have misunderstood him if he supposed that he (Mr. Butt) had uttered anything inconsistent with the principles expressed by Mr. Martin just now. He had simply said of Mr. Martin and of Mr. Smyth, that, holding their individual opinions, as they did, if the matter were put to them, they would prefer the proposal for simple repeal, but, at the same time, without compromising their sentiments in the slightest degree, were ready to join in the movement for federalism as, under all the circumstances of the time, the scheme to be pursued.

Mr. F. O'DONNELL, of London, said a previous speaker had referred to the great Babylon. Though they had complaints to make against London, he, as one who was resident in that city, and a public journalist, might be taken as evidence of the ways of Babylon, and of the views and opinions of the Babylonians with respect to the great question of Home Rule for Ireland. With respect to the question of federalism *versus* simple repeal, he was able to say that, were they to press the resolution in favour of simple repeal, no eloquence, no power of argument, would persuade the vast majority of the English people that its advocates sought only repeal, and were honest and sincere in their efforts to secure only the reform of the existing conditions to that extent and no more. The ordinary Englishmen could not understand the proposition coming

from Irishmen to give up their share in the government of this vast empire. To the logical, common sense mind of the average British citizen such a proposition and such an attitude would be simply incredible. The earnestness, solidity, and sense with which the movement had been conducted up to the present had given the English people fully to understand that Ireland would never be satisfied with a vestry in Dublin. Further, that it was the interest of England that its interest in Irish affairs should be relegated to such an institution. The act of union had caused inconvenience to the people of England as well as to the people of Ireland. In conclusion, Mr. O'Donnell said that the withdrawal of 100 members from continual interference in English affairs would be the greatest benefit to the English nation.

Mr. P. J. SMYTH, M.P., said he would not have risen at all except that he wished to keep his personal character and his public one clear before the country. He trusted that the fact of putting his name to the Requisition—which he did under protest, as Mr. Butt was aware, because it was not a programme he would have framed—did not preclude him from entertaining opinions which he had held throughout his public life. He, like Mr. Martin, was a simple repealer, but he did not think it necessary to enter there into that question. If it be the feeling of his countrymen—and from the expression of that Conference he took it so to be—that federalism was the right thing, was the way to win, he could only say, as an Irishman, he believed it to be an act of patriotic duty and of public virtue to say that he went with them. At the same time, while he abstained from any discussion of that kind at that time, he hoped he would get credit for all sincerity in avowing his conviction that repeal of the Union was the only logical ground upon which the nation could stand. If they adopted another ground in the direction of nationality he would go with them, and he hoped that upon such ground they would succeed.

The Rev. ISAAC NELSON, Belfast, next addressed the meeting. He stated he was proud as an Irishman, and as an Irish Northern Presbyterian, to be present at such a meeting of his countrymen. He remembered that five Presbyterians of Belfast, standing on the Cave Hill, clutched hands together, and vowed before heaven to devote their lives to their country's freedom. "Who fears to speak of '98?" These men were unsuccessful; but lightly might the green turf lie upon their ashes, and "when cowards mock the patriot's fate, who hangs his head for shame." He was sorry to know from the reading of his country's history that her condition was this—English intellect and English gold had been employed to demoralise the people, to degrade them, to buy them, and to sell them. If he put the stethoscope to the breast of the Irish nation, he found the pulsations of its heart were what they had always been—for Ireland's freedom. There were 105 Irish members of the House of Commons—honourable and learned men—and he wished to know were those gentlemen present at that meeting to consider the condition of Ireland? He would now be satisfied to return to the impatient people of Belfast, and he was sure, and it was a thing to be gra-

tified with perhaps, that if they but acted with a little wisdom they would have the Orangemen with them. He was no holiday talker, nor was he there to win laurels from the Home Rule Conference. He was there to do his duty to the people amongst whom God had placed him. Mr. Nelson humorously compared the expressions of many members of parliament with the utterances of the Delphic oracle, and said he was a Home Ruler, because he was a student and read his country's history. They should agree on the question of the restoration of the Irish parliament—of the "Old House at Home." He might tell them that no man could now stand up on the hustings in Ulster and give them a Delphic oracle answer; and he himself sometimes knew what a man means as much from what he does not say as from what he does. There was such a thing as "amphibology," and he would say to The O'Conor Don that he had left the most important part unsaid. They had given to themselves the idea that the old parliament was to be restored, and they were going to consent that it should be restored on a federal arrangement. He had the fullest confidence is his Catholic fellow-countrymen. He knew them and loved them. When he grasped the hand of the great Prelate of the West how did he receive him—that big heart in the big form? He grasped him by the hand with the feeling that he was a brother Irishman, and gave him on going home, and with a sentence written in it with his own hand, a copy of the Word of the Living God, written in Irish. The doctrine which he would then preach, as a Christian minister, was glory to God in the highest; on earth peace and good good-will to man. The rev. gentleman concluded by telling the 105 representatives of Ireland that they would have no chance of again going in for an Irish constituency unless they supported the demand for the restoration of our national parliament.

The CHAIRMAN.—We must now bring this debate to a conclusion. The subject has been very fully discussed. I have done the best I could in selecting gentlemen to speak who were representative men from the different districts. It would be quite impossible to hear every gentleman who might desire to speak on the subject, for if we did our sitting would not conclude for a week. I will now put the resolution. Gentlemen, the resolution upon which you are now called upon to decide is:—

That in claiming these rights and privileges for our country, we adopt the principle of a federal arrangement, which would secure to the Irish parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, while leaving to the imperial parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the imperial crown and government, legislation regarding the colonies and other dependencies of the crown, the relations of the empire with foreign states, and all matters appertaining to the defence and stability of the empire at large, as well as the power of granting and providing the supplies necessary for imperial purposes.

As many as are of opinion that the resolution should pass will say "Aye!" The contrary "No."

The question was met with loud cries of "Aye!" from all parts of the house: and one "No," from Mr. Mooney.

The Chairman, then, about half-past five p.m., announced the Conference adjourned till eleven o'clock next morning.

THIRD DAY,

20th November, 1873.

The Conference re-assembled at half-past eleven o'clock, and the Chair was taken by

Mr. W. SHAW, M.P.

The CHAIRMAN said, that in commencing the proceedings of the preceding day he expressed a hope that they would finish that evening. He was not sorry that they were disappointed in that expectation; for, although the business of yesterday covered only one resolution, the discussion was one of the most important that could take place in their Conference. It was, in fact, a thorough discussion on the real foundations of their movement. He was amused this morning at reading a statement that about 200 obscure persons attended that Conference. That information came direct from London. It, therefore, takes four ordinary Irishmen to make one obscure person, because about 800 attended, as far as he could judge, and he was not accustomed to exaggerate. That showed the way in which it was attempted to misrepresent their movement. He would not say it was done wilfully; but the word "obscurity" expressed exactly the way in which all Irish questions are looked at in England; not, he thought, intentionally, but naturally, from the prejudices and purse-proudishness of a big, rich, strong nation that can hardly look at anything but itself and its own wealth. The Irish nation would give them an answer—not in words, but at the next general election; and he had no doubt that, by-and-bye, the English would take their telescope and begin to see that there are rather more than 200 obscure persons in the movement.

He had to request that they would endeavour to finish the business that day. He felt sure that three days were enough to devote to that Conference. By a little self-denial on the part of the gentlemen who had something to say, and an effort to condense their remarks, he thought they could get through their business. One or two resolutions to be proposed were but corollaries to those already passed. They had decided the principle, and therefore much discussion was not required.

He called on Sir Joseph Neale M'Kenna to move the fifth resolution.

SIR JOSEPH NEALE M'KENNA proposed the fifth resolution. He said he would at once plagiarize the words of the Chairman, and say that the fifth resolution, which he had the honour to move was a corollary to the fourth. The fifth resolution simply affirmed that their plan did not contemplate nor involve any alteration in the constitution of the imperial parliament, nor any interference or disturbance of the prerogative

of the Crown. Notwithstanding that affirmation, he protested his belief that this whole plan was the nearest possible approach practically, at the present day, to the policy of Grattan. In that sense he understood and adopted this programme. That was what it meant to him. It meant the assertion, and it would mean the realization, of the right of Ireland to manage her own affairs, subject, nevertheless, to the Constitution, and to a fiscal and federal arrangement as the basis of their association with Great Britain as sister realms of one empire. Home Rule did not mean simply repeal of the Union; it meant, in some respects, somewhat less, and in other respects a little more. During the last seventy-three years—the post-Union period—the relations of the United Kingdom with all the dependencies of the Crown had been resettled. All the chief colonies, during that same period, had received constitutions and parliaments of their own, and it was during that notable seventy-three years that the East India Company had surrendered its dominions and India had been absorbed in the empire. Their programme did not ignore all this. They did not disclaim having participated in the legislation which had conduced to those results. They did not refuse to continue —nay, more, they claimed to continue on their present footing in relation to the empire at large, subject, however, to a fiscal and a federal agreement, which were matters of detail that had to be hereafter considered and worked out *seriatim*. The chief objection that was urged against their plan was that this fiscal and federal arrangement was impracticable. The writers in the English press assumed that Great Britain—England and Scotland—never could be brought to agree to terms that would be satisfactory to Ireland. Why not? England had only to be just. But they were not discussing a matter of abstract theory. Within the last few years Austria had found the means to do, and had done, this precise thing for Hungary. He could assure them, and the writers in the English press from that place, that the parallel between the relations of Austria to Hungary and those of Great Britain to Ireland was nearly exact. So much alike were they that no intelligent, educated, unprejudiced mind in Europe or America that he ever came in contact with was able to discern or point to a material discrepancy. He did not mean to occupy much of their time, but he would wish to explain the salient points of similarity. They all knew that in 1782 the legislative independence claimed by Ireland was voted to her by the English parliament sitting in Westminster. That was their Irish historic landmark—now this was the corresponding Hungarian one. Just eight years later, in the year 1790, the ancient legislative independence claimed by Hungary was solemnly guaranteed to her by imperial edict and all the forms of Austrian law. Similar grievances followed in both cases. Hungary and Ireland or rather Ireland and Hungary, for she took precedence for her wrongs, were both robbed or defrauded of their separate legislatures; and on the plea, or under the pretext, of political expediency, imperial laws were forced upon each. He would not trouble the meeting by going through the circumstances affecting the Irish nation. They all knew how and by what agency the Union was carried. Neither need he tell them why Ireland, in place of being a source of security and strength, is a source of weakness to the

British empire and to every British ministry. But he would show how the Austrian empire failed when she broke faith with Hungary.

After some years of discontent, Hungary rose in revolt, but rose in vain. The rebellion of 1848 was crushed in 1849 by Austria, with the aid of Russia. Might trampled on right, and the worshippers of successful tyranny all over the globe raised a mighty and exultant chorus at what they believed to be the final result of the struggle. But though the Hungarian rebellion was indeed wholly crushed and stamped out, it was stamped out for Austria in vain, just as in vain the Cæsars of ancient Rome attempted to stamp out the Gospel of Truth in the blood of the martyrs. The parallel was not yet complete. The agonies of Hungary were not confined to bloody reverses on the field of battle, for on the 6th October, 1849, the victorious Austrians erected a monster gallows within the walls of Arad, and before the shades of evening fell, eleven Hungarian generals were hanged; whilst, on the same day, the noble patriot Bathyani—the Geraldine of Hungary—perished by the executioner's hand at Pesth. But her victory and her ghastly vengeance bore bitter fruit for Austria. From that day forth she seemed to become a prey to misfortunes, such as the fabled Nemesis was said to hold in store for those who inflicted unrighteous punishments, and such as Providence, in all ages, had dealt to arrogant states and empires. Since then Lombardy was torn from her, Venetia was torn from her, and not only her primacy, but her position in Germany was utterly destroyed. And, as if to bring the gibbets of Arad and the execution at Pesth home to the Kaiser's own door, he had lived to mourn his own brother crowned with a mock imperial crown, tried, sentenced to death, and shot by the orders of a republican general who had overthrown his army on the plains of Mexico.

Passing, however, from that sad episode, let them see what a warning there was in all that had befallen Austria herself since she destroyed the native government of Hungary. France wrested Lombardy from her, and sold or bartered it to Victor Emmanuel, as the price of Nice and Savoy. Prussia, which had stood quietly by whilst France and Italy did that job, forthwith bargained with Italy to wrest Venetia from Austria, and deliver it to Victor Emmanuel, on condition that Italy should attack Austria in flank, whilst Prussia smote her on the face. An alliance was quickly brought about, and after many sanguinary battles, in which the Prussians as invariably beat the Austrians as the Austrians did the Italians, the Prussian general dictated terms of peace within sight of Vienna, making Austria not only surrender Venetia, but forcing her out of association with the other German states, and making her pay an enormous sum to save her capital from the conquerors. This was indeed the irony of fate for Austria—historic Austria—for ages holding together many states in allegiance to the one sceptre, consolidated by civil war and Russian bayonets in 1849, to be dismembered, plundered, and driven from the Germanic Confederation by Prussia in 1866. What must Francis Joseph have then thought? What might he not have accomplished or have averted long ere Sadowa had to be fought, if it were not that he had estranged Hungary by a forced union, and that she not only could not be relied on as of old, but that her sons were to be found in the

legions of Prussia? He sorely needed such generals as Kiss and Aulich, and Nagy Sandor, and Damyanics, to lead his armies; but alas! they had perished on the gallows of Arad, in 1849, because they had fought for their birthright and the freedom of Hungary. All this time there existed in Austria a strong, unscrupulous imperial sentiment, just as there was a similar sentiment in Great Britain, and there was an imperial party even in Hungary itself, just as there was a kind of anti-Irish imperial party in Ireland. The Austrian imperialists maintained that it was politic, and, therefore, right, that Hungary should *nolens volens* be governed by imperial law, and they flouted the charge of injustice because they professed to offer her equal laws as an integral portion of the empire. The upshot was that, bereft of the loyal friendship of Hungary, Francis Joseph of Austria was successfully attacked by Italy, France and Prussia, and successfully despoiled by each; whereupon Francis Joseph came to terms with the national party in Hungary and sent for Francis Deak; he entered into communication with the national party in Hungary, and he carried out an act of justice which was the glory of his reign and the salvation of his empire. He, with some slight modification, which time had rendered necessary, restored the ancient constitution of Hungary. He conferred on her thereby contentment and peace. To use our own familiar language, he granted her that Home Rule which his ancestor, Leopold, in 1790, had almost, if he had not actually, sworn to maintain for Hungary. Oh! what a glorious day for Francis Joseph and for Austria, the day on which he abrogated and put away for ever the hideous policy of Haynau—the policy of the gibbet, the rope, and the prison—to win back the love of a nation which had been, in former generations, equally lavish of its blood and treasures on behalf of his house.

He had dwelt on this subject simply for one object—to prove in this place that the trite and miserable plea of the impracticability of Home Rule was a subterfuge—that it was an attempt to escape from the political arguments bearing upon the case. He told them it must be abandoned, but he hoped it would never have to be abandoned under circumstances of such humiliation as those under which a similar policy had to be abandoned by Francis Joseph—not that he ever urged that policy himself, but it had been unjustly urged on his behalf. It was asserted by the English papers that if Home Rule was granted this country would be torn by intestine factions. He would ask what reason was there to believe that this country, elevated by the possession of her native legislature, would be torn by intestine factions in any other sense than any other country which had constitutional government might expect to have occasional collisions? They had been learning a lesson on constitutionalism for some years. England herself had only come to understand its bearing during the reign of the present house. He did not believe if Home Rule was restored to Ireland to-morrow that we would be torn with more emotions and passions than prevail in England, where the party chiefs freely accuse one another of corruption at one time, and plundering at another, scarcely ruffling the temper of anyone. Sir Joseph N. M'Kenna concluded by moving the following resolution:—

That, such an arrangement does not involve any change in the existing constitution of the imperial parliament or any interference with the prerogatives of the crown or disturbance of the principles of the constitution.

Mr. M'CARTHY DOWNING, M.P., said he had the greatest pleasure in attending the Conference, and he tendered to the Home Rule Association his unmeasured thanks for having called it. The country was deeply indebted to that body for having kept alive this subject, and having brought it to the proud position which it held to-day. He felt the greatest possible gratification at even being able to say a few words, for he was sure the Conference would not expect that he would, even if time permitted, speak at such length as would do his health injury. He had been all his life a repealer. He attended many of the monster meetings of the great O'Connell. He was a Home Ruler; for he was but a very short time in the House of Commons when he saw that the imperial parliament, even if inclined, had not time to give them laws necessary for the development of the many resources which Ireland possessed. He admitted that he came to the Conference the advocate of simple repeal—but a man should always admit when he changed his opinion and was convinced, and he confessed he was made a convert since he entered the room. The clear, lucid, and able speech of Mr. Butt had satisfied him that the programme adopted by the Association was the only one that the English nation would ever grant. He had come to the conclusion too—after having some doubts on it—that it would be perfectly idle to ask England to give Ireland a House of Commons without a House of Lords. It was the Lords, Commons, and King they had in '82, and it was the same thing they asked for now. They should remember this—that the House of Lords was becoming very unpopular in England, and that its having put a veto six times on the bill passed by the House of Commons legalizing marriage with a deceased wife's sister, caused a meeting to be called in London to consider whether the House of Lords should be got rid of or reconstructed. They might depend on it that if the House of Lords became factiously obstructive in England the English people would at once rectify that matter, and if rectified in England it would be rectified in Ireland.

It was said, no doubt, that the English people would not listen to this demand for a federal union. He believed the feeling of the English people was not understood in the matter. He had many conversations with English and Scotch members upon the question, and he knew their sentiments to be this—"Satisfy us that you only want a parliament to manage your own affairs, and do not intend more, that you do not intend afterwards to look for separation, and we will not only listen to you, but vote with you." He could name many of the leading members of the House of Commons to whom he spoke on the matter. When he protested that, as far as he knew, he could pledge his honour that there was no intention on the part of those conducting the agitation, of requiring more than a parliament to manage their own affairs, they said that they believed this to be his feeling, but asked how could he answer for others. He answered, why not believe others as well as himself? What more could they have, the honour of gentlemen, and the pledge of the nation? "But" added he, "supposing we deceive you, and try to

separate from you, do you think the Irish people have not common sense? Do they not know that you with your strength and power would send your vessels to close our ports, bombard our towns, and reconquer us? He asked them was not that a sufficient pledge? They could guard themselves in every possible way by an act of parliament, as far as an act of parliament could do it. They asked him, why Scotland is not seeking Home Rule? His answer was that there was an agreement, a regular compact entered into between England and Scotland, agreed upon by commissioners appointed by both sides to settle the terms. The first thing Scotland required was that England should sink her great name, and that the two nations should be thenceforth known as Great Britain. Their armorial bearings are carried on their flags; the Cross of St. Andrew is also emblazoned on their ensigns. It was a union free and independent on equal terms, and everything Scotland required was given. Scotland entered into an agreement by the contract—but Ireland never did—and yet Scotland shortly after sought to repeal the Union, and was only defeated by a small majority. The people of Ireland, from the day the Union was passed, never gave their sanction. The union of Sweden and Norway had been alluded to. One of the articles of that small kingdom of Norway is, perhaps, the most perfect to be found in the constitution of any in the world; and it is this, that if any change be proposed in the constitution of Norway it cannot be introduced in that session of parliament, and there must be an appeal to the country. If that was done here in 1800, would the Union have been carried? Was the parliament that had been entrusted with the affairs of Ireland justified in destroying the constitution, and handing over their power to another parliament? What would the people of England do to-morrow if the House of Commons entered into an arrangement with France, or any other country, transferring to that country the management of their own affairs to an imperial parliament sitting in Paris? Would the minister who did so have his head long on his shoulders? Two years ago he took up the returns to see how many bills were introduced into the House of Commons that year. Two hundred and fifty bills were laid on the table, and of them not more than six of the slightest consequence passed, not one for Ireland. He thought that when he became a member of parliament he could do wonders, and his constituents seem to think so still, for one of the charges brought against him the other day was, that he did not bring in a bill to compel landlords to sell their properties to their tenants. That may be a very good bill as regards absentees, and if he had the power he would do it; but he assured them that the Irish members could do but very little in a British House of Commons, though they attended from twelve o'clock in the day until four in the morning. There were many questions before parliament and the country twenty-eight or thirty years—for instance, the grand jury system, upon which many committees had reported. He had the presumption to bring in a fishery bill, merely asking for £5,000 a year to be lent on the most ample security; but Mr. Lowe, the benevolent, generous Chancellor of the Exchequer, turned round in the House of Commons, and, as he has very bad sight, he is always obliged to put up his glass when he wants to see any one—put up his glass and

said, "You want me to give you money on your personal security in Ireland." That was the answer. They had a railway bill, with the security of £120,000 a year from three baronies, and when they applied for only £53,000, they were refused. The people of England themselves saw the necessity for a local parliament in England. They had begun to talk of it. Irish business, they said, had for two years obstructed the business of England and Scotland. The English people had become most intolerant in their observations on the subject; and when he was spoken to in this tone, he replied, "Oh, let us go by all means."

Now, with regard to taxation, it was said, "If you have your own parliament, remember that you must be prepared to pay a great deal more than you pay now." He did not know whether many present had read one of the papers issued by the Home Rule Association, in which it appeared that Great Britain contributed to the imperial revenue a sum of 4s. o¾d. in the pound, and that Ireland paid 6s. o½d. on realized property. That was a return laid upon the table of the House of Commons, which was beyond yea or nay. In the last session of parliament they might remember that a bill was brought in to re-value Ireland. He spoke in the presence of gentlemen who knew it, amongst others, his honourable friend, the member for Kilkenny. Mr. Baxter, the financial secretary of the treasury, had stated in the house that the bill was essential and necessary. He admitted it would raise the property in Ireland by three millions a year, but he said they must do that or withdraw it, because in England they paid upon the rental, while in Ireland they paid upon the valuation. He (Mr. Downing) went to the library of the house, got the last return, and found that was not correct. He found that 25 per cent. was taken off the rental in England for the purpose of taxation. Mr. Peel, then one of the parliamentary secretaries, came up from the Treasury Bench to him (Mr. Downing) and asked him where he got that information. He told him, and Mr. Peel were obliged to admit it was true. While they were paying on the valuation in Ireland, the rental in England was reduced by 25 per cent. That is blundering and plundering. That morning he had received the *Standard*, and in one of the articles which he cut out he found a great deal that, he was sorry to say, was true. It told them that there were only the names of ninety magistrates, signed to the Requisition.

Mr. Butt—That is not true.

Mr. Downing said he could only tell them that that Requisition had never been presented, so far as he knew, and he ought to know something about it—it was not, so far as he knew, presented or carried to one single town in the West Riding of Cork; and if it was his friend, the Chairman, had truly said that in the county of Cork alone they would have got 200,000 signatures. What did the writer further say, and he was sorry to say it was true. He said, "Of over 1,000 barristers, and every barrister is a candidate for parliamentary honours, only eight unknown had signed it." There was not 1,000 barristers, he believed, looking for parliamentary honours, but there were a good many, and he had not seen one of them there. The bar of Ireland generally had led when it was necessary. They were amongst the men that resisted the Union to the last, and left burning words that should

animate and guide the bar of the present day. The *Standard* ought not to forget that it was not many years ago—and he recollected it well—when a petition was sent to the Queen, signed by 430,000 men of Ireland, asking her Majesty to take the opinion of Ireland as to whether the Union ought to be maintained or not. He said deliberately that any minister who wished to maintain the Union would yield what is now demanded by the Irish people. If the refusal of the demand of the Irish people for the management of their own affairs, be persistently adhered to, what would be the result? A good many who never before joined in extreme agitations would be led into it—a whole nation would be ready to assert their rights. There was just one matter to which he would allude, because he believed it was the intention of some friends to allude to it, and that was, whether the Conference, or the Council, of the new League—would lay down whether it would be necessary to pledge members at the next elections—and he gave his opinion that it would—or whether the minority of Irish members should be bound by the majority, which he believed should not be agitated. He supposed the Council of the new League would give their attention to the subject of seeking trusted men, and he believed it ought to be with the Council that the rest of the programme should be left. He was sorry there should have been a little misunderstanding with regard to The O'Conor Don. He could say there was no Irish member in the House of Commons in whom there might be greater trust placed. He was one of the most industrious men in parliament, and he (Mr. Downing) was certain that he would be found in the front ranks in carrying out their programme. For himself, representing the great county of Cork, he accepted, in the fullest manner, without any subterfuge or without keeping anything behind, what had been done in the Conference, and would do all in his power, in parliament or out of it, to make Ireland what she ought to be—a nation.

The CHAIRMAN suggested, as the fifth and seventh resolutions were corollaries of the fourth, there should be no discussion on them, but that discussion should be on the sixth and remaining resolutions. He hoped, however, the subject of parliamentary action would not be discussed there that day, as he considered that was a question for the League, and it was one of the most important questions connected with the movement. He would say nothing against the views that might be entertained on the subject, but it should be thoroughly ventilated by the constituencies or by the press, and any decisions arrived at calmly and deliberately would be thoroughly and fully carried out.

Mr. FERGUSON (Glasgow) directed the attention of the Chairman to one of the rules, stating that additional resolutions could be moved by any person after the first series prepared by the Conference had been disposed of. After that he apprehended it would then be in order to bring forward a resolution, which a large number of his friends considered absolutely necessary.

The CHAIRMAN said Mr. Ferguson was quite right. He only meant

that the discussion should not grow out of any of the resolutions. Afterwards it could be discussed, if there was time, and all he hoped was that they would come to no hasty decision.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN, M.P., said he hoped the Conference would permit him, as one of those connected in former times with the question which had now been so greatly revived, to say a few words. He believed, with the exception of Mr. Butt, he was the oldest member of parliament present, and was anxious to have an opportunity there, as he wished he should elsewhere, of identifying himself with the thought that was the dream of his youth, and that now in mature years he should see brought forward in a definite form, when the people of Ireland would throw aside all party politics and bickerings, and should only know themselves to be Irishmen. Sir Joseph M'Kenna, in the speech which he had the pleasure of listening to that morning, gave them an historic account of the struggles of a gallant nation to recover its liberties. He (Sir Patrick O'Brien) thought he was about to mention a famous incident that once occurred, when the people went forth to meet the monarch that professed a fidelity to them they believed real, they cried aloud—"Moriamur pro rege nostro." He trusted that they would always be true to the Irish nation, and the spirit of disaffection would soon disappear, and that when the hour of their deliverance arrived, they, with one heart, would cry—"Moriamur pro nostro rege." He trusted that what was true of the Hungarian nation would be true of the Irish nation, and above all things did he hope that the divisions which had torn their dear country would be thrown aside—that Protestant and Catholic, Whig, Tory, and Nationalist, forgetting all their differences, would be united in the common cause which brought them there. He could not see why they would not think, as was said by a great writer, that the inner consciousness which would come to a man that he was doing everything for his countrymen was a greater favour and interest to him than any idea of self-interest. This question of Home Rule, he believed, was one which required only to be ventilated, to have them united as one nation. The question of Home Rule had not been before the intellect and feeling of the Irish nation but for some three years past, and therefore it was not for them to assume that those who had not rushed forward at once would not yet approve of their movement. It was not a question raised at the hustings at the last election, and they were not to assume that those who might not now be with them would not gain faith in them, or would oppose the public opinion. The Conference should recollect that with the famine came a depression of everything like popular opinion in Ireland. Since the time of the famine this question may have been kept like a lamp in some silent fane—but Home Rule had not been presented to the intellect of the whole Irish nation as he had said. In order to accomplish their object they should act together in a spirit of thorough, entire, and complete conciliation—looking to the points of junction between their opinions, and not picking out minute points of difference. The present revival of Irish feeling, after long depression caused by the famine, had only been in existence for three years; but he believed that, at the next Conference held here, the

large room, so intimately associated with like events, would not be sufficiently large to contain the overpowering and overwhelming numbers who would take part in it. By that time opinion would be developed, their cause would gain additional strength, and their demand being strong, emphatic, and united, he hoped and believed it would be all-powerful.

Mr. BLENNERHASSETT, M.P., said he should only ask the Conference to bear with him for a very few moments. Indeed, he felt so deeply the value of time at this stage of their proceedings that he should not rise to address them at all, did he appear there simply as a private individual, but he felt that this was an occasion on which every man who professed to represent an Irish constituency was called on to declare, in clear and simple language, his views on the greatest of Irish questions, and in what spirit he was prepared to act in support of these views. He was an advocate of self-government for Ireland, and he believed the federal principle, as explained in the resolutions which he held in his hand, to be the most reasonable, the most practicable, the most honourable, and the most desirable form in which that self-government could be obtained; and, as an Irish member of parliament, he there declared and avowed that he considered it his first and paramount duty in that position to aid and support this movement by every legitimate means in his power. Nothing could be more pleasing to every real well-wisher of this movement present than to see the good feeling and the kindliness which had been displayed, and the readiness of many, who held strong opinions of their own to unite, and work cordially with others. This was the spirit which must prevail, not only amongst the Irish people, but also amongst their representatives in parliament, if they were to do good and useful work. He agreed with what his hon. friend, Mr. Butt, said in that great speech, which recalled the noblest traditions of Irish eloquence, that members of parliament should not be tied up here to any definite course of future action. They could not reduce their members to the position of mere delegates without degrading the whole character of their representation and weakening its force; but this should be well understood—that every man who went to parliament as a representative of the great principle of Home Rule for Ireland should not be a man that was willing to sacrifice everything to his own crotchets. Mr. Ferguson said yesterday he did not want men to go to parliament to represent themselves, but to represent the country. They did not want men to go to parliament to represent themselves; but they did not want men to go to parliament to represent the country, who did not, at the same time, represent the honest convictions of their own consciences; and let every constituency remember that, no matter how honourable a man might be—no matter how eloquent—no matter how gifted—no matter how honest—if he was not able to unite with others, to work with others, to concede at the right time and in the right way he should not be sent to parliament to delay to the Irish people the restoration of their right to self-government. He felt very strongly that the conviction of the justice of the principle of self-government to Ireland was not of itself sufficient to justify a public man in join-

ing this movement. He should also have a belief that the success of the movement was fairly practicable. Any public man who advocated a movement—no matter what it might be in its abstract theory—which he believed to be impracticable was committing a great public crime. He was destroying the confidence of the people in their public men and in constitutional government. He there avowed his conviction that, in his opinion, this movement was not only desirable, but that it was eminently practicable. He believed they had only to think of the reasonableness and justice of their demand to be assured of that. He believed that there was a strong good sense in the hearts of the great middle and lower classes of England to which they could successfully appeal in this demand. If they only acted together faithfully, honourably, and honestly in this great cause, the end was nearer than was expected; but let him say this, that, if through jealousy, if through falsehood, if through treachery, if through division, this great constitutional movement should fall through, no greater responsibility could fall on the heads of any men than would descend on the leaders of the Home Rule movement of to-day. They should remember that in applying for the restoration of their Irish parliament on the federal principle, they were simply claiming for themselves that which every Englishman prized as his birthright—the right of constitutional government, the right of a nation to be governed by representatives reflecting the views and opinion of the people. This was not a place for making speeches, but a Conference to discuss the principles of a great question, and the mode of action most desirable. Yet he would say this, whatever were the sneering comments of the English press on the Conference, he believed this was an occasion which, in future centuries, would be looked upon as a great occasion in the history of this country. They had heard a good deal of history in some of the speeches, but they not only learned history, but were making history that day. England had meddled and muddled, England had "plundered and blundered," to borrow a phrase from one of her own statesmen on Irish affairs. When would she gain wisdom from disappointment, and experience from failure? When would she learn the simple truth, that every people were best able to understand and manage their own affairs? He believed England was learning that lesson now—was learning it from that Conference, and, he believed further, that before long, her statesmen would put the lesson into practice. And, when Ireland had asserted her rights, and England had the wisdom and justice to intrust to the Irish people the responsibility of their own future, then and not till then would England find peace, security, and satisfaction in her relations with this country—then and not till then would the Irish people, awakened, encouraged, ennobled, rise to the full realization of their glorious destiny as a free and emancipated nation.

Dr. GRATTAN said he had for fifty years taken an active part in the public affairs of Ireland. He had been an uncompromising repealer, and to the end of his life he would hold to his opinion on that point; but he desired to express his cordial and entire concurrence in all the proceedings of the Conference, and in all the sentiments that had been

uttered. He avowed that he was a convert to the principles of federalism, and would do all he could to aid in obtaining a federal arrangement. O'Connell entertained much the same views. The Liberator, at a public meeting, alluded to the project of a federal compact; he mentioned the word "federalism," but it was not well received, and he verily believed had it been at the time put forward by O'Connell, it would not have been accepted by the Irish people. Now they stood under very different circumstances. He freely admitted that at one period he objected to the idea of an Irish House of Lords, but he had changed his opinion on that subject. His political creed might be simply stated. He there declared that no power under Heaven ought to have the right to make laws for Ireland but the Sovereign of these realms, and the Lords and Commons of Ireland. That was at the root of all their proceedings; and he believed if their movement was wisely, prudently, but firmly carried out, their triumph was secure.

The Very Rev. DEAN M'MANUS, P.P., said he would not abuse the indulgence of the meeting, for he remembered the significant words used by Sir Patrick down there, and indorsed by another Paddy up here, that this is not the place for speechmaking, or to show a man's industry in climbing up these heights and bringing down from parliament magnificent, but sometimes very valueless, flowers. He was there a witness, and would stand a cross-examination, even were it the prime minister himself who undertook it, charged with a new doctrine of quadratic equations and fluxions that was expressed there by saying that they had an assembly of about 200 obscure individuals yesterday—he was there to bear testimony to the chairman, and to that highly respectable meeting, that the men of the Connemara are sound to the heart's core, and to testify that some months ago when they received a message from those who, like Nehemiah of old, concealed the sacred fire of patriotism and sent them a message that awakened every spark of love of country in the men of the far West, that the clergymen of Connemara were the first as a body to answer the call made on them on that occasion. The echoes of the hills of Connemara give no uncertain sound. He feared they would have need to test the legal talent of the leader of this movement, Mr. Butt, in defending them against a prosecution for conspiracy, for he pleaded guilty to the existence of a conspiracy between the hills of Connemara and the hills of Kerry in testifying their readiness and willingness to use all legitimate means to have their country restored.

It was delightful to find such harmony between all ranks and creeds and denominations, as the speeches he had heard there exhibited. On the political platform they were all Irishmen. On Sunday morning they may wend their way to their respective places of worship, some with affected or real sincerity, looking on the ground, though it often happens that no one sees so much as the person who keeps looking down. Coming events cast their shadows before them, and if the future House of Commons, sitting in College-green, should be conducted with the dignity, capacity, firmness, and patience, that they had seen evinced by their chairman here, he believed it would be necessary to have a com-

petitive examination between the dignified characters of the British House of Commons and the Irish House of Parliament. What information was he to carry to the 26,000 men and women who were waiting to hear him next Sunday? They were fully determined not to be cheated or duped by either apathy or treason from any quarter. They had been frequently cheated, but, as far as they were concerned, there would be no faltering, or flagging, or treason, or treachery, within the bounds of the diocese of Tuam. He felt a pride in avowing that he belonged to Tuam, and a feeling similar to that which gave vigour and elasticity to the soldiers of Alexander, and as '*Milites sub Alexandro*' was the modest boast of every red-coated soldier in that army, they were proud to be '*Milites sub Joanne.*' He would take home a true message to the far West, where nature had done everything that could be expected, and where man and government had done nothing. The people of Connemara are becoming the instruments of retribution, even in this world, for they were allowed to die by the British government. They died of famine, and of disease consequent on famine, and their graves were made on the floors of their own homesteads. He gave them no exaggerated picture, and drew but a faint outline of the suffering of the good people of Connemara during the years of famine, when they were abandoned by the paternal government. There were 500 tons of yellow meal in the government stores of Clifden, while the dogs were crunching the skulls of the famine victims on the highway. There were two companies of soldiers guarding those stores, and they were profitably employed in drinking whiskey, got by giving out the meal themselves. They said they had the best right to the commissariat of the day, and they allowed the poor people to starve. He, therefore, came forward on the part of this people to tell the Association that they would have the co-operation of the people of Connemara. Need he say that John of Tuam is a guarantee of their perseverance? He had no book of retractions to write. If they wanted additional proof they had it in their beloved representative, Mr. Henry, whose motto was that no power on earth shall have, or ought to have, any power of making laws for Ireland but the Sovereign and the Lords and Commons of Ireland. Was he to tell his people they may elect a second member who would not go the whole hog, and say "I am a Home Ruler, and shall continue so." He could not but distrust the man who says "I am Home Ruler, but I won't take that pledge." It looked as if he were before-hand looking for a safety-valve for his own escape. If the social doctrine be sound, and if they belong to a society in which the minority should be swayed by the majority, where is the necessity of saying "I will reserve a little ground for my own calculations hereafter"? Any man who was convinced of the necessity of Home Rule ought not to follow any zigzag course. At the commencement of the last session of parliament there were only six or eight members of parliament to come forward to fight their battle. Where were the rest? They had a right to put the question. Mr. Henry had inaugurated a new system of political tactique—that of going from place to place throughout his county and giving an account of his stewardship, for an honest representative was not afraid to meet the men who sent him to parliament. Why should they despair of the success of the present

movement? The illustrious Archbishop of Tuam had said that when O'Connell came to manhood he found his country not alone paralysed, but prostrate in the sleep of slavery. O'Connell took up the trumpet of liberty, and he climbed up one of the lofty hills of Kerry, sounded a blast, and woke his countrymen to life and liberty, and they sprang to their feet disenthralled and emancipated, breathing the breath of life and recovered liberty. O'Connell had more difficulties to contend with in his time than they had now; and what had been secured by him by steady, increasing, unswerving honesty and perseverance, might be obtained by them. He believed the names of the men who had even remotely promoted the present movement would live for ever in the gratitude of the people. He had only to say in conclusion that the men of Connemara would be found ready and willing to co-operate with them in their movement.

The resolution was then put from the chair and passed unanimously.

Sir JOHN GRAY, M.P. said he thanked the Conference for the kind and cordial greeting that had been accorded him. He wished, in the first place, to say that he had not risen to make a speech or to trespass much upon their patience. He had rather risen to place before them a resolution of a business character, and then leave it to the members of the Conference to discuss that resolution and determine whether or not they should adopt it. The young and gifted member for Kerry said in his address to them that day that they were making history. He (Sir John Gray) would go a little further and say that he thought they were renovating a nation. In that historic room they had enunciated what had been called by Mr. Butt their national claims—they had enunciated their natural rights; and he hoped before they separated they would adopt sech a course as would secure the final achievement of these rights. They had said, almost in the words of '82—not that no power hath, for they had wisely avoided saying that—but that no power ought to have the power to make laws to bind Ireland save the Sovereign, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. That he took to be the sum and substance of their declarations for the past three days; and, assuming that they were resolved to carry those—their claims—into effective recognition, he had now to propose a resolution the effect of which, he thought, would be to render permanent those rights when they had achieved them. Perhaps he was going a little too far in saying that this resolution, or the adoption of it and the carrying of it out, would in itself have that effect; but it would tend that way, and it would be for the people themselves, having adopted this series of resolutions and carried them out, to take care that the resultant nation should be perpetuated. This resolution which had the honour to propose had that for its object and being a strictly business one, he would read it at once :—

That, to secure to the Irish people the advantages of constitutional government, it is essential that there should be in Ireland an administration for Irish affairs, controlled, according to constitutional principles, by the Irish parliament, and conducted by ministers constitutionally responsible to that parliament.

A responsible minister is the first essential of constitutional liberty. If they had a parliamentary constitution without a ministry responsible

to that parliament, without a ministry that would conduct the affairs of the nation in obedience to the will and in accordance with tbe votes of that parliament, any liberties they might achieve would, like those achieved by their forefathers in 1782, be swindled from them on the first opportunity that offered. Without such security and such protection there could be neither strength nor permanent life in the constitution. He would not trespass long upon their time, but he would read one or two extracts, which he thought would give some explanation of the principles enunciated in the resolution. One of these quotations, though coming from an enemy, was worthy of their special attention. It was an extract copied from John Foster's copy of the "Irish Debates." He quoted it from a speech delivered in the House of Commons, on the 5th February, 1800:—

"Nor were these the only objections to our present mode of connection. It had been often and justly complained of in that house that the ministers of this country, acting as they did under a British cabinet, were not responsible to the Irish parliament, from the moment they should withdraw from the kingdom, unless by a derogation of our independence we were to impeach at the bar of the English legislature those who had offended against the Irish constitution."

A stronger definition of absolute subservience, of absolute slavery, of absolute weakness, of the total absence of power and independence, it would be impossible to pen than these words, and they were the words of Lord Castlereagh when seeking to carry the Union, taunting the Irish members who adhered to the nationality of their country with the inherent weakness of the constitution which they were wishing to uphold, and showing them the impossibility of their having legislative independence under it. It was with the experience and the knowledge of that in the minds of the individuals who prepared the series of resolutions submitted to the Conference, that they came to the conclusion that it was necessary to have a declaration such as he had read, that there should be an Irish ministry responsible to the Irish parliament, and through them amenable to the Irish people. He said yesterday in the few hurried words which he thought essential for the purpose of indicating the opinions of the old O'Connell Repealers—and he was sorry to say there were not many of them living—that he was not content with the constitution of '82. He was proud of that constitution so far as it went. It was a declaration of the sacred and inalienable right of the Irish people to be the sole makers of laws to bind Ireland, and almost in his inner heart he venerated the men who achieved for the nation the independence it then acquired.

It was a great step in advance, it was a glorious step in advance, for it declared in words which were embodied in acts of parliament, that the Irish Lords and Commons and the Irish Sovereign could alone make laws binding Ireland. That constitution did great things for the country, it did great things for the trade, the commerce, the art of the country. It elevated the minds of the people, it gave them nobler ideas and nobler aspirations, and fitted them for liberty, but it did not secure that liberty, for while Ireland claimed legislative independence, the laws made by the Lords and Commons of Ireland could be intercepted and rendered void by the Privy Council of England. Under that constitution no

power save the King, Lords and Commons could make laws to bind Ireland, but the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland could not make laws for Ireland without the concurrence of the Privy Council of England, which was independent of the Irish legislature. Had the advisers of the Crown on Irish affairs been responsible to the Irish legislature, the Union never could have been carried. Ministers would have been impeached, and the very fact of its being done would have saved the parliament of Ireland. Such as the constitution of '82 was, they enjoyed it for only eighteen years. But not having a responsible ministry, controllable by the votes of the two houses of parliament, appointed by the Sovereign, but amenable to the Irish nation, with their constitution they ceased to enjoy that liberty which it professed to give. He would not dwell longer on the resolution than to tell them that the doctrines it contained were those held by some of the men most revered as simple repealers. They were the doctrines held by O'Connell, who always thought it would be necessary when they had an Irish parliament to get back, not merely the constitution of '82, but more than the constitution of '82—to obtain the right to make laws for Ireland irrespective of the caprice of a British ministry, and the right to have a ministry, each and everyone of them responsible to the Irish parliament. He had said that men whose memories are cherished in the inner heart of Ireland held this doctrine. In 1845 the Repeal Association issued a request to parties who were anxious to enunciate the true doctrine of Irish independence as sought for by repealers, to send in repeal essays in competition for large prizes, offered to the successful writers of those essays. Four essays offered were selected out of fifty, and he would read a sentence from the one that obtained the first prize. The value to be attached to it was not merely that the opinions expressed were to be found there, but that the persons selected by the Repeal Association, with O'Connell at its head, to judge of and determine the merits of the repeal essays, gave the first prize to an essay in which the doctrine of the resolution he had the honour to propose was clearly and distinctly expressed. The essay was divided into chapters, and, under the head "Form of Constitution," he found these words :—

"This principle, of course, requires that the Sovereign of Ireland should be advised upon Irish affairs by a minister responsible to the Irish parliament only. *In the constitution of* 1782 *no such provision was made.* The royal assent to Irish bills was given under the Great Seal of England, thereby leaving no efficient control to the Irish parliament."

Now, no such provision existed in the constitution of '82. Again the writer says :—

"As I would permit no control in Irish affairs to a British minister, *I necessarily contemplate the formation of an Irish cabinet.*"

He (Sir John Gray) alluded to men selected as judges—these men were Thomas Davis, John O'Connell, and William Smith O'Brien. He might add that the fourth essay selected was an one which ably advocated federalism as the form of constitution best adapted for Ireland. He feared he was trespassing too long upon their time. But before he

would sit down he would ask permission to make reference to a few words that fell from his friend, Mr. M'Carthy Downing, when he spoke of the possibility of a parliamentary action being decided there. He (Sir John Gray) did not think the time had arrived to do that.

Mr. O'Connor Power rose to order. The chairman had decided that this question should not be discussed in connection with the resolution, but it had been introduced by speakers whose object seemed to be to forestal the arguments in favour of an additional resolution to be submitted.

Sir John Gray said he would relieve his friend from all difficulty. He rightly adhered to the decision of the Chairman, that parliamentary policy ought not to be discussed in connexion with the resolution before the chair. He had not said more than that the time had not come for it; but he would tell them what the next sentence was going to be. He would tell them what he thought had come—the time for electoral policy to be determined on by the Conference. They had declared that the time had not come for the formal assertion of their rights. But how were they to seek to win them? The Conference could do nothing but declare what those rights were, but there were others outside, scattered through the length and breadth of the land, in whose hands had been placed the power to give force to the resolves of the Conference. The true policy to be determined on by the electors of Ireland, if they be true, as he was sure they all were; if they be steadfast in their pledges and to the principles of the Conference, as he was sure they would be—would be to declare how the resolutions were to be carried into effect, and how the Irish constituencies were to bear themselves and conduct themselves when selecting the members of the next House of Commons. He joined the Conference early in its proceedings. He hesitated for some time. He did it deliberately and thoughtfully, and with some amount of anxiety as to the future. He asked himself, were they to have meetings, were they to have Conferences, were they to have "patriotic" speeches, and nothing more? Mr. Chairman, they had too much of meetings—meetings that brought forth no fruit. They had too many conferences that brought forth, some of them, the bitter fruits of disappointment. They had had conferences that gave prominence to men, only that they might be worth purchasing, and betray the cause they were pledged to uphold. They had this sworn. They had heaven appealed to. They had another place appealed to. He asked now, as one advanced in years, and, unhappily, having had sad experience of the past—he asked the influential men who left their homes at great sacrifice that they might take part in the proceedings of that day, was that to be the result of this great national Conference? He asked them—he asked the country through them—were the constituencies throughout Ireland, were the electors of the different counties and the different boroughs of Ireland as earnest as they were? Would they endorse their opinions? Would they accept their constitution? Would they resolve to bind themselves together as brothers pledged in heart, pledged in soul, pledged before heaven and to each other that they would not vote for a single man at the coming election who did not accept the one broad platform—Sovereign, Lords and

Commons, the only power to make laws for Ireland. He was no unmindful of the many good laws that were passed in England, and h was sure there was not one of them would say a word to hurt the sensi bility of or to indicate ingratitude for these laws to the English people They had done much, chiefly for themselves, it was chiefly with a view to advance their own interests that they enforced cheap bread—carried reform, disestablished the Church, extended the franchise. If the Irish people had reaped benefits they felt thankful for them, but they were not content to be mendicants at the gate—they must be self-ruling, thoroughly independent, with the link of the Crown maintained by a federal union, which would give strength to the empire; but, above all, give permanent security and freedom to their native land.

Mr. DENIS O'CONOR, M.P., said he accepted the duty of seconding the resolution, with great pleasure, as it gave him the opportunity of saying a few words in reference to the great question they had assembled to consider. Were he merely a private individual, he should content himself with merely seconding the motion. But as the representative of an influential constituency, and agreeing with the Very Rev. Dean MacManus that representatives should not be afraid of expressing their opinions, he availed himself of the opportunity of addressing the meeting, and through the meeting his constituents, to let them know what his opinion was with reference to the great question of Home Rule. The eloquent champion of the movement, Mr. Butt, had stated that three principles were involved in the question. The first was, that every man taking part in the Conference was pledged, in the first instance, to Home Rule. Secondly, that every member present was pledged to the declaration that the time had come for seeking Home Rule. The third was the principle put to every member present, that of federalism as the basis upon which Home Rule should be constituted. For his part he declared fearlessly that he was in favour of Home Rule. When he looked around upon such a meeting as that now assembled, and saw the position to which the question had attained, he declared his conviction that the time had come for action. He was in favour of Home Rule before he entered parliament. Five years of parliamentary experience in the House of Commons had more than ever convinced him of the necessity for Home Rule. He was not one of those who suggested that the movement should pause in its career, because the influential people of the land had not come forward to join it. He did not believe such a suggestion had been put forward at the Conference, though some persons thought it had. If such a suggestion had been put forward, he, of all people in the room should be the last to adopt it; for this reason, that in 1868, when he contested the representation of Sligo, had he had to wait till supported by the "kid-gloved gentry" of the county, he might have been addressing the Conference, as he did to-day, but it would be as an advocate for Home Rule, not as member for Sligo. Finally, upon the third point, the adoption of the federal principle. He gave his cordial adherence to that principle. If he had any preference for any other scheme he would think it scarcely advisable, in the interests of Home Rule, to put it forward. He would think it excessively foolish.

He found the federal system adopted by the Conference, with the approbation of the leaders of the movement, who had given it a careful and patriotic consideration.

Mr. BERMINGHAM, P.L.G., King's County, spoke to the resolution. He said he had brought the question of Home Rule before a board of guardians representing 80,000 people, and it was unanimously approved of. At the election which followed, every one of the guardians was returned, a proof that the sentiment they had expressed at the board was endorsed in the country. He concurred in the federal system, because he thought it involved more than the restoration of the parliament of 1800. The Catholic under it would have complete emancipation, which they had not in 1800. The time, he thought, had come when the Catholic clergy and the people south of the Boyne, and the Protestant and Presbyterian clergy and people north of that river should unite and come forward in a common struggle for the welfare and salvation of their native land. There was no period of her history when the country was reduced to so low a condition as during the past seventy years. For 2,000 years Ireland had some form of government of her own. When her kings assembled at Tara, and even during the 700 years domination of England, Ireland possessed some form of government, independent or dependent. The time had come to end the only lapse that has occurred in the continued existence of the national constitution. Mr. Bermingham denied that Irishmen were unable to legislate for themselves, and pointed to the signal instances of brilliant talents exhibited by Irishmen as generals and statesmen in Australia, Canada, and other portions of the globe. If the two colonies named had recently obtained independent parliaments of their own, surely Ireland's claim, with a prescriptive right of over 2,000 years, was much more urgent and irrepressible. The unanimity which had characterized the Conference throughout its deliberations, sufficiently proved that Irishmen were capable of uniting and combining on questions of administration and government. When the disunion and discord of Communist, Royalist, and Republican, distracted France, it was the grandson of an Irish exile—the illustrious MacMahon—who was brought forward to reconcile the breach in the State. Mr. Bermingham asked what would be thought had Ireland done—what it was not possible for her to do—had invaded England, had deprived her of her constitution, stripped her of her legislature, subjected her to an alien system, reduced her to slavery, ruined her trade, destroyed her wealth, and degraded her in the scale of nations—would not the whole world cry out against the course taken by Ireland as a crime against humanity and civilization, as an act avaricious and tyrannical?

Captain KIRWAN said—May I, Sir, depart a little from the spirit of the resolution before the table, with which I thoroughly agree, and say a few words upon some questions which have been raised at this meeting. Mr. Butt, in his opening address, made a very remarkable statement—that he believed that the Catholics of this country had as much objection to be governed from Rome, in all temporal matters, as they had to be governed from London. I, Sir, as a Catholic beg to reiterate

that statement. Wedded as I am to the faith of my fathers—wedded as I am to the doctrine of my religion—yet in all temporal matters I would just as soon accept government from London as government from Rome. Above all things we want no religious ascendancy in Ireland. We have not destroyed one state church to erect in its place another. Nay, more, Sir, in that parliament which we all hope to see soon established in College-green, if that parliament is to be Catholic, which I do not believe, yet if that Catholic majority attempted to impose laws obnoxious to the interest or even hurtful to the prejudices of the Protestant minority, the Catholic manhood and the Catholic intellect of Ireland would be found in the ranks of the Protestant party, battling for the grand principles of religious as well as political equality. We do not forget, Sir, that it was the Protestant free parliament of '93 that abolished the obnoxious laws of a previous century which had been imposed against Catholic interests. We have no quarrel with our Protestant fellow-countrymen. There is not, Sir, in the history of political warfare in this country a finer specimen of toleration than the sight that has been witnessed under your eyes during the last two days. Here, Sir, the Protestant minister and the Catholic minister stood and shook hands over the chasm of religious differences, and pledged their fealty to their native land. The days of religious bigotry are, thank God! dying in Ireland, and soon we hope to hear its obsequies.

There is, Sir, another question to which I may be permitted to allude. Many speakers, here, have alluded to the subject of loyalty. Now, Sir, I hold loyalty to be a purchasable commodity—purchasable by good and equitable legislation. There is no such things in these days as unconditional loyalty. The man that is unconditionally loyal is either more or less than a man. Who in Ireland can say that his loyalty is purchased by good government? Who in Ireland can say that he has no subject of complaint. Disaffection, is, Sir, a chronic, aye, and a wholesome state of Irish feeling. Disloyalty in the present state of Irish society is not such a crime as people would lead us to believe. There is, Sir, one fact that the English people must learn—and that is, that although we are anxious to be loyal, we are determined to be free. And, Sir, if this agitation should fail—which I do not believe it will—the government of England will drive many men, who, by granting Home Rule to Ireland, would become the warmest advocates of imperial interest—she will drive them from the platform of constitutional agitation into the chamber of the conspirator. That is an eventuality I do not wish to see. It is, no doubt, what our enemies would wish, and it may be for what they will strenuously labour.

There is just one more question to which I shall allude. Mr. Sullivan, in speaking yesterday, said that in their successes the Volunteers of '82 carried the germ of their destruction along with them. He said the military revolutions which had been for a time successful, invariably fail, because they leave in the minds of the defeated party a hankering for retaliation. I, Sir, freely admit the force of this when it is applied from a people to a people—such, for instance, as in Spain and France. But, Sir, I do not grant it when it is from one people to another. The revolution of the Swiss in 1499 was a military revolution, and it was a

successful revolution. When the brave Tyrolese drove out the Austrian tyrant, and planted the flag of their national independence on the crags and peaks of their native hills, they did so by the force of arms. And in America, when the genius of Washington compelled Cornwallis and his 16,000 troops to lay down their arms, that too, Sir, was a military revolution, and a successful one. If one portion of the Irish people attempted to enforce laws upon another portion of the Irish people by means of a military revolution, then, Sir, I believe, that such a revolution might carry with it the germs of its own destruction; but when the efforts of the Irish Volunteers were directed to a foreign power, I do not believe, arguing from analogy, that such germs of destruction were possible. It was because the Volunteer movement was destroyed that the Union was carried. Had the Volunteers existed they would never have consented to what has been so well called "the most successful fraud of Castlereagh." And now, Sir, I must conclude by saying, that I, for my part, have sincere faith in this movement. I believe that the time is not far distant, when the accepted leaders of our people—the Butts, the King-Harmans, the Smyths, the Martins of our race—shall, like Henry Grattan ninety years ago, march through the ranks of an armed nation down to that old house in College-green, and there make anew another declaration of Irish Independence—when the walls of that ancient and historic edifice shall echo to the words which are treason to-day, but which will be patriotism then. At that time, Sir, but not till that time, shall the register of our liberties be full, and we can stand in the sight of God and the world, as men possessing the rights, the privileges, and the blessings of freemen.

The Conference adjourned for twenty minutes.

Upon re-assembling,

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY, M.P., said—Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of this Conference, the six resolutions that have already been moved and spoken to with so much fulness, eloquence and power in this consultative assembly, formulate in a clear and distinct manner the demand of the Irish nation. They leave no man in doubt as to that which we desire to have, and they state exactly how far we mean to go. The resolution which has been entrusted to me belongs to a different order of our subject. It refers not merely to Ireland but to the whole of the imperial empire. If you will allow me I will read it to you, in order that we may consider what it really means and says. The resolution is to the following effect:—

That in the opinion of this Conference a federal arrangement, based upon these principles, would consolidate the strength and maintain the integrity of the empire, and add to the dignity and power of the imperial crown.

Sir, there is no doubt that there are two classes of persons whom we must convince that this resolution really expresses the feeling of our hearts before this cause can be successful. The first of those classes consists of those in our own country, who have hitherto stood aloof from this movement, and especially the Protestants of the North of Ireland. The other class are those who are also our fellow-subjects, the people of England and Scotland. Now, Sir, I will, with your permission, very briefly address myself to both those classes. I will first of all

ask you to consider for a moment what it is that will really make this movement successful. The moment the Protestants of the North of Ireland and the people professing the Protestant faith thoughout the country join us heart and soul, that moment the movement is a success. Our enemies know this as well as we do, and that is the reason why they sow perpetual dissensions amongst us by telling the Protestants, that we mean, not a united Ireland for Irishmen, but an Ireland for one portion of the people, namely, those from whom they dissent in religious faith. But let me ask you whether there was not a time once when Protestant and Catholic did unite, and when they did unite did they not in that moment succeed? and what was it brought them into union then? It was the very same thing that will bring them into union now. It was not simply the love of nationality—though the love of Ireland glows no more warmly in the breast of the Catholic than it does in the Protestant—but that great principle, which after all has a powerful effect in this world over all the interests of man, namely, the interests of self-preservation and the claims of the material world. The fearful distress which existed in the country really brought about the union between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics in 1782. That distress was occasion by selfish and infamous restrictions upon trade, which were put as fetters upon Ireland for the express purpose of conciliating a selfish and hostile nation. I will read you, if you will allow me, what was said in 1779, upon this very subject by Mr. Hussy Burgh, whose name is well known in Irish political history. He said:—

"The usurped authority of a foreign parliament has kept up the most wicked laws that a jealous, monopolising, ungrateful spirit could devise to restrain the bounds of Providence and enslave a nation, whose inhabitants are recorded to be a brave, loyal, and generous people."

At the time of the American war the ports of Ireland were closed. It has been said, and said with truth, that there was not as much money in the Irish Exchequer as would suffice to pay the infamous pensions to infamous men, which had been put upon the taxation of the country by the English government, and it was that material suffering which brought together the Protestants and the Catholics of Ireland. Well, Sir, I won't say that we are to wait for more material suffering than exists in this land now, but I do say this, that if we can convince the Protestants of Ireland that their material interests are safe in our hands they will join us in this movement. I have never yet heard a sincere Protestant express himself as satisfied with the government of this country. I have never heard any man outside these walls, except perhaps some miserable place-man, an actual or expectant government official, who did not declare that the government of this country was a scandal and a shame to any civilized nation. I have never heard Protestants speak in other language than this, but I have heard them add something like this, "Oh, but if once we surrender the protection of England we, and our religion, will be eaten up alive by a parcel of rabid papists." That is the notion that exists, and the notion that we shall have to overcome. Well, now, Gentlemen, in reference to this matter I will ask you just for one instant to look what are the relative positions of Ireland and England —islands "set like gems in the silver sea." In themselves differing a

good deal in geographical denomination, they would still be, if fused together, only one of the most insignificant states in Europe. These two islands, differing in the characters and genius of their peoples, should we, might say naturally, be united by a federal arrangement; nature has as it were set them together, in order that they might each preserve their peculiar autonomy and yet be united against the continents around them. Now, Gentlemen, what is the history of these two countries? England was subjected to repeated invasion by the Romans, by the Danes, by the Normans. The original inhabitants were almost extirpated, and we have now that hardy, and I will say it, that virtuous and truth-loving people, which, resulting from the mixture of races, now dwells in England. But in Ireland we have a race totally distinct. Ireland was never thoroughly conquered by any invader, and it now preserves its distinct individuality as a bright light in the world around us. Well, Gentlemen, we know that although the system of a federal arrangement was understood among the Greeks it did not exist among the barbarians, who at that time inhabited the northern part of Europe. The law there was, as it too ofter now, is

> "That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can."

England invaded Ireland, but while unable to conquer it, eventually made great settlements in the country, and mark what then took place. So great was the assimilative power of the Irish race that settlers in Ireland became more Irish than the Irish themselves. And here let me say that everything that has been won for the Irish nation in its chequered, yet glorious history, has been won in great measure through the active agency of that race, which came over from Normandy or England; those who became friends, intermarried with the Celtic race, and took from the Irish their virtues, though not in all cases their religion. Yes, mark, Gentlemen, the Irish nation was united up till the time of the Reformation. At that time there came in another foreign invasion, and that demon of religious discord which, fomented purposely by statesmen, has since kept asunder the two races of Irishmen, and if it was in the power of the political wire-pullers on the other side of the channel would prevent them ever being united like brethren. But what has happened since? Parliament has put an end to religious inequality, and in so doing has destroyed the artificial barrier which kept them asunder. And on this point, Gentlemen, I would just remind you that to carry the question of Home Rule and a federal arrangement now, is a very different thing from the carrying of repeal in the times of O'Connell. The question of Home Rule does not now excite the terrors in the minds of our fellow-subjects across the water which the notion of repeal then did, because repeal was known to involve the downfall of the Protestant Church and a radical measure of land reform. But both these measures have been passed, and the terror of repeal has thereby being taken away. The Protestants of Ireland have found to their cost that when the interests of the English government are at stake their interests, real or supposed, are made a plaything and a bauble for the battle of party. It was a principle of the act of union that the Protestant church should never be disestablised. We do

not now ask to break the Union, for the Union has been already broken. It was broken by English statesmen at the time of the disestablishment of the Protestant church, with as little consideration as if it had been a turnpike act or a highway bill. Well, I trust the Protestants of Ireland then learned, if they did not know it before, how much they can depend for the defence of what many of them think their peculiar interests upon the English parliament. Let them rather for the future put their trust in their own fellow-countrymen, with whom they are so commingled by intermarriages, as to have become one great family, for I believe there is hardly a Protestant who has not got relations who are Roman Catholics, and there is hardly a Roman Catholic who cannot name as amongst his dearest friends those who differ from him in religion.

I will not detain the meeting further upon this subject, but I would remind my honourable friend who made the suggestions, that we should in the federal constitution assent to the revision of our laws by the privy council of England, that in the time of the Irish Parliament an act was returned to it, altered in seventy-four places by the English Privy Council. It had been altered by Lord Thurlow when Attorney-General; it was altered by Lord Resselyn when Solicitor-General, and revised by a Mr. Macnamara, a Castle official in London; so that it was said that "the Attorney-General of England with a dash of his pen could reverse, alter, or entirely do away with the matured result of all the eloquence and all the abilities of the whole assembly." If we would be so foolish as to consent to our acts in a restored parliament being altered in that manner I would like to know where would be your finality, or what would be the use of your legislation.

Sir, I now turn for a few moments to address myself to the second branch of this subject—that is, to the reasons why the English people should grant that which we ask. It was very well said by a speaker yesterday that the interference of Irish members in the purely local legislation of England and Scotland is an intolerable nuisance, and I would say, it is an intolerable shame. In my own short experience of the House of Commons I have seen repeated overtures made to Irish members to give their support in favour of their local projects in England or Scotland, under a kind of promise, expressed or implied, that they would again do a good turn of the same sort. This system of giving votes on matters affecting the interests of their fellow-men across the water, of which they have not the smallest or remotest idea, is an immoral system, and one which should be got rid of in the interests of morality, even if it was not in practice, fraught with so many inconveniences. Well, I should like also to tell my English friends that the greatest writers have recommended a federal arrangement between countries as by far the best form of government that can possibly exist. De Tocqueville, a writer whose works are read universally in England, says in his work on American Democracy:—

"It is impossible to imagine how much the division of labour contributes to the well-being of each of the states which comprise the Union. In these small communities, which are never agitated by the desire of aggrandisement or the cares of self-defence, all public authority and private energies are employed in internal amelioration. . . . The American citizen defends the Union, because, in defending it, he defends the increased prosperity and freedom of his own district."

That is what we should like to see established here. We should like to see our energies devoted to the development of this grand green old isle, and we should like to have an interest in the union—that federal union with England, which would lead the imperial power to be defended to the last shilling, and to the last drop of blood by Irishmen in every part of the world. Mr. Mill, again, in his work on representative government says:—

"He attached the utmost importance to the collective business of society by the people themselves—for the practical political activity of individuals is the best means of training social feelings and practical intelligence."

He wrote that just before the Canadian rebellion. I won't detain this meeting longer than to say, as a matter of history that within the last twenty years our colonies were a source of perpetual danger, suspicion, and anxiety. The reason was, that the government of the colonies was managed from Downing-street, just as our government is managed in the Irish office in London. But after repeated rebellions their arose a wise statesman, who suggested that the people should be allowed to do that which God intended they should do, manage their own houses at home, and that moment there was peace and tranquillity. Is there anybody here that does not remember the perpetual fright we were in lest America should invade Canada and take it from us. Have we any such anxiety now? And why? Because the Canadians being left to defend themselves, and attend to their own interests, all danger has ceased, and we have been enabled to withdraw every soldier from Canada, and the Canadians make themselves secure, and are the most loyal subjects of the crown. It has been the same thing in Australia, when the rebel who was chased from this country—Charles Gavan Duffy—persuaded the colonial office to adopt the federal principle, and has converted the disaffected colonies into the foremost bulwarks of the British constitution. I rejoice to think that there is a strong probability that Gavan Duffy himself will soon be here to take part with us, and with his mature wisdom and experience, lead us in concert with our friend, Mr. Butt. Gentlemen, I will detain you no longer. The destinies of the Irish peope are now in their own hands. You have got the ballot; you have got every safeguard which can ensure your having faithful representatives. If you do not obtain them it will be your own fault, and God help you for the future. Let us who are assembled here to-day, in this great Conference, extend the right hand of friendship to all our fellow-subjects under the imperial crown. Let us invoke the memory of the mighty dead! Shade of those, who in every land, under every sky, and in every age, have borne aloft the torch of freedom, guide our proceedings now. That torch was lighted when God made man in his own image, and breathed upon him the breath of life. It never has been; it never can be extinguished. It glows bright when men approach it with pure, unselfish hearts—it wanes and gets dim when violence would snatch it from peaceful hands—its light fades and is almost extinguished when ambiguity and double dealing would profane it with unhallowed touch. Never, as I believe, did that torch give a purer, holier light than now. Patriotism defends it, religion sanctifies it, wisdon is in its train, and the goal whether it is guiding us is to a really united and consolidated empire.

Mr. DAUNT, in seconding the resolution, said—I rise with great pleasure to second the resolution proposed by Mr. Mitchell Henry; and I am perfectly convinced that our federal arrangement would, in the words of the resolution, consolidate the strength and add to the power of the empire. Before I enter on my reasons for holding this opinion, permit me to congratulate you on the spectacle presented by this Conference. It is a sight to make an old man young. It is a grand reward for a long life spent in trying, however feebly, to help forward the cause of Irish legislative independence, to behold the nation braced up to the final effort to recover its rights. We have met here for two important purposes. One of these is to take counsel with each other as to the best and speediest means to win back the national legislature of which we were infamously plundered seventy-three years ago. The other purpose is to proclaim to Great Britain and to the world that the principle by which we are actuated, the principle of Irish nationality, is indestructible. We are here to say that water cannot wash it out of us, that fire cannot burn it out of us, that famine failed to starve it out of us, and that tyranny cannot scourge it out of us. We are here to say this after seventy-three years of that pernicious usurpation miscalled a Union, and after 700 years of connection with a country with which we should desire to be on the friendliest terms, and with which we should be on such terms under a fair system of home government honestly worked out. What sort of a man can he be who can affirm that our national interests would be better attended to, or with more advantage to this country, by strangers than by ourselves? It is the old, old story. We want to get rid of the blighting influence of foreign control. Englishmen applaud self-rule for Hungary, or Poland, or Italy. How is it that they will not apply the same principle to Ireland which they are willing to apply to other countries? There is no reason why Ireland should not govern herself for the benefit of her own inhabitants, instead of being misgoverned by England for the benefit of the English people. Since the earliest connection of the countries it has been the perpetual policy of the English rulers to maintain what they termed an English interest in Ireland. Now, that English interest has ever been the curse of Ireland. An Irish interest should predominate in Ireland, just as a French interest should predominate in France, or an English interest in England. Mr. Mitchell Henry has said that he looks for the political fusion of Protestant and Catholic. When I heard him say so, I remembered the words of Primate Boulter, in the last century, "When the Papist and the Protestant join, good-bye to the English interest in Ireland." Mind, when I repudiate an English interest in Ireland as an intrusion and an injustice, I discriminate between an English and an imperial interest. Ireland has an imperial interest in preserving the unity of the Crown; but that interest will best be upheld by giving to Ireland her undoubted right to regulate her own national affairs. Restore to Ireland the sole control of her own resources, and you thereby give her the strongest possible interest in maintaining the integrity of the empire.

If, on the other hand, you prolong the present abominable system by which nominal incorporation with England is merely a mask for the

provincial servitude and robbery of Ireland, you render the words British empire hateful to our nation, and you do all in your power to disgust Irishmen with the British connection. You make the words British empire words of evil omen to our country. The Union is, in fact, a disintegrating measure. It renders the English connection a galling and a disastrous chain instead of a fair and honourable alliance. It gives Ireland a sort of interest in the overthrow of the empire, on the same principle that prisoners in the hold of a slave ship would welcome shipwreck as affording them a desperate chance of escaping from their bondage. Of course what the Home Rulers demand is primarily the restoration of our indefeasible national right of self-rule, with its consequent advantages; but among these advantages we reckon the strengthening of the empire by exchanging a union of fraud and usurpation for a union of equal rights and reciprocal advantages. Talk not to me of equal rights so long as we have not Home Rule. A legislative union of equality is impossible between two nations so dissimilar in strength and wealth. As Charles James Fox said—"The Irish could not, in this legislative connection, have the same potential voice in legislating for England as the English had in legislating for Ireland." There is no conceivable measure, or combination of measures, that could compensate this country for the absence of self-legislation. There is something intensely offensive in the tone of the English press in general with respect to Ireland. The writers affect to wonder at our dissatisfaction. They talk as if they were our lords and masters, and as if the measures extorted from them by policy or necessity were boons that should command our gratitude, and extinguish our aspirations for national autonomy. "We passed a Land Bill for you," and "We gave you a Church Bill;" it is always "We gave you this, and we gave you that." I really do not suppose that this is intended for insolence, yet it is the very acme of insolence. Whether their meddling with Irish concerns is well meant, or ill meant, it is, in any case, an impertinent intrusion—and the feeling that it evokes on our part is a hearty wish that they would take themselves off, and leave us to regulate our own affairs. Now, as it has been well observed, no nation ever governed another for nothing. The Union drains off Irish resources to the extent of expelling the people from the country. Our English neighbours, who have a dishonest interest in this diabolical process, constantly mock us with assurances of their hearty desire for our welfare, and of the great prosperity which they choose to allege that Ireland enjoys beneath their sway. As to their friendly sentiments in our regard, the very best proof they could give of their friendship would be to rid us of their hateful meddling. As to the prosperity they think proper to ascribe to the Union, there are two objects to be gained by asserting its existence. One is, that the governmental system must be good which renders us so marvellously prosperous. The other is, that we are grown so wealthy that the pressure of taxation is unfelt. The London *Times* lately swelled the chorus, and, in proclaiming our rapid advance, said that it was partly owing to the emigration. Fancy a condition of national prosperity arrived at by driving out the people! Ireland is the only country I know of to which such audacious absurdity could be addressed; and that Ireland

is the subject of such irrational impertinence is attributable to her provincialized condition. The fact is, we are robbed by England—shamelessly, mercilessly robbed. If my voice could penetrate every dwelling in this kingdom, I would reiterate to peer and peasant that we are scandalously, recklessly, mercilessly robbed.

I have drawn up, at the request of the Home Government Association, a report on the fiscal relations of the two countries, and among the points which the report establishes are these—that England extorts from Ireland revenue in payment of the debt-charge of the old pre-union British debt, from which the dishonest authors of the Union promised that Ireland should be for ever protected; that the revenue thus extorted from Ireland is not only in itself a fraudulent exaction, but is monstrously in excess of the comparative taxable ability of Ireland—that our comparative ability, according to what Pitt and Castlereagh both said was the best test—the test, namely, of income and property assessed to income tax—is scarcely more than a seventeenth part of the general wealth, while Ireland is compelled to pay nearly a ninth of the general taxes; and that of all the English financiers, who have made free with Irish money for the service of their own country, Mr. Gladstone is the most reckless and the most callous to the considerations of Irish national suffering, and of equitable national proportion of burthen. One grand object of the Home Rulers is to emancipate the pockets of the Irish people from such men as Mr. Lowe and Mr. Gladstone. If any of our English neighbours, who so kindly concern themselves in our welfare, recapitulate the splendid benefits they have conferred on us, and ask what they can do to satisfy us, my answer is: Begone, robbers! take your hands out of our pockets, and relieve us of your pestilent interference.

The proposal of the Union did not come from Ireland; it came from her hereditary enemy. If anyone finds fault with me for applying to England the epithet of hereditary enemy, I beg of him to remember that from the days of King Charles the Second until the era of the Irish Volunteers, the English legislature, English public bodies, and English private individuals engaged in trade, repeatedly exerted all their energies to crush out Irish commerce and Irish manufactures. Now, to suppose that a union with such a nation could be productive of benefits to Ireland is moon-struck madness. If a neighbour, by a series of aggressions, shows his hostile animus, nobody but an idiot would surrender the control of his affairs to that neighbour. English writers who recommended the Union, Decker, Postlethwaite, Tucker, and others, invariably did so on the express ground that it would facilitate the robbery of Ireland. Their writings have frequently been quoted, and I will not trouble you with the extracts now. I cannot, however, omit to remark that among the advocates of the Union, so long ago as 1699, was an anti-Irish Irishman, Sir Richard Cox, afterwards Lord Chancellor, and his reason for recommending the destruction of the Irish parliament to the consideration of the English government was precisely that of the English advocates of that measure. He told them that the Irish delegates of the united parliament would spend their Irish rents in London, and could not influence the councils of England to her disadvantage.

He said—"Your taxes will be lessened when we bear part of the burden; all our money will still continue at London;" and he also said —"By the Union England will get much of our money and abundance of our trade."

When English statesmen attempt to rob us, it can at least be said that their conduct, if immoral, is at any rate natural. But words fail to characterize as it merits the loathsome, prostrate baseness of the unnatural Irish traitor who could hold out his country to her jealous and powerful rival as a subject of plunder. In truth, the grand motive of the unionists was to crush Ireland. The preamble of the act of union should have been something like this: "Whereas it is expedient to degrade Ireland from the rank of a kingdom to that of a tributary province, to emasculate the mind of the Irish nation, to destroy the manufactures of Ireland, and to seize on the revenues and general resources of the country for the benefit of England, be it therefore enacted that the Irish parliament shall be abolished," and so forth. A preamble like that would at all events have had the honesty of candour. The Union was carried, the Irish parliament was destroyed, and thus was broken down the grand barrier that stood between our national interests and English rapacity. I think it is Arthur Young who says that labour will raise the means of living from the bare rock, if it be left the produce it makes; but labour, applied to the most fertile land, if its produce be appropriated by others, becomes discontented and degenerates. So it is with Ireland. If our nascent manufactures, which were prospering before the Union, have withered away beneath its blighting influences, if almost our sole remaining industry, the agricultural, has suffered to so great an extent that grain cultivation has decreased by more than 1,100,000 acres; if the boasted increase in live stock does not nearly counterbalance the loss in tillage cultivation; if the produce of the country is largely withdrawn for the uses of another nation, it is not only impossible that the Irish people could be contented, but if they were capable of submitting to a condition of things so destructive and degrading, they would richly deserve the contempt of the civilized world. The Union being carried, the predictions of Sir Richard Cox, Decker, and the rest, were in rapid progress of fulfilment. The robbery went on through various channels. When, in 1864, General Dunne got his committee on Irish taxation, a question was raised whether the exorbitant extortions of revenue from Ireland were or were not violations of the act of union. General Dunne and other gentlemen contended that the monstrous exactions by which we were victimised were not in accordance with the act, and that its fiscal provisions had been broken. The General inferrred this, by interpreting the ambiguous language of the act by the promises and explanations of its author, Lord Castlereagh. But the promises and explanations are not in the statute book, and those of Lord Castlereagh were merely intended to deceive the Irish people.

The act itself, in a lengthy article of circumlocutory verbiage, opens a way for the English parliament to amalgamate the debts of the two countries; and thus fraudulently and most effectually, neutralizes the pretended protection which might naturally be inferred from the seeming import of certain words in the 7th article. In connexion with this

subject, it is important to remark how effectually the Union destroys the constitutional rights of the Irish people. Mr. Butt will bear me out in saying that a fundamental constitutional right is the right of the people not to be taxed except with the consent of their representatives. Now, when, in 1853, Mr. Gladstone introduced the Irish Income Tax, seventy-two Irish members out of one hundred and five—that is, something more than two-thirds of the whole, opposed the tax. In an Irish parliament, I need not tell you, that a majority of two-thirds, or a majority of one, would have defeated the tax. But the Union deprived the Irish Commons of their rightful constitutional control over the purse of their own country—and the tax, the oppressive, vexatious, dishonest impost, was fastened upon Ireland by the representatives, not of Ireland, but of Great Britain. The mere additions made by Mr. Gladstone since 1853 to the taxes of Ireland amount to no less than forty-five millions. In the face of this incessant and enormous drain, it is ludicrous, as well as irritating, to hear the professions of friendly zeal for our welfare which some English newspapers intermix with denunciations of Home Rule. It is to do us good that they oppose Home Rule, and insist on retaining their grasp on what they got by fraud and bloodshed in 1800. We should go to destruction if they ceased to take charge of our affairs. The *Times* said the other day that what Ireland needs is to be protected against herself. It is to do us good that they have undersold our manufacturers and beaten them out of their domestic market. It is to do us good that they have drawn off our wealthy proprietors to spend Irish money in England. It is to do us good that they have mortgaged Ireland for an immense British debt. It is to do us good that they extort from Ireland about one-ninth of the imperial revenue, although Ireland has scarcely more than one-seventeenth of the imperial wealth. It is to do us good that they have stripped Ireland of the means of supporting her people, and have banished millions of our race to the ends of the earth. It is to do us good that they try to sneer down or choke out our instinctive principles of Irish nationality. It is to do us good that they employed all the engines of hell to abolish our resident legislature. All this, if we are to believe them, was and is intended for our good, and we are very ungrateful and very unreasonable to question the warm attachment of a nation from whom we have received such signal benefits.

It is sought to overwhelm Home Rule with an avalanche of falsehoods. The Home Rulers, it is said, don't know what they mean; the Home Rulers don't mean what they say; they have terrible ulterior views of total separation, and Mr. Butt said as much at Waterford. Then Home Rule means anarchy and carnage; Home Rule means Catholic ascendancy; Home Rule means destruction of Protestants and Protestantism; Home Rule means Communism; Home Rule means the overthrow of Catholicity. Now, the gentlemen who on different sides reiterate all this are just as capable of saying that Home Rule means Mahommedanism or Hindooism, if they had an object or an interest in saying so. And if they did say so, I have little doubt they would find fools quite ready to believe them. When disestablishment was under discussion in parliament, Mr. Disraeli predicted that it would

produce anarchy, and carnage, and what not—the very same predictions which are now directed against Home Rule. The Rev. Mr. Flanagan predicted that rebellion would inevitably follow disestablishment, and promised, as his own particular share of the outbreak, to kick the Queen's crown into the Boyne. Well, disestablishment came; the rev. gentleman has not yet redeemed his promise; her Majesty's crown has not yet been submerged in the Boyne; and instead of anarchy and carnage, we have judges on circuit receiving white gloves and complimenting juries on the lightness of the calendars. The wilful maligners of Home Rule and Home Rulers are not to be silenced by anything that I can say, or that anybody else can say; but it is right that we should meet them by telling what Home Rule really means. It means the retention of Irish money in Ireland, and the consequent accumulation of Irish capital. It means the development of Irish resources by the application of that capital. It means the residence in Ireland of our wealthy aristocracy, who are absentees precisely because they have no parliament at home to afford them legislative occupation, and they would speedily return when they found in their capital an open for their honourable parliamentary ambition. Home Rule means the sole control by an Irish parliament of Irish revenue and expenditure, subject to the condition of defraying our fair proportion of the imperial expenses. It means the restoration of domestic markets for domestic manufacture. It means the infusion of an Irish spirit into influential classes of our countrymen who are now infected with the anti-national prejudices resulting from the provincialized condition of their country—prejudices that permeate the English atmosphere around them. It means the extinction of sectarian acerbity; for I hold it certain that when all classes of religionists meet together on terms of perfect equality, when bigotry is found to be an unprofitable commodity, the good sense and true Christian feeling of the country will prevail, and these miserable jealousies will disappear under the influence of the grand and sacred principle of Irish nationality. Those, Sir, are the blessings which I expect from Home Rule. They are surely worth struggling to obtain. And our battle is to be fought at the polling booths and on the floor of the foreign House of Commons.

As a rule, I do not doubt that the electors will fairly do their duty. I saw, not long ago, an article in an English newspaper, examining the parliamentary chances of the Home Rulers as they appeared to the writer. He imagined that if sixty or seventy Home Rulers were returned, not more than about two dozen would adopt the policy of systematic opposition to all administrations, and that the remainder, voting on a direct motion for Home Rule, and, of course, out-voted, would on all other questions follow the lead of their Whig or Tory prompter. Now, it is impossible to tell how few or how many of these pliable Home Rulers we shall have; but it is at any rate certain that they would be worthless. We want no double-faced patriots, squinting with one eye at the Treasury, and emitting patriotic glances with the other optic. It is not possible to lay down an inflexible rule of parliamentary policy—a rule so rigid as not to admit of any deviation—a rule which would absolutely, and under all possible circumstances, debar an Irish Home Rule member

from supporting or opposing any particular measure. As to a definite parliamentary policy, I concur with Mr. Butt that it would be premature to announce it here, and that it is more prudent to leave it the consideration of the League that will emanate from this Conference. I ask my countrymen and countrywomen to sustain our movement by every means in their power. If history teaches us anything at all, it teaches us that the preservation and development of our distinct nationality is indispensable to our national welfare, nay, I had almost said, to our national existence. To be chained to another community, to be ignored and obliterated as a distinct people—this is, to be prostrated to the lowest depths of provincial degradation—it is to be rendered subservient to the needs, to the prejudices, to the caprices, to the ignorance. to the insolence, to the contempt, to the dishonesty, to the hostility of the master nation. The Irish people would deserve to be blotted out of the map of nations, out of the records of history, if they were base enough to submit to such unspeakable indignity, or to forgive the great crime of the Union until England shall have made restitution by restoring to Ireland Home government, and thereby conferred on the empire an enduring stability and peace.

Mr. KENELM DIGBY, M.P., in speaking to the resolution, said he should occupy the attention of the meeting for a few minutes. He wished to speak before the business of the Conference had ended, for the purpose of expressing his views on the great question which called them together. He spoke, he believed, with the weight and authority given to a representative of popular opinion, the opinion not of one but of the great majority of the constituents of the country, and it was on that conviction that he ventured to intrude. He thought that already they had arrived at the Conference at grand results. The ground that had been cleared for action. Many mists had been dispelled by the clear and able exposition of the policy and principles of the Conference which Mr. Butt had delivered in his opening address. That address would teach England and the world that the demand of the Irish people would be presented in one united and unanimous form. Gentlemen who had given in their adhesion to the federal programme of modern repeal had waved their own opinion in favour of that which must now be considered the national demand. He would say for himself that, had he been old enough to be a repealer when repeal was the aspiration of the day, he would from his judgment, have favoured federalism, because the increased advantages it gave to this country of being represented in an imperial parliament could never have been bestowed by repeal. In the prosecution of the movement in which they were all embarked, and which they would all, he hoped, heartily pursue, they were working with the sole purpose they had enunciated. They were determined to set aflame no sentiment of disaffection or disloyalty. If they were entrusted with the management of their own business, if their demands were listened to, they should be able to tell the people of Ireland, even those who hold the most advanced opinions, that there remains no ground for hostility to England—that they were an independent nation enjoying an independent power. It was because he thought Home Rule an imperial necessity, as well as a national *sine qua non*, that he helped the movement.

The MAYOR of KILKENNY said he had come up to attend the Conference from the City of the Confederation to confer as one of its representatives with the people of Ireland upon the great question of Home Rule. He had been commissioned by his fellow-citizens to take counsel with the members of the Conference as to the steps they might deem it desirable to take for the achievement and success of what was emphatically the national movement. He did not come to make a speech. He had come for the purpose of taking part in the solemn consideration of one of the most important questions that ever attracted the sympathies or engaged the attention of a nation. Now that the Conference had been engaged during three days, in anxious, earnest deliberation, it might be thought gratuitous and unnecessary on his part to offer any remarks. But he had to tell them, on the behalf of the people of Kilkenny, that his fellow-citizens were with the movement heart and soul—that he was commissioned by them to congratulate the Conference, which was a monster assemblage of the intellect, virtue, and patriotism of the country—and to offer the interchange of sanguine hope to the whole rest of Ireland, in face of a congregation of talent and worth which might vie with the immortal Convention of Dungannon itself. He was specially commissioned, both by the city and county, to thank the Home Government Association for their glorious efforts under vast difficulties, and in face of extreme and formidable opposing circumstances, to bring the question to the proud and prominent position of development in which it now stood. It was an omen of happy augury to see, during the past three days, gentlemen of various, and in other situations, perhaps conflicting shades of opinion, merging all their differences upon one platform for the advancement of the interests of their common country. He might say his voice was hoarse from speaking to the people of Kilkenny upon Home Rule. He had impressed upon them the necessity of tolerant sentiments and friendly ideas towards their Protestant fellow-countrymen, engaged like themselves in the struggle for the good of their common fatherland. No sentiment he had uttered, not even those relating to the vital principles of Home Rule itself, were received with more enthusiastic plaudits than those in which he had inculcated mutual toleration and good-feeling towards the members of other communities. And this was true of all classes of his fellow-countrymen in the county Kilkenny.

The Mayor continued to say that all should be seriously and deeply interested in the cause of Home Rule. The people were flying in thousands from the country, leaving her land uncultivated, her manufactures decaying, her harbours empty, her places of commerce deserted, her wharves silent, save when their idle air was pierced by the heart-breaking wails of the emigrant quitting the isle of his birth and his love to seek a foreign shore. Their programme had been adopted by the common sense of the country; at all events, it had been adopted by Kilkenny; for it was federalism that he had there proclaimed, and federalism he commended to the common sense and intelligence of the true and patriotic people of Kilkenny. They also agreed with him when he told them that he believed they would gain more from England by offering her the right hand of friendship and of brotherhood, than by assuming

a hostile attitude or by any threats which might be construed into a desire for separation. They would be the equals of England, but would never be its slaves. With that quickness and intelligence characteristic of the Irish race they recognised that principle as a true and honest one, and had pledged themselves, and commissioned him to tell the Conference that they would never give up the struggle for freedom until equal with England—that they would never be slaves. But before they came to the close of that grand and solemn Conference, to which the liberties of the country were entrusted, there was one difficulty in carrying out their splendid programme, which stared him in the face. There was no use in overlooking the difficulties that English prejudices, English hostility, English power, and English gold would use against them. They should take calculations of their respective strength, and take counsel as to what power England could bring to bear against them, and what force they had with which to oppose it. They had not the arms of the Volunteers of Dungannon, and therefore they must look to the power which they did possess, and that power was in their representation in the British parliament. That power could only be exercised by determined action upon that part of the Irish representation—a determination that would bend to no prime minister's smile, and would not be put down by his frown, or seduced by his blandishments. That was the work now before them. Their principles were now laid down, but the programme by which they were to be carried out was yet to be placed before the country. He had no hesitation in saying, and he was commissioned by the people of Kilkenny to tell that magnificent and patriotic Conference, representing the intelligence and patriotism of Ireland, that parliamentary independence was the weapon by which the great victory must be achieved. They had a great authority for that in a man whose name had been received in that room with so much respect and enthusiasm, Charles Gavan Duffy, who, in 1852, with gallant men like his friend, Sir John Gray, Mr. Lucas, Mr. O'Shea, Father Mathew, and others, strove to save the lives of the people, and to root the tenantry of Ireland into the soil. The policy of independent opposition was the policy laid down—the policy of turning out cabinet after cabinet that did not concede the demands of the Irish people—and was the policy which would have succeeded had not traitors entered the ranks and broke up the gallant phalanx who were devoted to the liberties and freedom of their country. That was the time when Gavan Duffy said of this principle that independent opposition was more powerful than armies in the tented field. He believed that, grand as were the Volunteers of Dungannon, the people of Ireland, through proper representation and proper parliamentary policy, had more power at their command to achieve Home Rule than they had.

Mr. JAMES LONG (Tralee) said he appeared before the Conference because he was sent there by the Home Rulers of Tralee, whose present parliamentary representative was not in his proper place, and to declare that no one but a Home Ruler would represent that borough. He hoped that the example set by Tralee would be followed elsewhere, and that the result of that noble gathering, that really national assembly, of which

Ireland should be proud, would be to secure for the country the right of self-government, of which she had been so long and so unjustly deprived.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and adopted.

Mr. REDMOND, M.P. for Wexford, moved the next resolutions, as follows :—

"That, while we believe that in an Irish parliament the rights and liberties of all classes of our countrymen would find their best and surest protection, we are willing that there should be incorporated in the federal constitution articles supplying the amplest guarantees that no change shall be made by that parliament in the present settlement of property in Ireland, and that no legislation shall be adopted to establish any religious ascendancy in Ireland, or to subject any person to disabilities on account of his religious opinions."

He should not use many words in moving the resolution. In common with them all, he felt himself deeply impressed with the solemn importance of the meeting, and the responsibility which attached to each and everyone who was present and taking part in the great work, which he believed would result in the foundation of the future freedom, prosperity, and happiness of our native country. The gentlemen who originally called together that Conference—an assembly unparalleled in modern political history—had, no doubt, assumed a great and anxious responsibility, because, if it failed to produce those fruits which they expected from it, nothing would be more injurious to the cause which they had so much at heart. But the step had not been rashly or prematurely taken. The wonderful progress of the Home Rule movement, and the prominent position it now occupied as a leading and urgent political question, he believed fully justified them in making that advance along the whole line, which, he was sure, would result in victory. The rapid progress of the movement, could, in his mind, only be accounted for by two considerations—the first was the enduring and indestructible longing for nationality which is the passion of the Irish race ; and the second was the unassailable truth of the proposition upon which the movement was based—namely, that no government can be good, or beneficial, or tolerable, which is not in unison with the feelings and sympathies of the country to be governed. The absolute soundness of that proposition was, in his mind, tested and proved by nothing more than this—that the opponents of the movement on the platform and in the public press had shrunk from encountering them in argument in regard to their principles. They have expended the force of their hostility to the movement in misrepresenting their real aims and objects, and imputing to them principles which they had over and over again repudiated, and in attempting to create disunion among Irishmen by rekindling the fires of, he would not say, religious, but irreligious, unchristian, and heathenish dissensions and animosities among the professors of different faiths in the country.

In order to deal, once for all with these vile attempts, the resolution he held in his hand had, he thought, been wisely framed. Though they might have some feeling of mortification thus formally to make such a declaration, as intolerance had never been characteristic of the Irish

nation, yet he hoped the Conference would pass the resolution, because it would be wise for them, as far as they could, by the most explicit explanation and solemn declaration, to take away from their enemies and opponents any excuse for relying upon the false grounds upon which their opposition had hitherto been based, so that they might meet them face to face upon the real merits of the case.

What were the arguments put forward against the Home Rule movement? He remembered some two or three years ago, when the movement began to attract attention, one of the first responses he heard from England was something like this—that, even if Home Rule were safe or beneficial for Ireland, it would not be for the advantage of England or the safety of the empire, and, therefore, they would refuse to discuss it at all. That was a summary John Bull way of dealing with a question of right and justice. As Irishmen, they should deal with an argument like that by stating that the prosperity, the interest, and the honour of Ireland were paramount and supreme objects, and they absolutely refused to postpone or subordinate them to the advantage or safety of any empire.

He believed nothing would do more to increase the power, the prosperity, and the safety of the British empire than the settlement of the Irish question, and he would hold the man no true statesman who could not see the benefit which would result to the English people from the contentment of the Irish people. Such an argument as this would not go for much; and it seemed to suggest itself to some of their opponents that they might defeat, or, if not defeat, they might perhaps delay the accomplishment of their desires by importing into the discussion what was called the religious element, and thereby deprive them of that union, in possession of which they knew they were masters of the situation. Accordingly, the public press teemed with appeals and warnings to the Protestants of Ireland. They said to them, "Oh, if Home Rule be given to Ireland, the Catholics will not be content with equality. They will look for ascendancy. They will avail themselves of their numerical superiority to oppress and tyrannise over their Protestant fellow-countrymen." There might be plenty of people in England, and he believed there were, so ignorant of the Irish nation as to believe that; there might be Protestants in Ireland who, on these vague and undefined expressions, believed something of the same kind. He hoped the number of these were decreasing; that a greater knowledge and juster appreciation of their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen would induce them to throw away such groundless and unworthy fears. He trusted they would follow the noble example set them last night by the grand Presbyterian minister of the North, whose patriotism, whose genuine love of Ireland, whose keen spirit and manly independence, won all their admiration.

At all events, he did not fear his Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. But he, as a Roman Catholic Irishman, said he knew from his heart and soul, and so did all of them, that it was impossible there could be a more groundless, a more utterly unfounded, in fact, a greater falsehood ever invented or uttered by human lips than that the Roman Catholic nation, or any part of them, wished for anything like an invasion of the

freedom of their Protestant fellow-countrymen. Those who made these accusations and threw those imputations on them ought to consider one remarkable fact.

In the House of Commons he heard an English member, a Protestant of course, taunt the Scotch members with the fact that, notwithstanding the teeming Catholic population of the Scotch towns, there was not a single Catholic member sent to represent them. It was readily retorted that it was the same with regard to England. He asked was that the case in Ireland? How many great Catholic constituencies are there who freely sent Protestant gentlemen to represent them? and he was glad to say that well and truly did these gentlemen discharge the duties that were committed to them. Whenever there was a stand to to be made for Roman Catholic rights, they were always in the van; and he thanked God, who had planted these noble and generous instincts in the breasts of the Catholic voters that prompted them to place their dearest interests in the hands of the Protestant gentlemen whom they knew and trusted.

He thought the time had come, and he would say its arrival has been hastened by this Conference, when false pretences must be laid aside, and when their opponents must base their arguments on something else than fear of ascendancy, or imputing to them designs against the rights of property. Was there ever anything more preposterous than to impute a design against the rights of property to Home Rule—to a movement which was sustained and put forward by a requisition of 24,000 names—names, not of the titled aristocracy, but of the bone and sinew of the land, of the industrious classes of the land, of the property acquiring classes of the land, of men to whom peace, and order, and inviolability of property was of as essential consequence as it was to the richest nobleman in England. The time had come when all that rubbish must be set aside, when they must meet them face to face to discuss the real principles which they advocated. That their opponents felt they must do so was, he thought, forshadowed in the speeches of such men as Alderman Carter and Sergeant Simon. He believed the great mass of the people of England were open to argument—were open to conviction. They had but to explain to them what their real principles and objects were, and he believed they would truly and frankly say that their right to true representative government was as good as their own. They would respect them for the determination, and resolution, and perseverance, and moderation with which they pressed that claim, and would give them their assistance in the final achievement of victory.

Mr. Edmond Dease, M.P., said that considering the lateness of the hour and the great length of the debate, he would best discharge his duty by being very brief indeed. He had great pleasure in seconding the resolution proposed in such eloquent terms, by his honourable friend, Mr. Redmond, who, in truth, had left him but little to add. He had advocated in the past the establishment of religious equality in Ireland, because he believed in his conscience that the old spirit of ascendancy had been the primary cause of those disastrous divisions among his

countrymen, which had prevented them long ago from securing for their country the great blessing of self-government. The system of centralization, which is everywhere—as in France—the paralysis of all local and independent energy and life, has been ruinous to Ireland. It had increased the great evil of absenteeism and caused the withdrawal from our shores of the wealth of our country, which is expended in London and elsewhere. At length they had obtained the great blessing of religious equality, and they were determined never again to permit the evil spirit of ascendancy to re-appear among them in any form to prevent that unity of national feeling among Irishmen of every creed, which this very Conference was the best proof that could be given, had at length begun to prevail. He would only add that it afforded him the most sincere pleasure to have been able to be present at this great Conference and to join with his fellow-countrymen in a demand for Home Rule under a federal arrangement. He had more than once had the opportunity of publicly expressing his views on this subject. Those who knew him in private were aware that he expressed them there as well. The position which he filled, as the representative of an important constituency was alone that which added any weight to his words. He joined most cordially with his fellow-countrymen in this great movement, and having the happiness, as he had, of being connected by the closest ties of relationship with the great name of Grattan, he felt it was his duty to the memory of Ireland's immortal patriot—to assist in this great cause—the cause of our common country. He thanked them cordially for allowing him to second the resolution.

The Rev. P. LAVELLE, P.P., said he did not intend to make any lengthened speech, but he stood up to declare, what he had often declared before, not alone his adhesion to this great national cause, but his undying faith and his certain hope in its final triumph. He added, moreover, that these were not his own individual sentiments and convictions, but, as his colleague in the same vineyard, Dean M'Manus, had said that day, that the high hills of Connemara re-echoed the voice of Ireland in demanding liberation, so he declared that the voice of the wild plains of Connemara said that Ireland must be free. It was his pride and honour to have been of the first members of the Home Rule Association, of which that great Conference was the result. Then the association was slighted, was misreprerented, was openly assailed, was declared to be only a big mask. Now, thank God, the little grain, the smallest of all seeds, had grown to be that great tree, beneath which all the children of Ireland took shelter.

In his opinion, argument on the question of self-government had been exhausted. Arguments from Ireland's *pre*-union and *post*-union history, financial arguments, legislative arguments from the hostility, the rapacity, the tyranny of England; arguments from the misery, poverty, and ruin of Ireland—all these had been presented to the Conference in every shape and form, and so clearly and plainly as to make intelligible to the simplest understanding, the wrongs of his country and the justice of its demand. They had been told of the prosperity of Ireland during the short period she enjoyed comparative independence. In the words of

Lord Clare, echoed by that true patriot, John Foster, no country in the world ever prospered in commerce, in manufactures, and even in agricultural industry, as much as Ireland did within the same space of time; but during the seventy years that had passed since the Union, no other country in the civilized globe had suffered as much as Ireland in all the departments of commerce and agriculture. If there was no other argument for legislative independence but that, it should be enough. But there were many other arguments against what O'Connell aptly called the "accursed Union." To that union Ireland had never submitted. The people of Ireland were enslaved, but they did not hug the chains that bound them. They were "slaves ever chafing in their chains.

He wished to say a few words on one point—namely, the idea some might entertain that under a free and independent parliament, Catholics would seek to rule in ascendancy. Now, he knew the sentiments of the Irish priests. He believed that were the Catholic laity so mean and so base as to submit to dictation of that kind, there was not a Catholic bishop who would tolerate it, and the whole Catholic sanctuary would turn out and say "No." Ascendancy had had its day—the sun of that day is set, and never will rise again in Ireland. He sat some years ago at the side of the unpurchasable John Martin, the sentiment that he uttered then he would now repeat, "That he would rather have 105 Irish honest Protestant gentlemen making laws for Ireland in Ireland, than 5,000 English Catholics in England." It was his conviction that that is the sentiment of ninety-nine out of every hundred priests in Ireland. They were far more representative of the Irish people at this moment than that rotten house is of the English people—a house which Frederick Lucas called the "nastiest house in the kingdom." They were charged with harbouring treacherous and treasonable designs in their heart, and that if Home Rule be given to them in any shape, they would at once do what the Rev. Mr. Flanagan threatened. They repudiated all such notions, and would expel the man that they suspected of harbouring such notions. But, apart from these assurances, there were the armies of red-coats, and black-coats which could be called out if they moved in that direction, as was done in '98 and '48 and '65. The government had the sword and the bayonet, and the Irish people had only their tongues—they had not even the pikes now. By what means were they to reach Home Rule? At the hustings in Ireland, and on the floor of the House of Commons in England. No man should enter parliament from Mayo, Galway, Sligo, or Roscommon, unless he had Home Rule not alone placarded on his forehead, but engraven on his heart. They would not try any new sticks at all, but men in whose word they could trust as in proved steel, and they would return those in whom they would have a pledge that they were safe.

A great deal had been said about the justice of England. He was one of those who believed in it so far as this, that if their claims and arguments were brought to the doors of the English people, they would have their demands granted.

He did not hear any gentleman address himself to one subject, namely, that of the English press. For the last two days they had read the misrepresentations of the father of all bad liars, he meant the London *Times*.

That paper had told them they were only a couple of hundreds of non entities. They had twenty or thirty members of parliament. Mr. Butt, forsooth, went for nothing, Mr. Galbraith went for nothing, and even Father Lavelle, although physicially small, was of course, morally nothing. —nothing. He believed that if an appeal were made to the justice of Englishmen—if the English press were to give their claims fairly and honestly—they might have the active and cordial assistance of the English people. In the act, giving them their liberties, of '82, that act was to be binding for ever. In the act of union of 1800 there was a second one binding for ever. But he said there would be a third act, binding for ever and ever, and for ever. That would be the act regenerating Ireland—once more making them a free, loyal, and a happy, prosperous, and contented people, not willing slaves, or slaves unwilling.

The Chairman said he hoped the Conference would bear with him in putting the question. There was nothing of a controversial character in the resolution. There were several important matters to come forward yet, when every gentleman would have an opportunity of being heard. The hour was now late, and he would put the question.

The Chairman said that a gentleman present had a resolution to read, introducing the question of independent parliamentary action, and he hoped that the Conference would sit for half an hour to allow the resolution to be moved and seconded. To-morrow the discussion would take place on it.

Mr. DORAN, T.C., of Queenstown, said it gave him great pleasure to move the following resolution on the question of independent parliamentary action :—

That this Conference cannot separate without calling on the Irish constituencies at the next general election to return men earnestly and truly devoted to the great cause which this Conference has been called on to promote, and who, in any emergency that may arise, will be ready to take counsel with a great National Conference to be called in such a manner as to represent the opinions and feelings of the Irish nation, and that with a view to rendering members of parliament and their constituencies more in accord on all questions affecting the welfare of the country, it is recommended by this Conference that at the close of each session of parliament the representatives should render to their constituents an account of their stewardship.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER seconded the proposition, and said he was sure, since they had heard the terms of the resolution which had just been submitted on the question of independent parliamentary action, they would not be surprised that the speakers who had preceded them on the questions before them had shown such leaning to the principle of independent parliamentary opposition, he said that that great principle had been affirmed eight years ago.

Sir Patrick O'Brien—Twenty years ago.

Mr. Power said he was a young man, but was not in the habit of standing up without taking good care, first of all, to post himself on his subject. It was, as Sir Patrick O'Brien had told them, affirmed so far back as twenty years ago, but on the 24th June, 1865, this circular was issued by the National Association of Ireland, and he found that the prelates of the Irish Church were the gentlemen who particularly interested themselves in defining a paliamentary policy. He found that

at the meeting at which this policy was defined there were present his Grace—he begged pardon—Irishmen were pushing themselves so rapidly into places of power and position that he was going to mistake the dignity of Cardinal Cullen—there were present his Eminence Cardinal Cullen, Lord Archbishop of Dublin; his Grace the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale, the Most Rev. Dr. Keane, Bishop of Cloyne; Most Rev. Dr. Gillooly, Bishop of Elphin; Most Rev. Dr. Dorrian, Coadjutor Bishop of Down and Connor; Most Rev. Dr. Nulty, Coadjutor Bishop of Meath; and two other prelates whose services it was impossible to bring into the national cause now, because they had gone to a land where oppression had no power over them—Dr. Derry, Bishop of Clonfert, and Dr. Kilduff, Bishop of Ardagh. It was well to know under whose auspices the principles of parliamentary policy indicated in the resolutions he should take the liberty of reading was inaugurated, because amendments might be brought forward by some gentlemen who might think that the resolution now before the house did not go far enough in restraining the action of members of parliament. The resolutions adopted on the occasion referred to were :—

First:—This Association pledges itself to the policy of complete parliamentary independence, and the electors shall, in all cases, be urged to bind their representatives not only to vote for all the objects of the Association, but also to oppose any government who shall not incorporate with its policy, or otherwise efficiently support, a satisfactory measure of tenant compensation—that measure being deemed one of pressing exigency and paramount importance.

Second:—That, as it is impossible to give an honest and efficient advocacy in parliamentary measures, and at the same time to incur personal obligation to a minister who is opposed to those measures, the electors shall bind their representatives to accept no place of honour for themselves, and incur no personal obligation to any minister who shall not support a satisfactory measure of tenant compensation.

Third:—That there should be an understanding between the electors and their representatives that the latter should take counsel together, so as to secure a general uniformity of policy and a combined action for the ends of the Association.

That principle was affirmed in the very first sentence of the resolution which he had the honour to second. He might say, in passing, that it had been frequently asserted that the principle of independent opposition was a failure. He ventured to affirm, and he thought many gentlemen who took part in this movement and in the preceding movement, would support him in the declaration that the policy of independent opposition never failed, because it never got a fair trial. He was perfectly convinced that the taking of a pledge would not convert a dishonest Irishman into a patriotic one; but he attributed the failure of the policy enunciated in the Declaration to the fact that the public penalty which should have followed breaches of faith pledged to the Irish people did not follow the treason of those who openly violated it. He attributed it to the fact that their treachery was condoned, and he regretted from the depths of his soul that some of the prelates who were responsible for the passing of those resolutions—but perhaps none of those whose names were there—were parties to the condoning of those violations of promise. Now, they did not go so far as to re-affirm the resolutions which he had just read, but they had had the career of the Irish parliamentary representative in London depicted for them by a master hand. The death of the Irish patriot—the death of political

virtue—in the imperial parliament had been described for them by one who had himself trodden the path of corruption and who years ago stood in that hall. He asked them could any question be submitted to that Conference which was more likely to inspire hope and confidence amongst the masses of their people than a question which, by a resolution of this kind, would do something to preserve the political virtue of their representatives? He said unhesitatingly—and he did not say it in disparagement to the honourable gentlemen who were present—that from the very date of the Union parliamentary representation in London had been confined within the narrow limits of a traffic between the English minister and Irish representatives. If it were not so, did they really think that, out of the 105 members who claimed to represent Ireland in the House of Commons, not more than one-fourth of them had condescended to come into that hall to inform themselves with regard to the wishes of the Irish people.

Then, with reference to that part of the resolution which called upon their representatives to render, at the close of each session, an account of their stewardship, some gentlemen had affected to despise it. They said it would be of no consequence; but let him ask any gentlemen who had watched the proceedings of that convention since it was opened—any gentleman who had carefully noticed the progress of opinion there—whether it is a not a wholesome thing to bring the members of parliallament frequently in contact with their constituencies. And members of parliament, if they could not make up their minds on this public question, would be assisted in that operation by their constituents. Mr. Butt had kindly told them that some of the English members were already in favour of Home Rule for Ireland; but he believed that instead of three, as was stated, six English and Scotch members had declared in favour of it. How was that achieved? Simply because when they came before their constituents their Irish brethren in England took the trouble of questioning them with regard to their views on Home Rule. The members, of course, said they did not understand it; but when they were told what it was they saw it did not contemplate any of the wild schemes with which the federal party was credited, and the result of those men meeting their constituents and having their attention drawn to the subject by Irishmen had converted a good many to the Home Rule programme. They contemplated the possibility of a failure. He begged pardon, the resolution contemplated the possibility that after they had used all the arguments in their power—after moral force was used to the utmost—the imperial parliament might not be convinced. Well, he asked, was it wise in that contingency to leave the future policy in the hands of Irish members. He thought it was not, for whenever a difficulty of the kind arises in England they go the country to be informed of its opinions. It would be very expensive and troublesome for Irish members of parliament to retire in a body. What they proposed was that a great national Conference should be assembled, where they would meet their constituents, as has been done in this room. Ireland has been powerless, because she has not been able to watch her representatives, and the English minister has taken care to corrupt them, so that the genius of Ireland has been prostituted to the maintenance of Ireland's

degradation. If this is to continue there is no hope for Ireland except in measures which he would deplore the necessity of resorting to. He stood there to support them now, and he would stand there again, if that movement should fail, and he would be prepared to take part in any action which the national voice of his country might determine.

Sir Patrick O'Brien rose.

The Chairman said an amendment had been handed in. His impression was, that it would be wiser after hearing the two speeches they had just heard, to adjourn.

There being loud demands to read the amendment the Chairman read it as follows :—

That, to render the Irish vote effective, we recommend that the Irish members shall form themseves into a permanent committee for the public discussion of every ministerial and other proposal which affect the interests of Ireland, that no individual shall introduce any bill, or give notice of any motion of importance, unless his proceeding shall be sanctioned and supported by such committee; and finally, that the Irish members shall always vote in a body, or abstain from voting on all party divisions, as the majority may direct.

The Conference then (5.30) adjourned.

FOURTH DAY,

21st November, 1873.

The Conference re-assembled at half-past eleven o'clock, and the Chair was taken by

Mr. W. SHAW, M.P.

The CHAIRMAN said that before the proceedings commenced he wished to explain a circumstance that occurred last night at the close of the discussion on the first series of the resolutions. He had always looked upon that resolution (the 8th) as perfectly useless, and if it had depended on himself he certainly would not have included it in the list of resolutions, and he would be very much disposed, when they were making an act of federalism, to exempt himself from its operation. But it had been included on the representation of some gentlemen, to allay the fears and apprehensions of some gentlemen in this country and England. When he put the resolution several gentlemen got up to speak, and he was very sorry he did not notice some of them, because there were some of them who had a right to address the Conference on such a question as this, especially the Rev. Mr. M'Dermott, of county Sligo, and the Rev. Mr. Moran, a Protestant clergyman, both of whom, coming from different points of the compass, denounced the resolution, he believed, as absurd and unnecessary. However, the resolution having been in their series, and he having been clothed with a sort of dictatorship, perhaps he had acted a little unreasonably. He had thought it right to get rid of the resolution at once, and not raise a discussion on it; but their friends would that day have a full opportunity of expressing their sentiments on the resolutions they were now discussing—that is, they would hear them on the question on which they neglected to hear them last night.

Now, there was another matter to which he wished to refer. They had all listened, he was sure, with great pleasure to the speech of Mr. Power, who seconded the resolution now before the chair; and always on such occasions he gave himself up to listen to the arguments and laid aside critical faculty; but in the morning one began to criticise. That morning, it struck him, that there was one sentence in Mr. Power's address that grated harshly on his feelings. He was sure Mr. Power only meant to include a certain class of Irish representatives who had habitually trafficked in their votes and sold their country, and that it was the very furthest thing from his thoughts to include their friends, absent or present, of whom he would say, from his own personal knowledge, there were no more respectable or independent men in the House of Commons. He also believed Mr. Power never meant to include those who had gone before—such as Mr. Maguire and George Henry Moore—but a small class that they all knew very well.

Having made these observations, he would now open the regular business of the day, hoping that the speeches would be as much as possible to the point, as few and as short as possible.

They would not adjourn for luncheon until the resolution and the amendment to be moved were disposed of.

He would now ask Mr. Cahill to move his amendment.

Mr. DIGBY, M.P., said the day before they had occasion to call attention to the critical remarks which the English papers had made on this meeting and the proceedings in which they had engaged. They had called attention to the exact return in the first place, which they made of the numbers attending the Conference. Well, he could not see that their remarks produced on their minds any effect, for he took up the *Times* of yesterday, and in it found a statement that "the largest list published to-day of persons present yesterday contains 340 names —some of them are repeated, and the representatives of the Dublin and provincial press and mere spectators are included." Well, they knew themselves that they saw this large room crowded, and that the statement put forward had no foundation in fact. Nor could they imagine that this conduct, and the repeated ignoring of the importance of this movement, were accidental. There was an intention in it—an intention to decry their proceeding and to make light of it; but the day would come when those who speak and write as they now do would be startled by the importance and strength of this movement. Some of them may have seen Sardeau's clever play of *Rabagas*, in which an opposition journal is spoken of, and a certain prince who governed his people there faithfully and well had all his acts decried by this opposition journal. If he passed his troops in review before his subjects, his act was called one of military intimidation; if he did not do so, he was said to be afraid of the spirit of the army. If he stopped indoors he was the victim of his own debauchery. Well, that was the way in which the English press slandered them. The priests in Ireland had carefully, as a body, abstained, as yet, from expressing any opinion on this subject. He believed their motive was that they did not wish to give colour to the statement that they are instigating this movement for any exclusively clerical purpose. If they had popular meetings in the country, they were only appealing to the passions of the multitude. And so he could only compare the conduct of the English press to the conduct of the opposition journal which Sardeau so well described. He wished, in these remarks, as an independent witness, who could have no personal reason for finding fault with the report of these proceedings, except so far as they slandered this country and were hostile to the cause, to take this opportunity of protesting, in his own name and in theirs, against the wilful falsehoods of the English press.

Mr. BUTT, M.P.—As this is a question of privilege, I feel myself at liberty—otherwise it would be irregular—to interpose. I wish to say a few words, which I say with great regret, but which I say most deliberately and most solemnly. We are not unknown and obscure individuals here. The *Times* has occasionally thought it worth while when I have spoken to give me a telegraphic report the next morning of everything I said. I ask that great journal—and I acknowledge now, in the first instance, the fairness with which they have treated myself—I may say the

generosity with which they have treated me personally; in a great many instances they have treated this great cause with perfect fairness—I ask them now, and I ask their representative here, whoever he may be, to insert the words I now speak, and speak with great regret. I read in their Dublin correspondence, the other day, a statement that two hundred persons were in this room the first day of the Conference. Now, of any criticism they think fit to make we have no right to complain; but we have a right to expect from the public press a faithful chronicle of public events. The tickets of admission, taken at the door, tell us that 800 persons were here that day, and not 200. And now, Sir, what I ask to be reported is—and let it go to the English people a distinct and deliberate statement that in the Dublin correspondence of the London *Times*, a systematic course of falsehood which has been pursued, which it is impossible not to regard as wilful and deliberate. I am not an unknown individual, and I am not, nor are you, obscure; and I make this statement on my own responsibility. It is not in this instance alone, but in every instance connected with the Home Rule movement, that most mischievous falsehoods have been inserted in the *Times*, on the authority of some person who deceives both the conductors of that journal and the English people. And there are gentlemen here whose words will weigh with the English public, and who are not unknown or obscure individuals. And there is not a man here who will not endorse personally the statement I make, and have made—with the deepest regret I say it—that a deliberate system of falsehood has marked the Irish correspondence of the *Times*. I feel so strongly—I knew it would be the case—that I had intended, before this Conference met, to have written publicly to the *Times*, and asked them to do what they have done for less important things, to select an English gentleman and send him as a special commissioner here to report truly. New York journals have done so. It is for the *Times* to say what course they will take to vindicate their own honour and the honour of the press; but I think I have a right to ask that the words I have spoken, solemnly and deliberately, and to which I pledge whatever little character I have, should be reported in the *Times*, and let the English people know that a number of gentlemen of station and character here, backed by the voice of the Irish people, attest this fact, that the Dublin correspondence of the *Times* is a mass of misrepresentation and falsehood, as far as it relates to all Irish political affairs, more peculiarly so in anything that relates to the great question of Home Rule.

Mr. RONAYNE, M.P., said that in a short abstract in the *Daily News*, of what he stated here the other day, it was represented that he said, "Our quarrel was not with the English government, but with the English people." The whole context of what he said would have shown that his statement was the very reverse—namely, that our quarrel was with the English government, and not with the English people.

The Conference then proceeded with the following resoluion, which had been moved the preceding day by Mr. Doran, of Queenstown, and seconded by Mr. O'Connor Power:—

That this Conference cannot separate without calling on the Irish constituencies at the next general election, to return men earnestly and truly devoted to the great cause which this Conference has been called to promote, and who in any emergency that may arise will be ready to take counsel with a great national Conference, to be called in such a manner as to represent the opinions and feelings of the Irish nation; and that, with a view of rendering members of parliament and their constituencies more in accord on all questions affecting the welfare of the country, it is recommended by this Conference that at the close of each session of parliament the representatives should render to their constituents an account of their stewardship.

Mr. CAHILL, of Queen's County, rose to move the following amendment.

That, to render the Irish vote effective, we recommend that the Irish members shall, after the general election, form themselves into a permanent committee for the public discussion of every ministerial or other proposal which may affect the interests of Ireland; that no individual representative shall introduce any bill or give notive of any motion of importance unless his proceeding shall be sanctioned and supported by such Committee; and, finally, that the Irish members shall always vote in a body, or abstain from voting, in all party divisions, as the majority may direct.

He said that this amendment formed the fourth of a series of resolutions which had been drawn up and agreed to in the Queen's County. Any person reading the four resolutions consecutively would perceive that when they spoke of the Irish vote, they spoke of the vote of the Irish Home Rule members. When he would speak, therefore, of the Irish members being called upon to give up their individual opinions to some extent to the Conference, he would mean only those who are strictly in favour of Home Rule as well as of those other questions to which they referred in the Queen's County. It was with considerable hesitation and a sense of the deepest personal responsibility that he placed a notice of amendment on the records of the Conference. He wished to bring it forward for discussion, because it was peculiarly a question of their own in the Queen's County. His friend Richard Lawlor was unhappily not able to be present to advocate it with all the force of his personal character. He (Mr. Lawlor) some years ago brought forward a scheme for the constitution of an Irish assembly which was in as many words the scheme proposed in this amendment, which, though termed an amendment by the technical rules of that assembly, is substantially a resolution itself. The proposer and seconder of the resolution, therefore, would not consider that he brought forward the amendment in opposition to them, for there was no difference, and they merely meant to treat the same subject by a slightly different method. His amendment was more respectful to the honest susceptibilities of the Irish representatives. Language had been occasionally used incautiously attempting to throw imputations on the great body of their Irish representatives. He disavowed such language, and thought they ought to have confidence in their representatives. They are the free choice of the people, and if they have not done all that had been expected it was the people's fault, for they did not sustain them. There is no local public opinion in many parts of Ireland. They make an effort at general elections, but nothing is heard for seven years after. The English and Scotch members are invited to meet their constituents, but he was not aware of any place in Ireland where this was done. In his county

they had two good representatives, in whom they had confidence. Mr. M'Carthy Downing, Sir John Gray, and other gentlemen had stated the day before that they thought the meeting inopportune, and that it would be better postponed a little while yet. To some extent he agreed with suggestion. But, at the same time, he considered that the subject should be ventilated more or less. It was now ripe for discussion; and it should be brought before the English people on the authority of some great association, be defined and set forth, for it would be impossible to ask the English nation to join a movement which had no existence, and which must fall to the ground without the help of an association such as he now addressed. To propose a plan of a rigid and lasting character to candidates and members of parliament was to imply a doubt of their personal honour. It was so felt by the members of the county that he represented—gentlemen, too, who were heartily with the popular sentiment. But let it be once understood that all Ireland approved of such a proposition, and then there would be no difficulty in applying it to every locality in the country. Mr. Cahill commented on the resolution moved by Mr. Doran and Mr. O'Connor Power, and said his amendment contained, in another form, the principle of that resolution. He did not think it would do to establish a censorship over the Irish members. He proposed, as more respectful to those gentlemen, that they should be the guardians of their own honour; that, as the constituencies trusted them, they should trust each other, should act in concert on all occasions, not indulging petty crotchets or individual feelings, but seeking the public good, and responsible at the same time to the country at large. The plan he submitted would render the representatives of the country responsible from day to day and from week to week. Mr. Cahill observed on the fact that many Irish members were exceedingly remiss in their duties, and commented on the vast importance of securing a large Home Rule representation by members pledged to the cause in the English House of Commons. As it was, it often happened in divisions on the great national questions, not more than ten or a dozen, or at the most, twenty such members were found to take part.

He further observed that he heard it objected to the amendment that it was unconstitutional, that it asked the minority to submit to the majority. But he maintained the rule of the majority as a constitutional rule on all occasions. It was by that rule the kingdom was governed. The act of union was carried by a majority, and they were still bound by and still protesting against it. They also required that Irish members should yield allegiance to the general body of the representatives, as members do at present to the leaders of the different parties. Men must now yield individual opinions to Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli, and it was not too much to ask the Irish representatives to sink their individual opinions and crotchets for the sake of Ireland. Divided, the Irish members in the House of Commons are powerless, but united they would be a great power, especially when they are supported and sustained by the people of the country. If an English member makes himself ridiculous, the ridicule only recoils upon himself; but if an Irishman comes forward with anything absurd it is made

to reflect discredit on the whole country. He had great pleasure in submitting the motion and recommending it for their adoption.

Mr. JOSEPH G. BIGGAR (Belfast) said it gave him great pleasure to second the amendment, and in doing so he would like to say he considered that the most important part of the business of the Conference had now been reached. They had hitherto been enunciating abstract principles which were perfectly true, and they had got rid of personal difficulties, which might afterwards create embarrassments, and now came to the practical working of the Conference—namely, to find out the best mode of getting Home Rule for Ireland. He regretted that some of the members of parliament, with their knowledge and experience, had not brought forward these propositions. He considered the amendment preferable to the resolution. The only objection he had to it was that it did not go far enough, and that there should have been a clause introduced calling upon candidates for parliamentary honours to give written pledges. He was aware that many men, in whose judgment and honesty he had the utmost confidence, thought otherwis e but he believed it would be more convenient and desirable that there should be clear and explicit written pledges, which would prevent any misunderstanding. The amendment he considered quite reasonable in all its parts. It recommended organized action on the part of the Home Rule members, and if there was that organization they could carry whatever they pleased in the British House of Commons. It also recommended voting and abstaining from voting on party divisions. What did they care about Whig or Tory, or whether Gladstone or Disraeli was in power if they could only get accomplished the object they have in view for the benefit of the country? One great objection raised at the Conference was that the land question and the education question were not to be brought before them. These things had been kept very fairly in the back ground. Their one great object was to gain Home Rule for Ireland, and the only way to get Home Rule from the English parliament was for the Irish Home Rule members to keep compactly and honestly together. He would like to see the great cause carried, for his own gratification, to a successful issue; but, more than that, he would like to see it carried in the lifetime of the men who had been working for it during two generations.

The Chairman said the resolution and amendment were now before the chair; but he thought they were bound to hear the Rev. Mr. M'Dermott.

Canon M'DERMOTT said he was very grateful for the explanation with which the Chairman had so kindly favoured them, not so much because the explanation was couched in language complimentary to him, as because it registered a protest against any intention on the part of his hon. friend of cushioning a debate. He was also grateful for it because it gave him an opportunity of putting himself right before the gentlemen present, and also before his absent friends, whose representative he was there. When he rose he did not do so in any captious spirit. He heard Mr. Butt, who was the grand centre figure of this great Conference, express in language clear as eloquent that every one who entered

this room under the programme of the requisition was bound, not alone to the principle of Home Rule, but also to the principle of Home Rule under a federal system. These words carried no terrors to his heart, because he felt he was bound by a chain nobler and stronger still—that of the passionate love he felt for his country. He would not, therefore, violate that rule. He would not raise any objection against the principle or the platform on which the principle was placed by them. But the resolution to which he would object had no essential connexion with either. What does that resolution propose? "That we are willing that articles be incorporated in the federal constitution supplying the amplest guarantees that no change shall be made by that parliament in the present settlement of land, and that no legislation shall be adopted to establish any religious ascendancy, or to subject any one to religious disabilities." They might ask him why he objected to that resolution. He would tell them, lest he might be misrepresented, it was because he believed the proposition degrading, self-accusing, and yet not meeting the end and object for which it was framed. They stood there—the representatives of the Irish nation—they stood there in solemn conclave, and he asked them would they wish that it should be carried on the wings of the press, that it should be flashed to the utmost extremity of the habitable globe, that they conceded for one moment to the possibility, nay, probability that a parliament of Ireland's sons—Ireland the just, Ireland the pure, Ireland the Island of Saints—could sink so low as to become a den of thieves and a conclave of robbers. He looked with unutterable hope and longing for the day when Ireland would be a nation sitting among the nations of Europe. He looked forward with anxious hope to the day when the crown of victory would be placed on her head, and yet he would not care to see her thus victoriously proclaimed a nation amongst the nations of Europe—have her mantle of green tarnished even with a suspicion of impurity—*malo mori quam fedari.* And it was because he would not that he asked them to register with him their protest against that proposition. It was also, in his mind, inexpedient. Would it meet the purposes for which it was framed? Did they believe that that section of the community, so well and aptly styled the kid-gloved gentry would be induced by that resolution to come into the Home Rule camp? Did they consider that the guarantee it afforded would bridge the chasm over that stood between them? He said no—emphatically no. If they told them that they would not legislate for the land—that they would not repeal the Coercion Act—that they would not legislate on the education question—that they would still keep the prisoners within the prison bars—then, indeed, they would have done something to conciliate these gentlemen. But let them not tell him that a guarantee against mere visionary fears would ever have any effect on their minds—would ever lead them into their camp. It was not necessary too, they should descend so low to win over any section of the community. Let them remember the Irish nation is with them; and to quote the glorious sentiment of a great bard—

"We have hearts and hands full strong enough, I ween,
To rescue and to raise again, WITHOUT DISHONOUR our own immortal green."

If he was allowed he would ask them, with all humility, to reconsider their decision. Let them be faithful to the great principle of Home Rule at all times and in all places—in the family circle—under the public eye—at the hustings—in their places in parliament. Let them be ever thus faithful and true, and they shall do more to live down calumny and detraction, and dissipate honest prejudices than will be effected by the, to him, ignoble guarantee which the resolution would have them accept. If, then, it were allowed him, he would ask, in all humility, his friends around him to reconsider their decision. He would ask them in the name of the glorious past of their country—in the name of the honoured roll of patriots, martyrs whose words and deeds illumine the pages of their history—he would ask them, in the name of everything that was good and great in Ireland—in the name of its past and of its future —not to stoop, even to conquer; for, if they stooped thus in their victory, they will find their shame.

The Chairman said, when the Rev. Mr. M'Dermott rose the previous evening, a Protestant clergyman—the Rev. Mr. Moran—also rose. If that gentleman was present he should now be heard.

It having been stated that the Rev. Mr. Moran was not then in the room,

Dr. Grattan and Mr. Ferguson, of Glasgow, both rose together.

The Chairman called upon

Mr. FERGUSON, who said that he intended to support the resolution, although if that proposition had not been before the Conference he should have voted in favour of Mr. Cahill's amendment. He hoped, however, that now the amendment would be withdrawn, and he based his hope upon the belief he entertained that the resolution was better worded, more precise, more calculated to attain the object in view, and more in accord with the spirit of their leaders—Messrs. Butt, Martin, and others. A remark had been made as to traffic between the British minister and Irish members of parliament, and it was suggested that it did not exist. Why, were they going to stultify the cry raised by the national voice for fifty years? Even look back for six years, and see the wretched conduct of Irish members of parliament. Mr. O'Connor Power had cried out with Mr. Butt about this traffic, and said that a regular price existed for the votes of Irish members.

Mr. Butt—I never said that.

Mr. Ferguson—By whoever made, the observation was used. I do not mean to say that it was charged that it was continued down to the present time—but it was asserted by a speaker that there was a market and a price for Irish votes.

A Voice—It was said that it was not carried down to the present time.

Mr. Ferguson—Exactly; that it was not carried down to the present time, but there was a suspicion in the country that there was something like it, and a recent remarkable secession from the Irish national party, by a certain M.P. confirmed it.

Mr. Nagle (Cork) rose to order—They had a great deal of business to transact, and he did not think it was fair to occupy time with attacks on gentlemen whose public and private lives were characterized by the highest honour.

Mr. Ferguson said he would keep himself perfectly right with the Conference. He would not reflect in any way on the good and gallant men who were with them to-day—and who had fought the national battle of liberty so well. But, he could not forget that when Coercion Bills were being fought in the House of Commons—when Irish measures were being fought in the small hours of the morning by the gallant veteran (Mr. Butt), with half-a-dozen men at his back, many of the Irish representatives were not with the popular cause. So much in defence of Mr. O'Connor Power, whose meaning he believed to have been as he now interpreted it, and he would stand by that interpretation. With regard to Mr. Cahill's amendment he thought it was too soon to establish a permanent committee of Irish members. In the present state of the Irish representation, he certainly could not recommend it. He believed that the time would come when there would be Irish representatives to whom they could go in that way; but it would be suicidal at present. He would rather, in accordance with the resolution, bind the Irish representatives by a pledge on the hustings to their constituents to come before a national assembly like that which would show the people's will. It gave him great delight to find that many parliamentary representatives had come to know what the people wanted. He did not think it would interfere with the harmony of the country if the Irish representatives were brought once a year, or as often as possible, into such an assembly as that. There was a great political education in rendering this account of their stewardship. It had not been practised in Ireland, but it was of paramount importance that it should be practised. The example had been set by Mr. Butt, Mr. M. Henry, and Mr. Lewis, of Derry. If the 103 representatives of Ireland took counsel with the people, it would place a certain amount of responsibility upon them in the House of Commons, which would be very useful to their political education. No man should represent a constituency who did not agree with that constituency. If a member did not agree with his constituency, or if his own personal views were not in accordance with its opinions, such a member was in honour bound to resign. This was *par excellence* the people's question—there was no question of more interest to the Irish nation—that they should find honest men to represent them. Large masses of people had lain down in political apathy, and had recourse to dangerous pursuits through the want of faith in the Irish M.P.'s. In conversation with English and Scotch members, they would be told that the thirty or forty Irish members were a miserable minority, but let them get seventy or eighty members to support Mr. Butt, and the result would be otherwise. There would be enough of members representing national constituencies in the House of Commons to compel by the moral force of their position, the entire Scotch vote to go with them on every Irish question; but they could not expect the English or the Scotch members to vote for a minority. His desire was to leave the door open to every Irish representative who, through want of a political education, or a belief in Irish apathy and indifference, may have kept away from the national ranks. His desire was, and he spoke with the greatest respect and reverence for the members of parliament present, that members should come and find what was the people's will—and he had no doubt

that having found it out, then they would do it honestly. He there represented two or three millions of Irish people across the water—who were about to shake, in the interests of old Ireland, many a Whig and many a Conservative seat. They would be able to exact a Home Rule pledge in Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow, and numbers of other places. They could, at all events, change the representation till they got a Home Rule pledge. It did always seem to him to be desirable as a student of O'Connell's life, and as an admirer of his course of procedure —it always seemed to him to be wise to reduce the Liberal majority as much as possible in the House, and make the parties as equal as possible; with Isaac Butt and sixty members at his back to fight their battles, the power would be in the hands of the independent Irish party to hold the balance and make or unmake ministries. It would be a terrible reflection on the Irish people if after that Conference, which was attended by only twenty-five of their members, they allowed those who did not attend to go back to the House again. It was no wonder that the English press would say that the heart of the country was not with them, for their representatives had not attended their Conference. He said the man was politically blind who failed to see by the surging of the rosy tide above the political horizon, that the day of Ireland's hope was near at hand. Even should they fail, they should all remember that success was not the highest object. They should all adopt the spirit of some lines of poetry he had carried in his mind since boyish days:

"Reckless of danger, loss and shame,
In the free, fearless faith of youth;
I hope 'midst good and evil fame
To struggle in the cause of Truth.
I hope to bear amidst toil and care
Her standard on to victory;
And from the very strife to gain
Strength to dispense with sympathy.
Truth must prevail; meanwhile, endure—
Of worldly peace let worldlings boast;
Amidst the storms of life, be sure,
The loftiest spirit suffers most."

Even though they failed in accomplishing their purpose, they would have the happy feeling of having spent their lives in doing good, and of having followed in the path of those who had spent their lives in doing good for Ireland.

"We will go forth amongst men not mailed in scorn,
But in the armour of a pure intent;
Great duties are before us
And high aims;
And whether crowned or crownless,
When we fall it matters not,
So that God's and country's holy work are done."

Captain E. R. KING-HARMAN said he had been an attentive listener during all the days of the Conference, and nothing had pleased him so much as the way in which this most difficult question had been approached. On all other subjects they had been, he might say, unani-

mous; but on this question there must be a difference of opinion amongst honest, well-meaning men, who would still view the same object from different points. He had risen, not exactly to support either the amendment or resolution, but if he supported either it would certainly be the original resolution. The amendment went in for a distinct and binding —not one pledge, but a succession of pledges. If they voted for the amendment they would not bind rogues, but they would manacle and fetter the hands of honest men. What was the history of their representation for years past, and he did not speak of the representatives of Ireland alone, but of Great Britain and other countries besides? An honest man came before them, and said—"My convictions are so and so;" but some politician says—"I want you to vote for something else besides!" The honest man says, "I cannot do that." The politician says, "Then I will not vote for you." Up comes some whining fellow who says, "I will vote for whatever you like; put me into parliament; that is what I want." It was a great mistake to pledge men too tightly. The men they ought to put into parliament should be honest men. They should have men with brains, temper, and tact, and when they had men with these component parts, who in the main principle are in accord with their feelings, why should they pledge them on minor points? Let them pledge their members distinctly to Home Rule, but allow them to follow any course consistent with Home Rule. Let them put in men who are able to see the right way to vote, and if they do not vote the right way put them out and put in somebody else. When men have once got into it, if they are rogues they snap their fingers at the electors; if they are honest men they need not call on them to resign. There are a great many pledges other than political pledges that men take away with them; they pledge themselves to vote in a certain way, but they also pledge themselves to put somebody into the Excise or the Post-office. When speaking lately of a very great friend of his to one of his constituents, he said he had not done much in parliament. "Oh!" said the other, "there is not a post-office in the county that he has not put a man into." How could that man be an independent member? Let them pledge themselves not to ask their members to do anything but what is right, and then trust them to do what is right.

The only part of the resolution he objected to was that recommending that in case any extraordinary emergency should arise, the Irish members should lay the matter before a grand Conference assembled in Dublin. In a short time this National Conference would come to be a Dublin Conference, where the members for Galway, Kerry, or Cork, would come up to be judged by a Dublin constituency. He thought every member of parliament should be responsible, first to his own conscience, and then to his own constituency. A Home Ruler could not vote for a Coercion Bill, for if he thought the country fit for Home Rule it did not need a Coercion Bill. The Home Rule subject bears on other topics in the same manner. If their members thought the country demanded education in accordance with the wishes of the people, it must be the natural sequence of Home Rule. If he does not vote for Home Rule, it means that he wants England and Scotland to tell them

how to educate themselves. It is the same in tenant-right or the land question. Whoever wants to see the land question honestly settled in the country will vote for Home Rule; if he does not he will vote for English rule. Therefore, let them give their members but one pledge; that pledge should be Home Rule, and nothing but Home Rule. Let them vote freely in accordance with their conscience and with common sense on every question, but let the constituents see before they send them in that their common sense and conscience point to Home Rule. If they bind their members more he would say—"Establish a fund; pay your representatives and dismiss them after a week's warning as you would any other servant. Let them assemble while parliament is sitting and receive telegraphic instructions as to how they were to vote." By first electing honest, sound men, they could then trust them.

Mr. JOHN MARTIN said that Captain King-Harman had put forward most conclusive reasons in favour of the course he was going to recommend—the adoption of the resolution proposed by Mr. Doran, and seconded by Mr. Power. It fairly stated the objects of the Conference so far as parliamentary action is concerned. He agreed with Captain King-Harman that the pledge of taking counsel with a great National Conference was a needless and confusing sort of recommendation. If that Conference represented the patriotic public opinion of Ireland, as he believed it did, if that Conference desired to have the national cause carried by men of honour and ability, the fewer pledges the better. He did not pretend to be a man of very high spirit, but he certainly would take no pledge as to the exercise of his judgment in the representative capacity in which his constituents may place him. What he should have done, and had done, was that he should take every rational method for making his constituents thoroughly acquainted with all his opinions on public matters. He should leave them to judge whether he was worthy of the trust, and if half, or even a third, of his constituents were displeased, he would resign his place into their hands. As far as regarded the spirit and intention of the amendment, he agreed with it; but he could not consent or submit to accept the representation of a constituency that would ask him to sit as a member of parliament on the condition that he swallowed such a pledge. He judged of the other honourable gentlemen who had the distinction of representing Ireland in parliament as he did himself.

Before sitting down he should take the liberty, with the chairman's permission, to say a word upon the question so well spoken to by the Rev. Mr. M'Dermott. He had sat silent yesterday when the eighth resolution was passed. He had already given his assent to it in private before entering the Conference, but he had done so with a feeling of humiliation for his countrymen, for the Irish nation, and with a bitter feeling of humiliation for himself as a Protestant and a member of the Protestant community. That there should exist any doubt as to toleration and a spirit of justice in the minds of the Irish United Conference appeared to him almost an absurdity. He recognised the fact that such a doubt did exist in the minds of a great many of his Protestant fellow-countrymen through their ignorance, and the state of isolation in which

circumstances have caused them to keep themselves. It was not to deal indulgently with that weakness of the Protestant mind that he had given his consent to that resolution. But his Catholic fellow-countrymen had never persecuted Protestants. They had never persecuted or imposed disabilities, or showed any disposition to pass penal laws upon conscience. Every act of theirs in public affairs had shown a deep and settled determination, a vehement sentiment of fair play, and a generous spirit of confidence and trust in their Protestant fellow-countrymen. Was he not himself an example of Catholic confidence? Sympathising as he did strongly with the Rev. Mr. M'Dermott, but for reasons of policy, and in the well-grounded belief that the solemn adoption of the eighth resolution by the Conference, involving, as it did, so humiliating a guarantee, would be viewed by that gentleman as he viewed it, he assented to the proposition, declaring that he had no objection to the resolution, but was opposed to the amendment.

Mr. PETER SHERIDAN, of Dublin, desired to be heard as a voter of the city and county, and one who had been many years engaged in politics. He spoke in support of the resolution. He did not care one fig for pledges. They had pledges at the time of the repeal movement. They had men giving their £5 to that body—men of that class of whom the *Times* asked subsequently, "Where are they now?" He appealed to the Home Rule Association. They had tried members of parliament before who took pledges—men who were now on the bench and elsewhere. No doubt, they would have gentlemen coming forward at the next general election to give pledges. He would not give a farthing for these pledges unless there was some power to make those who gave them accountable in case they should break them. No one could object to the resolution. It promulgated a principle which was perfectly within the grounds of common sense, when it proposed that members of parliament should be required to render an account of their stewardship.

Mr. W. H. O'SULLIVAN (Kilmallock) said the eyes of the Irishmen all over the world watched the deliberations of the present assembly. Unless the resolution were passed the conclusion of the assembly would be like the play of *Hamlet*, with the part of Hamlet omitted. The time had not long gone by when he saw his prostrate country in the sleep of death, and thought that nothing in the world could wake her save the ring of the rifle or clash of the sabre. But he had now a different hope. He felt that the Home Rule Association had advanced during the past two or three years more than its warmest and most sanguine friends could have anticipated. He hoped Ireland would be able to get what she required in a peaceful and legitimate way; but the way to secure that was to seek seriously what was required. It would not do to have it go forth that the Conference was a mere whitewash of fraud and misrepresentation. He could not agree with the charge that the Irish members were open to English gold. He was very glad to hear the statement corrected, because some of the brightest ornaments of Ireland's genius from the days of Grattan down to the days of Martin had honoured the British House of Commons with their

presence. With regard to the threat of the leading English Conservative organ that the Irish members would be met by a combination of Whigs and Tories, it was a mere idle threat, for everyone knows that they are as anxious for the loaves of office and as ambitious of it as an expectant barrister of the Castle for place. He concluded by imploring the constituencies—every voter and every man who had not a vote—to do their duty, as this was the time to fight the battle of their country.

Mr. SYNAN, M.P. (Limerick), said, as he had not hitherto taken part in the discussions of the Conference, he hoped he would be excused for speaking for a moment upon a question so vitally affecting members of parliament and the constituencies of the country. It might be considered that a member of parliament in speaking to the resolution or the amendment might be placed in an embarrassing position; but he did not feel so at all, and did not rise for the purpose of speaking on behalf of himself or brother members, but for the purpose of speaking on behalf of the constituencies on the great question now before them. What would be the effect in the imperial parliament of sending the members there as delegates instead of representatives? The experience of nearly ten years had satisfied him of the great difference of the two characters. On several occasions they were insulted and taunted in the imperial parliament with being delegates of a party from this country, and if they sent them there with that reproach upon them, their exertions would be crippled and their labours rendered ineffective, as English and Scotch members could say that they were the mere mouth-pieces of others without any principle of their own. He admitted the right of the constituencies to pledge their members. When it came to the question of pledge the candidate and the constituency were perfectly free—the one to offer and the other to receive a pledge. But suppose there were two candidates before a constituency—the one a man of character and known political views, the other a man without character or known political views—the one pledging himself to go to the imperial parliament as a national representative, the other taking every miserable pledge offered to him—which of the two ought the constituency to select? Should it not be the known man, and the man of character, who would represent the Irish nation, and not the man who would pledge himself to represent classes or parties, but really represent his own interest? If they tied down candidates too tightly and fettered them they would have no weight whatever in the House. As far as the resolution went he had no objection to it, as it did nothing more than bind them to what they had already accepted and by what had been done at the Conference. Had not the twenty-five members who had come there to support the national cause accepted without qualification—he meant substantial qualification or reservation—the resolutions which had been adopted? What greater pledge could be given than that? Were they not pledged in the face of their country; and would it not be the greatest infamy in any one of them to recede from any pledge contained in any one of these resolutions? If they did would they be worthy of the society of honest men, or to stand upon any hustings platform? He declared they would not. Then why did they want to multiply pledges?

Why did they want to overload their proceedings or to embarrass themselves? What were they doing? They were putting it in the power of the lying Press of England to misrepresent what they were doing, and to announce to the nation that at the very moment they were passing these resolutions they were afraid that the very members who were there would go and betray them. Was not that what they were doing? He said that was the effect of what they did. They said the very people who were attending the Conference were afraid the twenty-five members would betray them (A voice: "they were an exception"). He was glad they were the exception. He was not surprised, however, that this resolution had been brought forward. History taught them by examples, and unfortunately the vicious examples history had were more easily imitated than the virtuous examples. Twenty years ago a political pledge in a conference like that was given, and that political pledge was broken, and the cause of the country was betrayed. The public mind had been poisoned, the public heart had been filled with gall, and the public now almost thought it had a necessity to follow vicious example, and to repeat pledges to members of parliament.

Rev. T. O'Shea, P.P., rose to order. He was Secretary of that great Conference, where they had forty-two members—

The Chairman—I don't quite understand the point of order—

Rev. Mr. O'Shea—That the giving of the pledge was vicious.

The Chairman—This is a matter of argument.

Mr. Synan said he did not mean the pledge was vicious. What he meant was vicious was the perjury. But the pledge was intended as a substitute for character, failed as a check, and produced the perjury. He admitted their right to put pledges to their members; but he said it was the example of '52 that had induced them now to propose this resolution and amendment, and that they ought to make a distinction between men who had adopted a resolution pledging themselves to the national cause and the men who betrayed their cause at that time. He was not speaking of it on his own behalf. It was no question of his, it was no question of his friends, it was a question for the Conference, how could this national cause be best served. Was it by men who were free? Was it by men who could say they went into the house of parliament, not as representatives of any particular topic, or class, or any particular denomination, but as Irish representatives who, when they were attempted to be insulted and called delegates, could tell the Scotch and English members that they had come in on certain principles, unpledged and unfettered, free to carry out the national cause, but not free to betray that cause. He thought the amendment was altogether vicious. He perfectly concurred in the criticism of Mr. Ferguson. See what it was. What was the meaning of pledging them to a Conference of Irish members? Was it not absurd if it referred to the present? If it pointed to the future, was it not too early? They did not know what representatives they might have after a general election. If they had seventy or eighty members, it would be the duty of the seventy or eighty members to come and carry out their national platform. What was the meaning of the other part of this amendment—"That the Irish members shall, after

the general election, form themselves into a permanent committee for the public discussion of every ministerial or other proposal, which may affect the interests of Ireland, and that the minority should vote with the majority, or abstain from voting?" In the present state of the representation of this country that amendment would stultify them or produce mischief; and how could they anticipate what would happen at the general election? Let them return seventy or eighty members, and let the coustituencies call on their members to act in a body, and the seventy or eighty members would not then attempt to betray the demands of the people of Ireland. They were going to have a League springing out of this Conference, to watch the interests of Ireland, and to watch the proceedings of the members of Ireland. Was not that a bond to them? He excused the gentleman who framed this amendment. They thought the general election was over. They thought they had seventy or eighty members to represent their cause, and they wished to apply the resolution to the events that had not occurred. Pledges might do a great deal, but let him say that character and honesty did a great deal more. There was a time in the history of Rome when a great Roman was asked to swear to liberate his country. What was his answer?

> "No oath! What other oath? what greater bond?
> Than word of Roman to a brother Roman?

Mr. BUTT, M.P., said he was anxious, at this stage of the discussion, to state the views he had deliberately formed, not only on the two propositions, which had been placed before the Conference—but on the more general questions that lay behind those proposals what was the line of parliamentary action to be adopted, and how far this Conference ought to interfere to control, by anticipated trammels, their future action. Before he came to this, there was one matter he wished to dispose of, and he hoped he would do so in a few words, that was the discussion somewhat inconveniently raised as to the resolution adopted the previous day. He took to himself the responsibility of that resolution, while he shared in the sentiments so eloquently expressed by the Rev. Canon M'Dermott. He (Mr. Butt) would never have assented to that resolution but that he found in the American constitution a similar provision, though not exactly in the same words; and the constitution of several of the American States gave more stringent provisions against any act of the legislature adverse to religious liberty or the rights of property; and what Washington, and Henry, and Jefferson had assented to, he (Mr. Butt) did not think could be held to humiliate that Conference. Let him add, in justification of the resolution, that they were not now legislating—if he might use that expression—for to-day, or to-morrow, or for ten or twenty years. They were endeavouring to frame a constitution that would be perpetual; and who would undertake to say that, as other nations had departed from the principle of freedom, as England had departed from her principles of freedom, as the Irish Protestants had departed from their own principles of freedom—would any man undertake to say that they could answer for futurity, and that there might not be a

day when other counsels than those of freedom would prevail even in Ireland, and that stipulations such as those in the resolutions may not be useful when Ireland gained her national parliament. He (Mr. Butt) had already pointed out that in making such stipulations a part of a federal constitution, they did not make the vain attempt to bind future generations by irrevocable conditions. They proposed that which was feasible and practical—that certain conditions should be observed until the Irish and the imperial parliament agreed to abrogate them. He would say no more about the resolution, except that it was suggested to him some time ago by a Protestant gentleman, earnestly devoted to the cause of Home Rule; and when he (Mr. Butt) objected, that gentleman referred him to the American constitution of the United States; and he repeated that he did not think it humiliated Ireland to do what other countries had done in such a matter. He would add, before passing from that topic, that he believed the Irish Protestants had nothing to fear from their Catholic fellow-countrymen in any open and free discussion, whether in that Conference or in the old house in College-green. But he would tell them what they had to fear. It was nothing in the shape of persecution, nothing like religious ascendancy, but it was that they might be deprived of their just influence and position in the country under that system of "undertaking," and intrigue, and private intelligence with the minister, by which the government of this country was now carried on.

Sir, (continued Mr. Butt), when I hear Protestants say that under Home Rule, although no disability might be imposed upon them by law—yet practically they would be excluded from their share in all the places and offices of the state, I cannot help calling to mind an incident which occurred to me some years ago. A short time before I ceased to have a seat in parliament, I had happened in a political party to express a strong opinion that at no period had disaffection to English rule been more deep seated, more universal among the people than it was then. I even went the length of saying that if an invading force came to land in Ireland in such manner, and of such a character, as to afford a reasonable security that in subverting the existing government, social order would be preserved, nine out of ten of the inhabitants in a large portion of the island would be ready to join them, or, at all events, to wish them success. A few days afterwards I received a note from a statesman, one who really deserved the name, one to whom history has awarded it, expressing a wish to see me. When I went to him I found that my expression of opinion had been communicated to him, and he made rather earnest enquiries on the subject. He told me that from those on whom he thought he could depend for reliable information as to the state of Ireland he received a very different account—assurances that the whole country was every day becoming more contented and loyal. I could only repeat the opinion I had already expressed. I remember well the genial manner in which he said to me "If you are right it is very hard to satisfy the Irish people. We have appointed three Roman Catholic judges in succession, and there are eight Roman Catholic judges on the Bench." It was in the closet of the prime minister that the assurance was given—I know not from whom he received his information

—that this was the mode of conciliating Ireland to prefer Catholics to Protestants in appointments. In this assembly, in this open Conference in which the Catholic people are openly and fairly represented, such an idea is mentioned only to be derided. As long as you have the present system of government you will have men—they will always be found—who will "undertake" to their English rulers to manage the Irish nation, and assure them that if some suggested appointment were made, it will please some one who has influence, and ensure them the support, it may be, of the Catholic people. There is not a man in the room who does not feel in his heart that this is the system on which the government of Ireland is carried on. It must be so as long as that government is in the hands of strangers, who must take their policy as they take their knowledge from informers—informers whose position offers at once the opportunity and the temptation to job and to intrigue. This is a system of government to which no man in Ireland, whether Protestant or Catholic, ought, if he could help it, to submit. It is one which, at all events, could not exist with a national parliament and a national administration.

Mr. Butt continued to say that with these observations he would pass from this somewhat irregular discussion on the resolution which had yesterday been passed, and come to the consideration of the two most important propositions, which were the business of to-day. No question was surrounded with more difficulty than that of parliamentary action. He thought they owed a great deal to Mr. Doran for the resolution he proposed, and although he strongly opposed the amendment of Mr. Cahill, he thought the Conference were under equal obligation to him for having raised a subject that ought to be discussed in this Conference of Ireland. The resolution only contended that when any great emergency arose the men elected should be willing to take counsel with a Conference like this of the Irish nation. He did not think justice had been done to that resolution, because it never implied that they were to come together on every petty occasion, to convene and consult such a Conference. He would put a case. He did not suppose it would ever occur; but suppose a bill was brought into parliament making the agitation of Home Rule treason, it would be the duty of every Irish member then to come there, and, under circumstances the most solemn that could engage the attention of the Irish nation, take counsel with the manhood of the country as to the course he should adopt. Upon the general subject of parliamentary action he (Mr. Butt) had already strongly expressed his opinion that they would act unwisely if in this Conference they would lay down by hard and fast lines any plan to which they should expect the representatives in the House of Commons to adhere. It might be enough to say that the time has not come for it, that if even they were to do so that step belonged to another and a future stage of the movement. This was to his mind a sufficient answer to any proposal on the subject that would now be made. But he (Mr. Butt) believed that they would act very unwisely if they sent their representatives into parliament with instructions beforehand as to the plan of action they should follow; just as unwisely as the government who would send a general on a warlike expedition

with a plan of the campaign, to be followed under all circumstances—and not only this—but a plan communicated to the very general whom he was to meet.

Let him glance at some of the things which had been proposed. He had heard it said that if they could not carry Home Rule they ought to retire from parliament. He would not pledge himself to any such thing; but he would be just as unwilling to pledge himself not to do it. Circumstances might arise that would force it. There might be circumstances under which such a step would only cover themselves and their cause with ridicule and contempt. On the other hand an occasion might arise in which it might and ought to be taken with power to that cause and with dignity to themselves. It might in the opinion of the civilized world have the effect of a solemn protest against English treatment of Ireland. It might be a necessary declaration that it was vain to expect justice from an English parliament, nay, it might be the strongest proof to English ministers that the Irish members as well as the Irish people were in earnest in their determination that their country should be free. But who could forecast all the circumstances and shades of circumstances upon which the character of such a movement on the part of the representatives of Ireland would depend. Under any circumstances the whole power of that movement—the most important and solemn that men could make—the whole moral power before the world would depend upon its being seen that they were carrying out no foregone conclusions imposed on them by men who knew nothing of the circumstances and could not foresee them; but that it was the honest judgment of their own hearts arising from the events that would force them to that course.

Again, they had heard a great deal of the policy of independent opposition. That policy included two things—independence and opposition. So far as it meant that a Home Rule member should be independent of every ministry—should hold himself entirely aloof from them, should neither seek nor accept favours, and should not act as if he were enrolled among their supporters, he (Mr. Butt) entirely and cordially concurred in it. But independent opposition involved, of course, something more than independence. There was a sense and a very important sense in which for himself he was and must be in opposition to every English ministry that kept Ireland in the bondage of an alien government of its affairs. That ministry was at enmity with Ireland, and, therefore, every true representative of the Irish people was at enmity with it. The moment a national demand was made for self-government—if that demand was in earnest it placed every man really representing the people in an attitude of hostility to every minister who refused it. And when a representative stood in that attitude of hostility the minister certainly could not calculate that he would not any moment join, and perhaps be glad to join in a blow that would terminate his ministerial existence. If this were independent opposition, then he heartily concurred in the opposition as well as the independence. But if it meant that Irish members were to adopt a system of indiscriminate voting against every ministry upon every occasion that could turn them out—that he was to unite with the party opposed to a ministry in every

factious vote—then the policy was one which he could not adopt, and if he (Mr. Butt) were asked to pledge himself to vote on every such occasion against any ministry which did not make Home Rule a cabinet question, he would not accept a seat in parliament on condition of taking such a pledge.

To bind himself by such a pledge would destroy every particle of moral influence which any action of his would have in the House of Commons. He was bound to an independent opposition which destroyed his independence. To exact such a pledge would be wrong in principle and mistaken in policy. It would be importing into their national struggle the worst and lowest artifices of parliamentary intrigue; calling on men to vote not on the merits of any individual question, but with reference to some advantage which they hoped to extort from the ministry whose proposals they opposed. By pledging themselves to such a course the Irish members would lower their own character and that of their country. Instead of severing themselves from English parties they would place themselves in the lowest of their ranks. It was a course that would directly mix them up with the intrigues of English factions, and do so without even the poor recompence of gaining by this any influence over their movements. They must remember to vote against the ministry was to join the opposition. The Irish members would simply be a force on which the leader of the opposition could rely whenever he chose to assail the ministry—and rely on them without the necessity of conciliating them, of deferring to their sentiments, or even of abstaining from calumnious attacks upon their country and themselves. Such a force would not be a political party, but a mere band of disturbers, ready to the hand of any man who desired to displace an administration. He (Mr. Butt) would be very sorry that the minister should calculate on his vote when he wanted it to keep him in power, and just as sorry that the leader of the opposition should calculate on it when he wanted it to bring him in.

He (Mr. Butt) was far from saying that the presence in the House of Commons of a large and compact body of Home Rule members would not exercise a powerful influence upon the combinations and the policy of English parties. He was far from saying that occasions might not arise upon which they might fairly and honourably prove their power by throwing their weight into the scale of one party or another. But all the real influence of such a power was gone the moment it was announced that it would be universally exercised, and exercised in one way. Each occasion must determine the course that should be pursued. The course of displacing a ministry by uniting their forces with the opposition was one in his (Mr. Butt's) mind not to be taken as a matter of course. Even if they were ready to act on the principle of independent opposition, or rather universal obstruction—that policy ought not to be avowed. The power was one which was lost in the declaration that it would be used. This policy, if it meant anything beyond a menace to a minister—meant that they should obstruct the carrying on of the Queen's government until Home Rule was conceded. Extreme cases might justify a policy of obstruction. If ever they did, the obstruction would probably be carried in other and more decided ways than that of voting on all

mere party questions with the opposition. But if such a policy were adopted and avowed as the ordinary purpose and policy of any party in the House of Commons it would fail. The truth was, it was opposed to all free parliamentary action. If eighty men by such means could carry Home Rule, eighty men could carrry the Permissive Bill or the Inspection of Nunneries, or any other measure which they would conspire to force upon parliament in the same way. They might depend upon it, it would fail. The attempt would only give strength to those against whom it was directed. It would provoke a combination of all parties to defeat it. He thought he might say that the policy of independent opposition, commending itself as it does in one sense to their judgment, was yet one that might be construed and acted on so as to cause damage and not benefit to their cause.

He would now come first to the resolution. The resolution of Mr. Doran referred to two things perfectly distinct, but both he thought expressing the same principle. The first, that it was desirable that Irish members, like English members, should meet their constituents in some form of assembly during each recess. The second, that if any great emergency arose they should meet their countrymen in a conference like the present.

Both these proposals pointed, although in a different manner, to the same result. They meant that their representatives were not to stand aloof from the people; that they were to be with the people and of the people, acquainted with their feelings, and influenced by them. Both proposals were intended to bring about an identity of sentiment between the Irish representatives and the Irish people; so that in the noble words of Edmund Burke: "The Commons in parliament assembled may be one and the same thing as the Commons at large." Both proposals aimed at bringing the members into closer contact with the people; that when defeated in parliament, they may from that contact gain new energy and strength—like the struggler in the fable, who, every time he was thrown on the earth, which was his mother, rose with new strength to the conflict.

As to the recommendation that the Irish members should each year meet their constituents: he had done this for the last two years. He did not like to say he had set the example; but he would say, the more general the practice became the better. The difference between Ireland and England in this respect arose from this, that in England the matters in which the members took an interest in parliament were the very same as those which interested the people out of doors. In Ireland they found that the subjects upon which the hearts of the Irish people were set, were not those which occupied their representatives in a parliament that was not the parliament of the Irish people. Still he (Mr. Butt) had sometimes wished that every one of their 105 members had been obliged to do as he (Mr. Butt) had done, and to stand in a theatre before 2,000 of the people to answer as to his parliamentary conduct. He could not help thinking if they had such a thing before them during the last session some of them would not have acted exactly as they did.

To this part of the resolution he apprehended no objection would be made. He need not say that it had his cordial concurrence. He gave

an equally cordial assent to the remaining portion, that which called on the constituents to elect men who would be ready, when the occasion arose, to meet a national conference like that in which they were now assembled, and take open and free counsel with the whole Irish people as to the course which in any national emergency they should pursue. It did not mean that a solemn conference should be called on every light occasion, or that Irish members were to seek such direction how they were to deal with ordinary events. But it did contemplate that in their struggle great and solemn occasions might arise—occasions upon which the Irish people ought to determine what was to be done. He (Mr. Butt) had already instanced one contingency that would form such an occasion—it was an extreme case—one remote from all probability; but it would suggest very many occasions of great moment that were not improbable to arise. Even on such occasions the resolution did not say that any member should be bound by the decision of the conference. It did say that he would be expected to take counsel with his countrymen—that he should not shrink from advising them and receiving their advice—meeting them and speaking openly and freely—telling them his own heart, even when he thought his sentiments might not concur with the popular voice; but having the courage and manhood to state them openly and fearlessly. The resolution did say that in this sense every Irish member would be expected to take counsel with the people—it assumed that he would be guided by the result of such deliberations unless his conscience told him he ought not.

Now, with a perfect sense of its solemnity and its importance, he acceded to the resolution; and not only that, but—because this was a pledge that an honourable man might give—he pledged himself undoubtedly that whenever the crisis did arise upon which he thought the national voice ought to be consulted, he would not only come to the Conference when it was called, but he would do his best to insure that it should be called. In the remarks he had made as regards the resolution he might perhaps have removed some scruples that were in the mind of his friend, Mr. King Harman, who had so eloquently addressed them, and who had given some proofs that in the old aristocracy of the country there were men with hearts as true, and whose hearts beat as true for Ireland, as any that were to be found.

He would then come to the amendment before them and see what it sought to do. He was sure his friend Mr. Cahill, would feel that the spirit in which he criticised that resolution was one of fairness. He felt the difficulty of attempting to frame any pledge, and perhaps it was that very difficulty that had driven Mr. Cahill in an attempt to suggest an effective pledge—to frame one that he (Mr. Butt) believed would be exceedingly mischievous. It was only to take effect after the general election. He supposed Mr. Cahill meant only to refer to the Home Rule members, and to ask that they should meet together in public to consider every question of interest to Ireland, and that the majority should bind the minority.

Now, in the first place, he thought there might be many questions of interest to Ireland upon which Irish Home Rule members might differ, and differ fairly, and not be called upon to give up their own opinion.

The amendment as framed demanded unanimity upon every Irish question. But this was not his objection to this pledge. Mr. Cahill asked him, by the amendment, to surrender his convictions and his judgment into the hands of a number of men who were not yet elected, of whom he knew nothing—who might be some of them knaves—he hoped they would not—but he had no security. Would they value his honour and truth if he said that any consideration would induce him to place his conscience on the most solemn matters in the hands of men of whom he knew nothing? It they asked him to leave it in the hands of the twenty-five men who had proved their fidelity by coming there, he would not agree to leave his conscience even in their hands. An occasion might arise in which he might be obliged to dissent from them. It would only be in an extreme case that he would set himself against them, but a case might arise in which it would be his duty to dissent from them. He believed that he would betray his own principles, his dignity, his personal honour and personal honesty, if he now gave a pledge that he would submit his future conduct to the absolute control of any tribunal on earth, except his own conscience, and that higher tribunal, his responsibility to God. However desirable it might be that the members should act together, however valuable it might be to lay down a distinct and plain line of conduct, from which no one could deviate without dishonour, he (Mr. Butt) thought they would find every high-minded man would shrink from pledging himself to act in accordance with the decision of a majority, no matter what that decision may be. There were questions indeed upon which it would be the plain duty of every man to give up his own judgment to the opinion of those engaged with him in promoting the common cause. But there might also be questions upon which he could not with honour surrender his convictions. It was impossible to define the occasions, and therefore impossible to make them the subject of a pledge. He did not shut his eyes to the fact, that it was said that it was absolutely necessary to bind Irish members by stringent engagements to prevent them falling into the temptations which beset Irishmen in the English parliament, and that no pledge could be effectual to prevent desertion except such as had been suggested. Severe comments had been made on Irish members because they were said to have trafficked with the government, to have voted as ministerial supporters, and to have exercised over government patronage that influence, which generally speaking the parliamentary supporters of a government never scrupled to employ. But were not the Irish members elected at the last election to support Mr. Gladstone? They should not judge by the same rules the conduct of men elected to support a government and the conduct of a man like himself, elected—he might say as a political outlaw—to be apart from all parties, until a party could gather round him for Home Rule. Had he been returned as a supporter of Mr. Gladstone he might have held himself perfectly at liberty do many things he would not do now.

They must judge fairly of the conduct of all men, and he (Mr. Butt) did not think they would judge fairly if they condemned a representative whom they had returned to support Mr. Gladstone's ministry—who was elected when Home Rule was not mentioned at any hustings—who

gave no pledge of independent opposition, for there was nothing except the then Tory ministry, independently to oppose. The cry at every hustings was to secure the advent of Mr. Gladstone to power—if they condemned a man whom they had elected on these professions and none other—if acting on them he had acted as a partizan—had brought Mr. Gladstone into power, and had supported him in power, before they judged harshly of the past conduct of their representatives, they must bear in mind the circumstances of the general election of 1868.

He admitted now that circumstances were wholly changed. It was not for him (Mr. Butt) to presume to dictate to such men as he saw around him the course they should pursue, but he did venture to suggest them to consider whether, now that the Home Rule movement had been established, they could consider themselves as supporters of a government that was opposed to them on this, the one great question, and whether it would not be wise to lay down a rule that henceforth they would have no political intercourse with ministers or ministerial officials, except across the table of the House of Commons. He admitted at once that so far as they sought for remedial measures from the existing legislature, this rule would have its disadvantages. Had it been acted on, for instance, during the passing of the Land Bill, great advantages would have been lost. But he advocated the observance of such a rule, because the time was come when their great business was not to seek remedial measures from the British parliament, but to claim the one and only remedy for the grievances under which Ireland suffered —the restoration of self-government to the country. No Home Ruler went, as he believed no true Home Ruler could go, to parliament as the supporter of any government any more than he went or could go as the supporter of any opposition. He could not consistently be the counsellor or the abettor in their Irish policy of any ministry or of any party. He must make no alliances directly or indirectly either with the ministry or with the party opposed to them; he must do nothing to entangle or compromise himself with either—he must be in independent opposition to both. These were the considerations which had induced him (Mr. Butt) for himself to avoid everything approaching to personal communication with ministers. He was not unwise enough to lay down any inflexible rule for himself or presumptuous enough to suggest it for others; but he must say that the more every Irish member kept aloof from all private communications with English ministers or English parties, the better. He had no hesitation in saying broadly and boldly that henceforward the asking of any favour from any minister would be inconsistent with the position which the Irish people had that day called on their representatives to take.

He did not conceal from himself all that this involved. The real position of affairs in Ireland was an anomalous and a melancholy one. There is enmity between the Irish government and the Irish nation. The representatives of the people must accept this position. The Home Rule movement had only given prominence to this truth, and made it impossible for any man to ignore it. He used the word government not to designate the present or future administrations, he meant the system of government which exists under every administration, which has existed

under every ministry that was—which exists under the ministry which is, and which will exist under every ministry that will be, until we control an Irish ministry by an Irish parliament. The government of Ireland carried on as it is is but a part of the suppressed civil war which is disguised and scarcely disguised—it is certainly not hidden—under many of the relations of Ireland's political and social life. There was the English interest in the Castle of Dublin—the Irish interest in the hearts and souls of the Irish people. This was the real antagonism between the government and the nation. In the minds of the people the antinational policy, the antinational government was represented by the emphatic word—the Castle. The Castle, with its mock court, with its real machinery of corruption and oppression—its drawingroom and its law room in the Upper Castle Yard—with the back stairs that had become synonymous with jobbery and intrigue—the detective brigade, and the constabulary office in the Lower Castle Yard. No wonder that popular humour had affixed to it the epithet of the "Devil's Half-acre." He hoped he violated no confidence in saying that his friend Mr. Galbraith, with the characteristic caution of a great mathematician, had refused to accept the popular epithet until he had ascertained by walking round and measuring the upper yard of the Castle, that in quantity as well as quality, the description was correct. He was forced to admit that whoever was the owner, the exact half-acre was there. Without settling this question of ownership, they might safely say that Dublin Castle was the impersonation—at all events the local habitation—of a system that was at war with all the prejudices, the feelings, the instincts, and the interests of the Irish nation. When once they avowed this the great truth of Irish politics, they should hold no private parley with the power which is at war with the Irish people, and with which therefore the Irish members ought to be at war. Their true position was that of ambassadors from a nation, and as such ambassadors they should demean themselves.

He (Mr. Butt) said that he himself had acted on the principle of refusing to approach a minister on any subject. Would they bear with him if he illustrated this by one of the few instances in which he had been asked to do so.

A short time ago he received a letter from a very distinguished person, pressing on him the case of a friend who had been badly treated in the army. The writer was one whom every Irish nationalist would feel proud to oblige—he thought that as the War Office had some military places to give away a strong representation of his case would be successful in obtaining redress. He (Mr. Butt) answered that it was not a case for the House of Commons, but an injustice to be remedied upon strong representation; but, that as he believed, private representations to ministers came too near a system of approaching ministers for favours, he should respectfully decline to make the representation. He received an answer, apologising for having made an application of which the writer did not see at first the full effect. He (Mr. Butt) had thus unequivocally stated the rule upon which he himself had acted, and would continue to act—he was sure it was the only rule that would impress on ministers the conviction that those who declared for nationality were in earnest;

but saying all this he asked them to give up captious reference to the past conduct of men who are now taking a new position.

From what he had said they might perhaps infer that he (Mr. Butt) would not be very much grieved if any constituency exacted from a candidate a pledge that he would neither seek or accept any favour from a minister until he saw an Irish ministry in Dublin Castle, and an Irish parliament in College Green. Yet he had a feeling that even such a pledge implied a distrust that did not elevate the character of the representative. If observed, no doubt it bound him in some degree to independence. But there are other things to be thought of in that contest—they were to maintain the dignity of the nation, and remember what they are. If they are anything they are the representatives of a great and ancient nation struggling for its rights. Let them beware lest by any pledge or resolution of theirs they lessened the dignity of their proud and glorious struggle. If he could gain some advantage by Home Rule by a questionable traffic with the minister for votes for or against him, he would reject it with scorn, because whatever might be its immediate result it would inflict a very deep injury on the grand old cause of his country and demean the proud position in which Ireland stood. He had advocated, in the strongest terms, independence. He did not say the time may not come when Irishmen will be driven to an obstructive policy. The power of doing it remains, and will depend on the moral support of the public opinion which the world would give them. No man can foresee circumstances. If they went into it pledged beforehand it would lose all its power, and they would not have the moral force of the world with them. He believed that the faults of all the politicians of the present day was that they had too little faith in principle, and dealt too much in miserable intrigues. Let them come forward and assert a principle, and take their stand on it. They should not imagine that the Conference was to close without leaving any trace of an association behind. The resolution proposed an association which was in some way to include the whole mass of the Irish people. It involved a power of convening and arraigning representatives before a national conference. The Conference when it had ended would leave behind it an association in which every man would be free to speak. They would have in that future assembly the unanimity, the dignity, and determination which had characterised the national parliament in which during the past few days they have been taking a part. If pledges were necessary could not that association recommend the constituencies to enact them? Could not the people so settle it when the emergency arose, and parliamentary candidates should be before them? But it should not be done now. As to pledges, there was a pledge which every man offered in his address. But there was this danger in pledges, they turned the attention of constituencies, not to the personal or political character of a man, but to the extent to which he is willing to pledge himself. And when a constituency might happen to take up two men—one coming forward with a deep pledge, and the other with a pledge less deep—it tends, unless people are watchful, to put up the Irish representation to a sort of competition by auction, in which the hardest swearer will be the highest bidder. It would be well that the

Irish people should consider these probabilities well, and that constituencies should be ready to act, and the association prepared to pronounce its opinion on the question whenever it should chance to arise. He thought a system of pledges, even such as an honourable man might take, should be temperately and cautiously applied, for the less honest a man was the more ready he would be to take pledges. Take a personal instance. Were he himself as an elector to choose a man to represent the constituency of which he was a member, he would prefer a thousand times the honest and manly hesitation of The O'Conor Don to the strongest pledge ever swallowed, and yet to be swallowed by many a political trafficker, who might be watching to displace him. Experience told them that pledges were wholly insufficient to bind men. Had they not found that the man who pledged with most solemnity and strength—the man who promised too much—was the first to betray? The system of pledges might be honestly adopted, but it was a vicious system, a fact of which his friend, Father Tom O'Shea, had forcible cognizance.

In 1852 a large number of members had been returned bound by pledges to oppose every ministry that would not make certain measures cabinet, bound too to vote together as the majority would direct. The result was not such as to encourage them to repeat it. There was one man among them whose name he might mention without any offence to any one. It was that very agreement that gave John Sadlier the opportunity of selling the Irish people to the coalition. The Irish party made their terms with the politicians who would not have come into power without their vote. The terms were said to be for the country as well as for themselves. But here was just the evil and the danger of these political negociations. If the negociations included certain measures demanded by Irish patriots—it was no unnatural, perhaps no unreasonable, addition to the programme of Irish patriotism that some places should be provided for some of the patriots. The end of it was sure to be that this addition was the only part of the negociation which was carried into effect—the measures were forgotten when the places had been bestowed. All these dangers would be more increased by a resolution which would bind members to vote with the majority, and deprive any one man of the power to go down to the house and denounce the corrupt bargain which by the means of honesty and truth he might defeat. For his (Mr. Butt's) part he would never bind himself to a pledge which would disable him from the exercise of that power. Such a pledge would, he believed, be ruinous to his country, destructive of his own influence, and derogatory to his honour and his truth. And if he were required to take such he pledged them he would say—let the constituency of Limerick choose another man.

Mr. W. H. O'Sullivan.—No pledge will be required from you.

Mr. Butt.—Does not this prove I am right in saying such a system is wrong. You ought not to ask any other Irish member to take a pledge which you would not require me to take. Mr. Butt continued to say that he believed that if they sent in members bound by the pledge contained in the amendment of Mr. Cahill, they would really enable any dexterous intriguer to obtain a higher reward for his services,

by representing himself able to manage a majority of the party, and therefore to command the whole. They would transfer the whole system and machinery of influence and corruption from the lobby of the House of Commons to the room in which Irish members met to determine their vote. Depend upon it they must in the end rely on the honour of the men whom they elected, and not upon any pledges however stringent. If men were determined to be dishonest, they would find a loophole for evading, or an excuse for breaking them. It might even be that the man who had entered into the most solemn engagements might use it to enhance his price in the market of corruption by including in that price a claim for compensation for incurring the infamy of a violated pledge.

He (Mr. Butt) believed that the resolution offered them better security for the faithful conduct of their representatives than the amendment.

A far greater influence would be exercised over the mass of their representatives by establishing a system which would bring them into contact with their constituents and the people, than by imposing on them any pledge they could devise. A far more powerful effect would be produced by looking forward to a meeting with their constituents in a national conference, than by looking back on election promises. He (Mr. Butt) had fully and frankly stated his own views upon the whole question of parliamentary action and of pledges. He placed those views before the country for the consideration of those by whom, when the proper time came, these questions must be determined at the elections in the several constituencies. It was of great value and importance that this discussion had taken place. Opinions had been elicited and materials of thought supplied which could not fail to be useful in guiding the public mind. But he earnestly hoped that Mr. Cahill would be satisfied with that discussion, and not press his amendment. He (Mr. Butt) thought he had given reasons enough to show that in its present form it could not pass. There would be ample opportunity for the discussion of the question at a more convenient time. Before a general election Mr. Cahill, or anyone else, could propose a system of pledges, and he (Mr. Butt) although he had strong prepossessions against such a system, would be ready to give such a proposal his best consideration. There was of course a pledge he (Mr. Butt) thought a solemn pledge, and the most binding on a man of honour and conscience, in the profession of attachment to the Home Rule cause. But if men were bound by rigid promises on the details of their conduct, then he agreed with Mr. Synan they would lose influence either in the House of Commons or before the world. Their real influence would arise from its being known that whatever they did was the result of their independent judgment, or circumstances as they arose. He did not undervalue the importance of united action, but united action must spring from unity of interest in their common cause, from the voluntary concession of opinion which every man must make to his fellows in that common cause. It was not to be forced by an iron system of pledges which left men no free judgment and no free choice. It rested after all with the constituencies. They had the matter in their

own hands. Let them select honest and true men to represent them, and the difficulties as to pledges would not arise. If they said we do not want pledges for honest, but we do want them for doubtful men—then he asked them would they degrade their country by saying or letting men say that they could not get honest men to represent them, and that they sent every man to the House of Commons with the brand of pledges which were made only for the dishonest. But his strongest objection to pledges was this—they were calculated to lessen the care of the constituencies in selection. Let them not deceive themselves. To carry this great question, they must return, whether they were pledged or unpledged, true and earnest men, men whose whole hearts and souls were in the cause of their country's freedom. For these men the constituencies must look out, for men devoted to the national cause, and, if necessary, they must select them independent of all considerations of rank, property, or station, with the one thought of who would best and most truly fight the battle of Ireland in the House of Commons—a battle which no man could fight unless his whole heart and soul were in the cause. None other should be sent to fight it.

If, as he suggested, the amendment was withdrawn, he hoped the Conference would unanimously pass the original resolution. He did not disguise from himself the importance, as he had already said, the solemnity of that resolution. It called on their members, it pledged those present who assented to it, to make common cause with the people. It struck a blow at that system of suspicion and distrust which made those who called themselves the upper classes hold aloof from the people. He (Mr. Butt) believed that in any well-ordered society where ever the people were the upper classes should be.

If any proof were wanting to show how false and mischievous was the policy which kept the upper class aloof from the people it would be found in the proceedings of that Conference—in the spirit and demeanour of those assembled. It was pre-eminently a popular assembly—it fairly represented popular feeling in all its phases. In four days' free and often warm debate not one word had been uttered to which the haughtiest or most sensitive peer could take exception, or by which he could have felt himself hurt. These miserable distrusts in the breasts of the higher ranks were indeed a weakness to their country, but it was far more the weakness of those who composed the higher ranks themselves. It was the wretched inheritance of the wrongs and oppressions of former times. Their traces were still there. The thunder scars of the storms of past ages were still on the features of Irish society. Men in high station felt themselves the representatives of bygone oppression, and hence really the distrust that kept them aloof from the people. This miserable spirit spread down through many classes of society. Men who fancied themselves raised above the people would not come to a popular meeting lest they should be compromised by the utterances of "some fenian fellow." Kind friends of his own had repeatedly warned him of his imprudence in attending popular assemblages, in which something surely would be said to compromise him. For himself—his reply was a simple one—wherever his countrymen were assembled he was neither afraid or ashamed to be. If any man—Fenian or other—expressed sen-

timents from which he felt called on to dissent—he would not hesitate or fear to express that dissent. Every man who had, or fancied he had, any advantage over the generality of his countrymen owed to them and to himself, and to his country, a solemn duty. Whatever gifts of influence, of intellect, of education, or of station, God had conferred on any man, he ought to use them to counsel, to control, and to guide the people in following what was right, to dissuade them from what was wrong. They neglected that duty who kept aloof from all popular movements and left the people to themselves. The resolution bound their representatives not to stand apart from the people. A time might come when their pledge would call them to a duty of vital moment to the future of their country. He (Mr. Butt) trusted that the hopes which were now animating and controlling the people of Ireland would not be disappointed. But a deep responsibility rested on those who had excited these hopes, and had won men to the paths of constitutional exertion. If these hopes were driven back upon the heart of the nation to rankle into exasperated despair—then in the hour of a nation's difficulty, when rash counsels suggested themselves—a solemn duty would be cast upon all who took part in this movement to stand by the people in a national Conference like this, to counsel, to guide, and, if necessary, to restrain; but at all events to deliberate with them on the course which it was best for the interests of their country to pursue. The resolution gave to the people the assurance that if the occasion arose, that duty would be fulfilled, and he (Mr. Butt) felt certain that the passing of such a resolution would inspire a belief in their earnestness, and give confidence to the country. Mr. Butt concluded by declaring himself favourable to the resolution, and suggesting the withdrawal for the present, at least, of the amendment.

Mr. MITCHEL HENRY, M.P., said he felt it incumbent upon him to rise and make a few observations in reference to Mr. Butt's statement. In the support of Mr. Doran's resolution he entirely agreed. He had given pledges to his constituents—pledges solemnly given, and which he would adhere to, that he would sustain the national cause. He had up to the present, fulfilled that pledge to the best of his power; but, in doing so, he felt throughout the support that ought to be given to him, not by the acclamations of a great meeting, but, he trusted, by the testimony of an honest conscience and an honest heart. He came there now to say that, while he would give pledges to his constituents when, in his conscience, he believed them to be justifiable, he would give no pledge to any man living, as to the course he would hold with any minister of the Crown, or any other human being. His friends, throughout life, had mainly belonged to the Tory party, and he hoped to convert them. Was he to be debarred from intercourse with them as well as with others? He knew that this question was to be won by argument, and not by declamatory threats, by showing the English people, who were at heart good and true, that their cause was a rational cause, not intended to break up the empire, but to make it greater and stronger than it was before, and that he would never threaten them or adopt any course that would give them a rational right to say, "You never con-

descended to argue out this matter with us." He wished to be understood on the subject of conversations with ministers. God knew he had had very little conversation with ministers. He never had had the honour of speaking one word to the Prime Minister, but he greatly desired to have an opportunity of speaking many words to him. Not words across the table of the House of Commons; not words in fierce debate on topics which arose there; but he would greatly desire to tell him personally what he knew of the people of Ireland, and what was the condition of things here. He would tell him that he had been misled by the corrupt and vile information conveyed to him in the immoral press of England, and by some of those who sat within the Castle walls, and were supposed to guide the interests of this country. This was the mode, as he looked upon it, in which they could most readily advance this movement. To say that they were not to hold any intercourse with ministers of the Crown; to say he was not to go among those, many of whom he had known from his earliest years; to say that he was not to go amongst his Tory friends—(no, no)—it had been said, and he should put himself right in respect to it; to say that he was not to endeavour to improve a bill in the House of Commons in the interest, not merely of Ireland, but of the other portions of the empire, was to require him to make a declaration which nothing would induce him to make—not only because it was degrading, for it would be degrading—but because he felt that it would be the very means of producing the failure of their cause. Where were their statesmen to be nursed? They were to have a parliament in College-green, and as his gifted friend knew, and as he told him long ago how high were his hopes on that subject; but were they going to send into that parliament a number of inexperienced men by shutting members out from legislation upon imperial interests, which it was the very object of that association to provide for in the future? Was he to have no word in the Ashantee war—was he not to have a word on any great measure of commercial freedom, and on other subjects which came before the House of Commons, not as concerning Ireland alone, but the whole empire; was he not to go to the ministers or to the whippers-in, or to any one else, and tell them what improvements he believed could be made on measures under consideration. That would be indeed deserting his duty as a representative of the people. He had taken the issue, and it would be in the recollection of the meeting.

He desired again to say, as regarded his private relations with anybody, he would never give a pledge to anyone. He was desirous further most respectfully to say that whilst he agreed entirely in the resolution, and he agreed in all parts of it (and he agreed in a great measure with the spirit of the amendment; but he thought the time had not come for it), and while he disagreed with other things which had been said—that the way to carry this great question was by fair argument, to endeavour to convert the representatives of England and Ireland, and the ministers of the Crown. He declared there that it was to Mr. Gladstone he looked to carry out this measure, and to nobody else. Everything that had been done for Ireland recently had been done through the personal convictions of an honourable and virtuous Prime Minister—Mr. Gladstone.

The Chairman said he thought that this was hardly in order. It was not in the resolution.

Mr. Henry said he would come to the question. He could not remain silent in having it supposed that he could assent to the advice which had been given by Mr. Butt to the Irish members. He believed that every advice given from that quarter was given after mature consideration, and from an honest heart; but he believed that, in this instance, it would defeat the objects of that Conference. For his part he would be responsible to his constituents. He would work devotedly for the national cause, and there were certain pledges he would give; but with regard to his social intercourse with other persons he would give no pledge.

Mr. Butt said his valued friend (Mr. Henry)—not the less valued on account of the warmth with which he had attacked him—must have misunderstood him. He never suggested that they should avoid social intercourse with any men. He appealed to the recollection of every man who heard him whether he had said anything so foolish or so narrow-minded. His observations as to intercourse with official personages referred to political intercourse in political matters—and that intercourse even at the loss of some advantages which might result from it, he still thought it would be better, and safer, and wiser for Home Rule members not to hold. Such a course he thought was more consistent with their position as men protesting against the whole present system of government, and seeking to put an end to it. Mr. Henry dissented from that opinion. Both of them had given their reasons, and the country must judge. But, perhaps, he might remind his friend that his (Mr. Henry's) high position might enable him to do things which other men would be safer in avoiding. For himself, in the position in which they were placed as the advocates of a nation's demand for self-government, he had an insuperable objection to anything like private dealings with officials. His opinion, of course, could not bind anyone else. He had never presumed to do more than throw it out as a matter for their consideration. He still retained the opinion he had expressed. He never meant to shut himself out from taking part in the House of Commons in the discussion of any measure, either Irish or English, or from giving any help in his power to the passing of any good measure. No one could foresee all the circumstances that might compel him to change his views; but at present he did not think that anything could induce him to hold private political communications with any ministerial person upon any question whatever.

Mr. DALY, Mayor of Cork, said they had arrived at the most important stage, and that was the manner by which they were to carry out the resolution in favour of federalism. He thought that the only way success could be obtained was by the education of English opinion outside the houses of parliament by the acts of Irish members inside. Let any practical man look at the probable consequence of the next election. There would be in every borough and county of Ireland candidates backed by particular influences. He was told that this system of pledges was a bad and vicious one. No doubt, the past history of this country showed that

men who were most free to take pledges were the first to break them but he suggested that a plain creed should be defined by the Conference so as to give the electors at the coming election——

Mr. Peter Gill rose to a point of order. The matter had been already defined, and they were going to the country on Home Rule and nothing else.

Mr. Daly said that was not a point of order. He had no wish to trouble the Conference, but he had a deep feeling in his mind that he ought to put forward this suggestion. He believed that a creed proposed by this Conference would go with more importance to the country than anything resulting from the Irish Home Rule League. If they had not some definite plan, there would be some members who would not accept leadership—who would say Home Rule was to be obtained this way and that way; but if they knew they were to walk in a certain direction, there could be no mistake.

Mr. M'Carthy Downing, M.P., said he considered that this question had arrived at that important stage that it should not be got rid of without a full and free discussion. He hoped that those who knew him knew that he had courage never to deny what he did, and that he was prepared to take the responsibility of his acts. It might be said that he had communications with the prime minister. He avowed it. He did go, in the interests of the people of Ireland. It was well known he took a very active, and, he hoped, a very useful part in the passing of the Land Bill, and he had no hesitation in saying, if he felt his duty on every material clause of that bill, he would see every minister that he could, and invite a meeting with them. He was sure his honourable friend, Mr. Butt, never intended to convey—as his friend, Mr. Henry, supposed he did—that an Irish member was not, when he felt it essential to the interests of his country, to hold a correspondence with or meet a minister, if for no other purpose than to tell him—"You are about to bring in a bill that will affect deeply the interests and feelings and sentiments of the people of Ireland; I have to tell you if you do you will raise a feeling against you; every Irish member will vote to displace you." He said that was the duty of an Irish member. He took the full responsibility of saying that he did, on every question affecting his country, take every opportunity of seeing the prime minister, but he would say, though invited to his house, he never entered his doors. With regard to the resolution and the amendment, he took the opportunity of saying he did not think this was the place to discuss the question, but at the same time intimated that he was entirely in favour of tests being put to candidates at the next election.

It had been said, why enter into pledges as to parliamentary action, when you do not know who are to be returned. Now, if they did not return seventy or seventy-five Home Rulers what was the use of their meeting there at all? How could they expect to carry the Home Rule question? In considering this question, they should assume they would return seventy or eighty members at the next election. The way, then he would have the resolution and amendment run was this:—"That to render the Irish vote effective, we recommend the Irish members shall,

after the general election form themselves into a permanent committee for the public discussion of every ministerial or other proposal that may affect the interests of Ireland, and that the Irish members shall vote in a body, or abstain from voting, on all party divisions, when it shall appear to them calculated to advance the cause of Home Rule and the general interests of Ireland." That would be the resolution. The amendment he would have run thus—"That this Conference cannot separate without calling on the Irish constituencies at the next general election to return men earnestly and truly devoted to the great cause which this Conference has been called to promote, and with the view of rendering members of parliament and their constituents more in accord with all questions affecting the welfare of their country, it is recommended by this Conference that at the close of each session of parliament the representatives shall return to their constituents an account of their stewardship." That he thought would be reasonable; but to lay down as the amendment did, that no Irish member should bring in any bill without getting the consent of the majority of the Irish members, that would be perfectly monstrous. As Mr. King-Harman had well said, it was the duty of an Irish constituency, as was done in England, to call on its representative to give an account of his stewardship, and he (Mr. Downing) deeply deplored that he never had had the opportuntity of doing this, for if he had he would have been spared some attacks in the public press. With regard to pledges, he would say that constituencies ought to be pledged not to torment the members by looking for situations. He was in the habit of replying to the humblest man in the county of Cork who wrote to him, and he could state that the postage of his replies to the letters he received would keep an ordinary man well off in the city of London during the whole session.

Sir JOHN GRAY, M.P., said he would not detain the Conference for any lengthened period, but he asked their indulgence while he noticed one or two points that arose during the discussion. He did not think his friend, Mr. Butt, intended to indicate that no man who was returned as the representative of an Irish constituency should hold conference on Irish matters with any minister. He did not think Mr. Butt intended that; if he did intend it, he (Sir John Gray) could give at least one instance in which such a restriction would have proved mischievous to the cause of Ireland. In the year 1865 a meeting was held of Irish members. At that meeting twenty-two or twenty-three members attended, and he, as a young member, never having taken his seat at the time in parliament, took the liberty of suggesting that the Irish Church question should be one of the topics to be referred to in the resolutions of that meeting. He was sure there were gentlemen present who remembered that circumstance, and that he (Sir John Gray) found it rather difficult to persuade the Irish members that the Church question ought to be dealt with on that occasion, some of the more experienced of them believing that he was half a century too early, expressed that opinion, and urged that the Church question be not introduced. After some time however, he got the consent of the meeting to have a resolution on the Church question, and he ventured to

write and move a resolution himself, which Colonel Greville, now Lord Greville, consented to second. The resolution was carried. Then the question arose—who will undertake to introduce the Church question into parliament? He (Sir John Gray) was very unwilling, as a young member, to undertake it. He urged that the duty should be assigned to some senior member. But he was pressed, and recognising the kind dispositions towards himself, he in the end said he would undertake this "forlorn hope," and steadily stand in the breach until some better man came forward. Well, it was said they were too early in looking for Home Rule. His intelligent friend who represented one hundred and fifty thousand personal acquaintances in Tipperary, would agree with him that they were not too early; that Conference would agree, and Ireland would agree, that they were not too early, and that they must all go on. He, at the suggestion of the Irish members, introduced to the House of Commons a resolution on the Church question. He could not get a division that session—a Liberal ministry was in power, and he failed to get a division——

Mr. Butt—A Tory ministry.

Sir John Gray—No; a Liberal ministry was then in power. The next session the Tories were in power, and he got a division. On that occasion the Tory whip did all he could to whip-up his against the resolution, and no help of a substantial nature in the way of collecting votes was given by the Liberal whip: but they got an admirable speech from the Liberal leader, Mr. Gladstone, who, however, with many of his friends walked out of the house to avoid voting. They took a division, and were beaten only by twelve votes, with all the forces of the then existing Tory ministry arrayed against them, and the leading Whigs neutral. He felt that he was then as "Lord John Russell, too small for the place." He as private lord was big enough and strong enough to introduce a resolution and make a speech upon it; but now, that they had approached a point which led close to success, he had no parliamentary party, he was an isolated city member, and must in order to secure success get some person with a powerful following to take it up. Well, he did not confer with the minister, but he conferred with the ex-minister, and he conferred with him twice a week, as a matter of course, regularly. He was sure he thought him a great bore during the early part of the question, for he very often button-holed him in the lobby, and said, "Well, have you made up your mind? There is no possibility of coming to power except by taking up the Irish Church question." He talked to the ex-minister then as well as he could. He talked to him as softly as he could, and he pressed it as earnestly as he could; and at last, at the end of two or three months said—"I am powerless in the House of Commons. I am the representative of the City of the Confederation, and I have no other power but that. You have the power—you have a great party at your back. If you wish to come into power as prime minister you must take up the Church question, for on that alone the present cabinet will not out-bid you." He (Sir John Gray) thought there was a gentleman not far from him who knew that this was the case—the honourable member for Kilkenny County—with whom he consulted again and again upon it. After several consultations with the ex-minister in that way—and he felt

that it was a great honour that he was permitted so to reason with him —he consulted with the ex-cabinet, and wrote him (Sir. John Gray) a most kindly letter, which he had now in his possession, and would treasure as long as he lived, saying that he had resolved to take up the question and eventually make it a ministerial question. He (Sir John Gray) then retired from it. Mr. Gladstone took it up. They knew the result.

Now, he thought Irish representatives ought not to be shut out in any way from taking any similar course, either with the minister or an ex-minister, if they saw a reasonable prospect of similarly pushing the Home Rule question. But in the general principle and the general scope of the observations of his distinguished friend, Mr. Butt, he entirely concurred. No ambassador from Ireland should be sent over to parliament to whom it would be a danger to the country or a danger to his own honour to have the freedom which he spoke of. The way to prevent any evil occurring was treasuring the policy enunciated by Mr. Butt—not to send weak men—either men of weak intellect or weak in heart, of weak determination, and of weak resolve. Such men had no business going to negotiate and to converse with the minister, for such men were likely to be deceived, and such men were likely to be betrayed, and such men were likely, perhaps unconsciously, to betray them. Let them send men of firm resolve—men to whom Ireland was everything—send men who expected to be consulted but not considered, to use the phrase of Grattan—men who would go to consult, to argue, to persuade, to pour their doctrines into the ear of the minister and drive them into his soul, by showing him that by adhering to them, by adopting them, by carrying them out, and by that alone, could he secure power, greatness, and prosperity to the empire. But if they sent men who were not true to their cause—who were not ready to sacrifice everything save honour in their cause—wealth, position, social honours—social advantages—everything must give way to the cause of Ireland—let that cause be the cause that their representatives had at heart, and then there would be no danger from such a man coming in contact with the minister.

He would now ask to say a few words in reference to the resolution and the amendment. He had the greatest respect for his friend, Mr. Cahill, whose patriotism he knew, whose devotion to the cause of the country he knew, and for whom personally he had the greatest regard, but he must say he dissented *toto cælo* from his resolution. There was not an Irish member who heard him who did not not know that again and again, when Irish members assembled, they were in danger—he meant those who were devoted to their country, rather than to party—were in danger of being in the minority. Would men having a knowledge of that fact consent to go into a meeting of Irish members bound to vote with the majority, unless they were certain the majority there was devoted to their country, so that they would not go blindfolded to a vote? He (Sir John Gray) for one, would not do so, he would be sacrificing the independence of his constituency, sacrificing his own honour, he would be allowing men whose opinions he did not know—whose opinions, perhaps, he dissented from—to bind his vote, and so sacrifice his honour and the honour of his constituents. To the constituencies, however, he

would say—"Do your duty." If they sent in proper men—if they sacrificed everything save truth and honour for the cause of the old land, and allowed no private predilections for this man—no private regard for this family or that family—no consideration on earth to influence, save one—the carrying out the great object that Conference had met to achieve—if they did that, then the majority might bind the minority, and he was sure the majority would bind them to what was right. But, until the constituencies had done that—until they had proved to the Irish representatives that they were true—were in earnest—that they were dealing with this as a solemn and a grave question—that they were resolved not only to pledge themselves, but to act in sending no representative to the House of Commons except a man whose personal honour was known—except a man whose personal devotion to those principles was known—except a man who would devote himself to the principles adopted by the Conference, and to fling back every solicitation for place, they should not talk of binding the minority by the majority. He would ask them, instead of passing such an amendment as that of Mr. Cahill's, to go amongst their brother electors, when they returned to their homes, ask them what they would do, go to them in every parish, in every townland, take the registry in their hands—become canvassers, not for a candidate, but for Ireland. Say to every man, "Ireland is weak now, she is going to make a final struggle, will you give your hand and heart to me, and pledge yourself to vote for no man who will not prove true to Ireland?" Thus, and thus only, would they gain their cause. In conclusion, he had to express his entire approval of the resolution, and his disapproval of the amendment.

Mr. CAHILL, of Queen's County, said that the discussion on the amendment had been extremely useful, although he thought the amendment a little misunderstood. He disliked pledges as much as any man could, but he disliked still more that want of union which was apparent amongst the Irish members. He believed that, if the Irish members acted in the way suggested by the resolution of Mr. O'Connor Power, what they intended by the amendment would be carried out. Hereafter, if another pledge should be necessary they could insist on it. He, therefore, begged permission to withdraw his amendment.

The Chairman thought the feeling of the Conference was to close the discussion then.

Mr. CHARLES M'GOWAN, P.L.G. (Leitrim), said he came there not to speak for the aristocracy, but to represent the artisans, the men of the mud-wall cabins, and the industrious farmers of Leitrim and Donegal. There is a delusion abroad amongst the men who are to make or to break this national movement. They would hear it whispered in the forge and the tailor's shop that they were always struggling, and had struggled long enough, and what had they for it? That they did everything to get a good Land Bill, and that when Sir John Gray and Isaac Butt, men whom the people of Ireland look on with the greatest veneration, announced Home Rule, it was scorned, and there was a bad Land Bill introduced that was no protection but "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare."

Mr. O'Connor Power said he was a quarter of an hour late that morning, and, after coming in, he found that the Chairman, in his wisdom, thought it necessary to make an explanation of something said by him the preceding evening. He wished to state distinctly that every syllable he uttered he would stand by, and he would not allow any man, no matter how dignified his position, or how much his wisdom, to retract for him one syllable of the sentiments he had uttered.

Chairman.—Is that all the matter you have to speak of?

Mr. Power.—Yes.

The Chairman said he might stop the discussion by saying that he did not attempt to give any explanation of what Mr. Power had said; but he expressed the belief that Mr. Power did not include in that sweeping charge all the Irish members. He consulted the mover of the resolution, who also felt sure that he had no such intention. He thought it due to himself, and those members of parliament whose honesty he knew, to say that if that sweeping charge was made against them, he should himself repudiate it. He was sure Mr. Power did not mean it in that sense.

Mr. Power said he accepted the admirable report in this morning's *Freeman's Journal* as a correct and fair report of what he had said. He found this in parenthesis: "He did not say that in disparagement of the honourable gentlemen who were present."

The Chairman said he knew that some of the honourable gentlemen who were present felt it rather hard; and he thought it due to them, as there were many persons outside who might not see the admirable report in the *Freeman's Journal*, but who might see some other report.

Mr. O'Connor Power found nothing in the report of the *Irish Times* contradictory to what was in the *Freeman's Journal*.

The Chairman.—There is nothing in this that should occupy our attention.

Mr. Power said he merely wished to set himself right. Mr. Doran and himself were proud of having brought that resolution forward, for no one had ventured to say it was not in accordance with the wants of the country.

The Chairman then put the resolution, and it was carried unanimously.

The usual adjournment for luncheon took place. On resuming—

Mr. Bryan, M.P. (Kilkenny), said he had been requested to propose the first of the second series of resolutions, and he accepted the programme of that meeting. He thoroughly accepted the proposal of federalism as explained and laid down by the member for Limerick. He fully, freely, and without reserve of any sort or character, accepted it. He proposed not to become a passive but an active member. He was sorry that the opening speech of the member for Limerick was not delivered in St. Stephen's, and inscribed in the imperishable pages of "Hansard." The first speech of the worshipful gentleman the Mayor of Cork—the pleasure or honour of whose acquaintance he hoped to have—pleased him. He was excessively pleased to hear him do justice to the English nation. England is a great nation, and there is no use for

anybody to suppose she is not a great nation. Nobody is better qualified, from his commercial and other relations with that country, to speak than the gentleman to whom he alluded. It would very much surprise him if, even from their enemies, it does not get favourable comment and criticism; for it shows that, anxious as we are to have justice for ourselves, we are equally ready to accord that to other people. Probably, there were many there who thought he was a Home Ruler of yesterday. That was not so. He might appeal to his friend, the hon. member for the city of Kilkenny, in proof of this. If his memory served him right, it was on the third reading of the Land Bill, and in the lobby of the House of Commons, he told the hon. member (Sir J. Gray) it was incumbent on them to devote their attention simply to the procuring of a national parliament in College-green.

Sir John Gray.—I well remember the incident, Mr. Bryan, and I was proud of it.

Mr. Bryan continued.—He was never a member of the Home Rule Association; but he must fairly say that the thanks of all Irishmen were due to the small band of patriots who had kept the question before the country until it had culminated in the present Conference. It was most desirable that they should have a programme. They had now got one, and he did not think they could adhere to a better one.

Almost all the speakers had referred to the House of Lords, and he would say one word on the subject. He agreed thoroughly with the member for Limerick, that they had every right to ask for a restitution of these noblemen's rights. They had been suffering from political ostracism for many years. In asking for the restitution of their own rights, should they not seek for the restitution of these others also? There was no tenant on the estate of any landed proprietor, of whom there were many present, who had not more practical voice in the legislation of the country than the oldest peer in the realm, Lord Kinsale. It was a principle of constitutional law that every man was supposed to be innocent until he was proved to be guilty, and he, for one, thought it would be wrong in them, without conclusive proof, to doubt the patriotism of any section of their countrymen.

The resolution he had been asked to propose was—

That, in order to carry these objects into practical effect, an association be now formed, to be called the "The Irish Home Rule League," of which the essential and fundamental principles shall be those declared in the resolutions adopted at this Conference, and of which the object, and only object, shall be to obtain for Ireland, by peaceable and constitutional means, the self-government claimed in these resolutions.

He did not think that there could be a second opinion on the propriety of having such a league. He would, therefore, pass from that to anticipate another resolution. Let no gentleman who had attended the Conference go away with the belief that he had done his duty by giving a moral support to the cause. He must give, not his physical, but his monetary support to it. There was no use in shirking the question that unless they had money the matter would be put off indefinitely. They must put their shoulders to the wheel and their hands in their pockets. If possible, they should get the clergymen of all denomina-

tions to be the collectors for the national purse. Unless they procured money all their patriotism and eloquence would fail to secure the attainment of their object. He could not look upon the present Conference without thinking of the great struggle for repeal of the Union. He was aware there were more ways of over-running a country than that adopted by Attila and his Huns. He believed that very shortly the Irish race would overrun England, and gain their object, not by the use of bayonets and armed men, but by the force of true reason and the logic of facts. He cordially proposed the resolution.

Mr. PHILIP CALLAN, M.P., said it was with feelings of no ordinary pride that he found himself entrusted with a resolution in conjunction with his honourable friend, the senior member for Kilkenny, as it was not the first occasion on which they had stood side by side in the House of Commons and elsewhere in the interests of Ireland. The resolution was a most important one, as it applied to the very point on which the Irish people have hitherto been most deficient—that of organisation. Not in the position of representative of the Gap of the North—proud though he was of the distinction—but as one of the honorary secretaries of this great national Conference, they would permit him to make a few observations. Mr. Callan then referred to the difficulties connected with the convening of the Conference, the object in view, and the manner in which those who had originated it had entered into and carried out the programme. They felt the responsibility, and the time was an anxious time for him and the friends around him. He had only to look around this room to see that they had worked efficiently and effectively. With reference to the resolution before them, he might say of organisation that it was what the Irish in England and in their own country were most deficient in, and it was the very point which was essential to success. The member for Limerick had said that they did not know what the future state of representation would be. He would, however, tell the honourable gentlemen what it was most likely to be. He found that here in Ireland, if properly organised, if they carried out the resolution which he had the honour to second, they would be able to send exactly seventy-four members to parliament pledged to the cause of Home Rule. But it was not in Ireland that he believed they could ensure success for Home Rule. They could do it still more efficiently and effectually in England and Scotland. Mr. Callan proceeded to refer to the influence the Home Rule question exercised on the representation in parliament, of the seats comprised in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and illustrated the spread of the feeling of favour with which the movement was received across the Channel, by referring to the elections in Dundee and Greenwich. In the former place there had been three candidates, two pledged to support Home Rule, and the third opposed to it. Ten thousand men polled, and for the two gentlemen who were pledged to support Home Rule, nine thousand votes were recorded. In the Greenwich election, notwithstanding the influence, wealth, and position of the candidate who was opposed to the cause of Ireland, he was defeated. Those two elections had taught a lesson to the English people, and now wherever they went they found every consideration—every inquiry made as to

what they mean by Home Rule. The meaning of the words had come from that meeting with no vague utterance, but came defined and clear in the fourth resolution, which had been passed, he believed, unanimously on the second day of the Conference.

Captain King-Harman—There was one dissentient.

Mr. Callan—Yes, there was a dissentient; but he was a man in whom they had no confidence. He (Mr. Callan) would sink his own opinion in favour of simple repeal, and would most honestly and sincerely adopt in heart and soul the programme laid down. He would resume his seat at the end of a laborious week, and he did so with even greater pleasure and pride than he felt in sitting down about this day five years at the end of a not less laborious week, when the sheriff of his county declared him member of—he might say his native town. Then his first public utterance was that in him they had secured one who would fulfil his pledges, and be faithful to the cause of Irish nationality.

Mr. W. KEATING CLAY, Solicitor, said, I shall indeed act in strict accordance with the limitation which our estimable Chairman has put upon us with regard to the time we should take in our addresses to this Conference. I have reason to do so when I consider that we are met for a purely business object—the enunciation of the great principle of Home Rule, and the manner in which it is to be agitated in the future. My observations shall therefore be very brief. I may be permitted as one of the very earliest amongst those who joined in the promotion of this movement, and who has abided by it through evil report and good report, and I am proud to add am a member of its executive council from its formation to the present—to offer a few remarks in connection with the question, and to say with Professor Galbraith, that if I did not think the movement tended to strenghten and consolidate the relations between this country and England, rather than to dissever and destroy them, I should not remain one moment a member of this association—but I am firmly impressed with the opinion that a federal union of this kingdom with England in lieu of the unhappy, ay, and I will add, unjust relations which now exist, will tend to fuse into a solid and indestructible union the well-being and interests of both. The great principle of the right of nations to govern themselves, is as old as the world's history; and has been contended for—not only on the glorious plains of Marathon—or by the blood-stained heights of Warsaw, but in the thousand other immortal struggles for liberty, throughout the entire civilized world, from the remotest epoch of time down to the latest conquest of independence. The truth of this great principle I am happy to add, has also been recognised—of recent date, even by our own rulers—who in more peaceful councils by the enactment of just and generous measures, with respect to other nationalities connected with them, have greatly served in the instances referred to, to more firmly cement and strenghten the connection of these countries with the British Crown. I therefore not only sincerely trust but am sanguinely hopeful that this great contest for Irish nationality in which we are now engaged is to be won, not by the flash of the sabre, or the boom of the cannon, but by the concession of these rights to the indomitable might of the will of an united people—who, if so united

will make their claims irresistible, but who without such union in heart and soul and spirit, will only entail upon their cause inevitable disaster and defeat.

I trust therefore, Sir, such an union will be accomplished. And it is also to be sincerely hoped that in the coming crisis, the spirit of the mighty past may be re-kindled, and if we can command the glorious array of patriots and statesmen, whose names emblazon the roll of our political history—such a race of men as owned that "great High Priest of Liberty" as their leader, "the immortal Grattan," who, to use the language of one of England's most illustrious poets, "sprung up like a god from the tomb of ages," from the glance of whose mind "corruption shrunk, scorched," and shrivelled, and may I not reverentially add, whose name is imperishably graven on the heart of the nation. If we cannot evoke the spirit of these, it is to be trusted we will, at least, be fortunate enough in electing not only true but earnest men, to fight this great question of national independence.

The speaker having quoted extracts from English newspapers in connection with this question, said that in the future they should not anticipate anything but that the hopes of Irishmen for Irish nationality should be accomplished, and concluded by saying that such would be the certain result of this great cause, should it have the good fortune to secure for its advocates honest, earnest, and independent representatives, who will do battle for their country's rights.

> "Not with a placid energy half-hearted,
> But with the ifon purpose which instils life into apathy—
> The proud persistence, which perservering ever wins its way—
> Seeing beyond the nightmare of the distance
> The splendour of inevitable day."

Mr. Denis B. Sullivan said it was the corollary of the principles which they had already laid down in the Conference. If what had been already said was not to perish as empty sound, some such step as that pointed out in the resolution was an absolute necessity. They had promulgated their plan. Now came the question of organization—how they should best discharge the duties submitted to them. They should acquit themselves of the obligation imposed upon them, and one and all continue what they had commenced with a determined heart. There were men there who had travelled long distances to serve their country, and he would ask them to take back this resolution, that each in his own district would carry on the work he had assisted in founding. With the support the country was giving to the programme laid down by Mr. Butt, and affirmed in this Conference, he looked forward with confidence and with hope to the future of the organization. Looking back to the association whose career might be said to be at an end—he meant the Home Government Association—he could not but feel a sentiment of gratitude to the men who, under great difficulty and misrepresentation, kept the flag of independence flying. Under the auspices of that Conference, the Irish Home Rule League would, he trusted, press on to a glorious destination.

The Chairman then suggested a transposition in the order of the

resolutions, and instead of more long speeches, to show the amount of money they were ready to bring in to the movement, they would now take up the 14th resolution.

Mr. GEORGE BROWNE, M.P., proposed the resolution:

That in addition to the ordinary resources of the League, it is essential to raise a large special fund for the purpose of promoting the organization and success of the movements throughout Great Britain and Ireland: That such fund be vested in the following trustees, whose sanction shall be required to its expenditure by the Council of the League:—Archbishop of Tuam, Most Rev. Dr. MacHale; Roland P. Blennerhassett, M.P.; Wm. Shaw, M.P.; Wm. J. O'Neill Daunt; Kenelm T. Digby, M.P.; P. McCabe Fay; John Ferguson; Rev. J. A. Galbraith, F.T.C.D.; Mitchell Henry, M.P.; Bernard McAnulty; John Martin, M.P.; Rev. T. O'Shea, P.P.; Joseph P. Ronayne, M.P.; Laurence Waldron, D.L.; Alfred Webb. That such sanction of the trustees be given by a resolution, duly passed by a majority of those present at a meeting to be convened and regulated in such manner as the trustees, or a majority of them, may by a general rule approve: (4) That whenever three vacancies shall have occurred in the number of trustees, a special meeting of the League shall be convened for the purpose of filling them up.

The hon. gentleman stated that he was connected with the Home Rule Association from its formation. He had at an early period convinced himself that until the Irish Parliament was restored on the Federal system, as proposed, no peace would exist in the country. He firmly believed with an Irish Parliament existing in College-green, the resources of the country would be developed to the utmost extent, while they were neglected in the Imperial Parliament. His impression of the House of Commons was that from the increasing business there, it was utterly impossible to deal satisfactorily with Irish affairs. Though the English Press misrepresented them he believed they would get the assistance of the English people in their great cause once they were convinced that they did not require total separation. At the next general election it would be for the electors of Ireland to decide whether they should have Home Rule or not. They must vote for the men whom they believed to be honest and determined Home Rulers. There never was such an opportunity afforded them. The resolution referred to funds, and there could be no doubt that without money they could do nothing. Mr. Browne concluded an eloquent and vigorous speech, amidst prolonged cheering, by declaring his adhesion to the programme which had been laid down, and pledging himself that if he faltered in supporting it to the utmost he would resign if called on by his constituents to do so.

Mr. LAURENCE WALDRON, D.L., said, I have the honour to second this resolution. I esteem it a high honour to be privileged to take a part in this great demonstration. The small band of earnest men, who over three years ago, engaged themselves in leavening the public mind with a due appreciation of this great question, have managed to do so with very slender means—with what success let this splendid gathering attest. But, Sir, that will no longer suffice. The question has entered a new phase. Twenty-four thousand men of mark have put their names to a declaration, that they will not rest satisfied without a restitution of their country's rights, not to the full, to which they are incontestibly entitled, but

only so far as they believe will be for their country's good and the consolidation of the empire. What was the principle of our Association has become the demand of a nation. The banner of Home Rule has been borne to the front. There can be now no steps backwards, our watchword is, "Gang forward." In our progress munitions and provisions will be required. For those no doubt means will be found. But emergencies will arise—opportunities will offer—which if not met in time will be chances lost—perhaps forever. It is to provide for those that the fund contemplated in the resolution is to be created. It requires only to state this, to convince everybody how necessary such a fund will be. I feel sure that not only will this resolution pass, but a fund sufficient to satisfy all expectation will be formed. I second the resolution.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN, having been requested to do so, furnished an exposition of the nature and extent of the resolution. It proposed that a grand national fund be raised totally irrespective of the annual subscription. The League, it was hoped, would derive considerable resources from the annual subscription. The resolution, besides this, proposed to create a board of national trustees, to whom the Irish nation at home and abroad shall intrust the great national fund. Mr. Sullivan read the names forming the Board of Trustees, each of which was recognised with enthusiastic plaudits by the Conference and the spectators. Under the resolution, when the League required a sum of money for some special purposes of great importance, they were to prefer their request to the Board of Trustees, who would have power to vote them such a sum out of the special national fund. The Association had been invited by some of the leading Irishmen in foreign lands to establish a Board of National Trustees, into whose hands the Irish race in America, Australia, and over the world, might pour its contributions to the help of the struggle at home. It was thought wiser to form a committee which should be a fixed body of national Trustees for the trusts of that fund rather than to have it constituted by the governing body of the League, which might vary from year to year.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said the fund was formed on the principle that it was essential to the success of the Association to possess a fund of that kind. It was needed to spread Home Rule throughout the kingdom, to pay lecturers who should explain to the people of England and Scotland what it was the people of Ireland meant and what they wanted. They needed the fund for a further important object. There was many a man who ought to be in parliament advocating the cause of his country; but who had no money to pay the expense devolving upon the patriot who, without wealth, was yet too honest to take bribe or office.

The Chairman said there was nothing in the resolution defining the the objects of the fund. At the preliminary meeting it was decided to leave the objects of the fund to the members of the Board. No doubt the objects mentioned by Mr. Mitchell Henry were calculated, but it was hardly prudent, perhaps to go into the matter at present.

Mr. Mitchell Henry—Well, I don't know why people should give their money unless they know what they are giving it for, and I never contemplated silence on the subject. The honourable gentleman continued to say that the Home Rule question was to be carried in parliament, and by votes. They designed to influence these votes, not by bribery but in the manner of every great organization. In England there were at each election lots of members just half sure of their seats. Now, could the Association but start Home Rulers, and support their candidature; they might either secure the seats, or induce the uncertain candidates to pledge themselves to Home Rule. Beyond that, also, the registration of voters was to be attended to.

Mr. BUTT.—There is a point connected with the fund upon which I would wish to be distinctly understood. The fund is not to be at the disposal of the trustee. *Prima facie* it is at the disposal of the Executive Council of the League. But the veto on the trustees will be a perfect assurance to the whole Irish nation that not a penny of the fund will be improperly allocated. I most earnestly hope that not a single penny of the fund will be expended in electioneering purposes. I will not say that this matter rests with the trustees of the fund. I think it is one of the things the constituencies of Ireland should do for themselves. I hope every constituency in the country will take upon themselves the expense of that electioneering work, and that they will volunteer wherever the necessity may arise to return members who ought to be returned.

The Chairman said some of the subscription dockets had already been filled in. He would read a few of the names :—Mr. Mitchell Henry, M.P., £300; Mr. George Bryan, M.P., £300; Sir Joseph Neale M'Kenna, £100; Mr. Alfred Webb, £30; Mr. King-Harman, £30; Mr. B. M'Nulty, Newcastle-on-Tyne, £20; Mr. William Cummins, Liverpool, £20. Other names would be announced before the meeting closed.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER moved the fifteenth resolution :—

That an appeal be made for aid to our Irish brethren in all parts of the world, and to all persons who have at heart the early success of the federal movement.

He presumed that the National League, after a time, would send representatives to America—to every part of the world, in fact, where Irishmen dwelt—and sure he was that no Irishman would be found unprepared to sacrifice something in the cause of Irish liberty.

Mr. FERGUSON, in seconding the resolution, stated that he should take care to give it practical effect amongst their Irish brethren across the water. They should immediately commence a subscription list in Glasgow, and he had no doubt they would soon be able to send over a very handsome sum.

Mr. CALLAN announced the following additional subscriptions :—Mr. Shaw, M.P., £300; Mr. Ronayne, M.P., £50; Mr. M'Carthy Downing, M.P., £30; the Mayor of Cork, £30; Rev. Mr. Galbraith, £25; Sir John Gray, M.P., £30; Mr. George Browne, M.P., £50; Mr.

Kenelm Digby, £50; Mr. P. M'Cabe Fay, £60; Mr. P. Egan, £10; and Mr. E. J. Synan, M.P., £30.

Mr. SYNAN, M.P., moved the next resolution as follows:—

"That the annual subscription of each member of the Irish Home Rule League shall be £1, and that steps be also taken to enrol the great mass of the people in the League."

He congratulated the Conference upon the great work they had accomplished, because he believed that federalism, founded upon a representative system, was the chief strength of an empire. Burke once said that chivalry was the cheap defence of nations; but in modern times that eloquent aphorism was more applicable to federalism. Had the representative system been known to the ancients, the Greek republics would have defeated the Macedonian and the Roman as they did the Persian. Had the system been known to the middle ages the Italian republics would not have perished ignobly as they did. Federalism preserved the autonomy of Switzerland, made America a continent of federal states, and Germany an iron and irresistible federal empire. With federalism Great Britain and Ireland may defy the world in arms. But what he principally congratulated them upon was, their founding federalism upon the ancient lines of the constitution. Had that principle been adopted in 1782, the Irish constitution would have never perished, and the words of Grattan would have been as true as eloquent *esto perpetua*.

The subscribers who now entered the League, were those who would carry the cause to a successful issue. It was the pounds, and the men behind the pounds that carried emancipation, and carried repeal to the height where famine and division found and destroyed it. Their brethren in America and Australia, and Great Britain would assist them heartily; and the League now organized would be the representative of fifteen millions of Irish people.

Mr. BARRY, of Manchester, Secretary of the Home Rule Confederation in England, seconded the resolution. The Confederation at the other side of the water had carried out the principles developed here to-day. For over twelve months England, Scotland, and Wales had, through the length and breadth of the land, Home Rule Associations, all united under the presidency of Mr. Butt. In all the principal counties in England, and many in Scotland, the Irish element actually holds the balancing power between parties. He did not like boasting, but he might be permitted to say that the result in England at the next general election would be startling.

The Chairman put the resolution, and it was adopted unanimously.

Captain KING HARMAN proposed—

"That the Irish Home Rule League be now constituted—1st. Of all existing members of the Home Government Association who may desire to be members of same, subscriptions already paid to the Home Government Associatian to be considered as subscriptions paid to the League. 2nd. Of all persons present who may now enrol their names with the honorary secretaries, and pay a subscription of £1. 3rd. Of all persons who have signed the requisition, and who may so enrol their names and pay their subscription on before 1st of December—admission of members thereafter to be regulated by the rules."

It gave him a pang to part from the old Home Government Association, but he felt that he was embarking in a bigger ship, which would reach port in safety. The new League is formed but its rules not yet made out, and until it hoists the blue peter the old Home Government Association would stand on guard. He thought their secretary would have immense work till the 1st December. The best thing for him to do would be to take the whole census for all the southern, all the western, and half the northern counties and enrol them.

The Chairman.—A representative of the young aristocracy has moved the resolution, and I will call upon a representative of the old aristocracy to second it.

THE O'GORMAN MAHON on rising thanked them for the honour done him, after an exile of twenty years, in permitting him to take part in their council and in this Conference, which had resulted from the labours of those men who had done so much for their country, and who deservedly occupied such a high place in the estimation of the Irish people. He wished to say, having at one time a seat in the British House of Commons, that he did not come under the category of those to whom allusion had been made. Unwilling to hurt the feelings of others, that allusion forced him to state, that having represented his native county and his native town, he never was a place, or pension, or office hunter. He had never sought or received one farthing of ministerial or public money, or devoted himself to the interests of any minister, but, as an Irish representative, he always supported whatever was for the benefit of their country.

He cordially seconded the resolution, asking them to join a new League. The word league was an ominous one. There were historical associations connected with it, which deserved attention, but which, in the limited time at his disposal, he could not dwell on; yet this he would say, that, holding high military rank as he did, he was prepared to lay down his colonel's commission and go forth among his countrymen, whom he asked to join the League, in the humble capacity of a recruiting sergeant. Those of his countrymen who remembered forty years ago, when he was amongst them, would know that he was incapable of asking them to enter any water in which he was not ready to plunge in at their head. While abandoning, in favour of better men, every pretension to a seat in an English parliament, there was one post to which he could not relinquish his claims. If danger should arise to the Union into which he now invited Irishmen of every class, then, in order to be amongst the earliest to face it, he would resume his station as of old, in their front, and there add another record of his devotion to the cause of fatherland. More auspicious days had dawned upon their country since the time alluded to, and with moral force they now hoped to achieve their liberties. He trusted his country should never be driven to resort to any other. In that assembly he saw the germs of strength—nay, the strength itself that would lead to certain victory. He was but a shattered remnant of those who, in the days of the Catholic Association, gallantly led the Irish people; but though the snows of seventy winters whitened the locks on his head, they did not

chill the warmth of his breast, which still beat, and would beat until his eyes closed in death, responsive to the cause of his country.

The resolution was then adopted.

Captain NOLAN then moved the adoption of the following two, which were taken as one resolution :—

That a committee of sixteen be appointed to prepare rules and bye-laws for the regulation of the League:—Isaac Butt, Q.C., M.P.; John Barry (Manchester); J. G. Biggar, T.C.; John O. Blunden, William J. O'Neill Daunt, Kenelm T. Digby, M.P.; Philip Callan, M.P.; John Ferguson, (Glasgow); Rev. J. A. Galbraith, F.T.C.D.; E. R. King-Harman; Mitchell Henry, M.P.; Rev. William Malone (Rector); Joseph P. Ronayne, M.P.; William Shaw, M.P.; Alexander M. Sullivan; Alfred Webb.

That such rules be submitted to a private meeting of the League, to be held in this building, on 2nd December, and that such meeting do then proceed to settle rules; and that the first officers of the League be elected at such meeting, or some adjournment thereof.

In moving the resolution, Captain Nolan felicitously commented on the several members, whose names he read out.

The Chairman said the last of the three series of resolutions had now been proposed.

Dr. CUMMINS, of Liverpool, seconded the resolution, which was adopted.

Mr. M'CARTHY DOWNING in moving a vote of thanks to the honorary secretaries of the association, said—While all must feel happy at a termination of the glorious confederation, as it might now be called, which had transacted such momentous business during the last three days, while they should leave the room with feelings of grateful recollection, they ought to remember that success would not have been attained to the extent it had been attained but for the exertions of the honorary secretaries of the association. It was all very well for many present that they could spend a few hours at the meeting, but it was the men who worked for days, for months, often through the night; it was these men who felt the burden and heat of the struggle. He would venture to say that not the oldest man present had ever seen arrangements more admirable than those which had made the Conference so complete in its business details, and so singularly facilitated the transaction of business. He need not pass a lengthened eulogy on the gentlemen constituting the secretarial body. They were formed of Mr. Blunden, whose name was well known and revered in Dublin; Captain King-Harman, whose public estimation was shown by the cheers which had greeted him, and whom he hoped to see one day in the House of Commons. Besides these gentlemen there was another, an unostentatious and laborious worker, one who had done a great deal of good, one but for whose efforts and arrangements Irish members in London would often have been unable to meet to consult upon national questions. That gentleman was Mr. Philip Callan. Mr. Downing acknowledged on behalf of the Conference, the excellent arrangements conducted by Mr. Alfred Webb, and alluded to Mr. O'Neill Daunt as a gentleman whose honesty and consistency were most distinguished—who had never spared himself in the cause of his country, even to the extent of writing private letters on the national

question. He was only sorry that when he besought Mr. Daunt to stand for the representation of an Irish constituency he had not consented to lend his aid once more in the legislature to the cause of his country.

Mr. BRYAN, M.P., in seconding the vote of thanks, spoke in flattering terms of the untiring efforts and zeal of the gentlemen named. He concluded by moving :—

"That the marked thanks of the meeting be presented to the honorary secretaries:—Mr. John O. Blunden, Mr. Philip Callan, M.P.; Mr. O'Neill Daunt, Captain King-Harman, and Mr. Alfred Webb.

The resolution was put and carried.

Mr. ALFRED WEBB rose to return thanks on behalf of himself and his fellow Secretaries. It was comparatively easy for the Secretaries to carry out the arrangements when they were so ably seconded by Mr. J. P. Macalister. But indeed the great success of this Conference had more than recompensed them for any trouble they had been at. They must all remember, however, that their real work was only now beginning. It was easy to feel enthusiastic under the influence of this great gathering and those crowded galleries, and after having listened to such cogent reasoning, to such stirring bursts of eloquence. Long weary days of constant labour and untiring exertions were before all who meant to be true to the cause—exertions that would call out all their patience and working qualities. In no speech did he more thoroughly agree than in that by Mr. Ferguson, when he spoke of how their aim should not be success, but conscientious work. They all believed they were in the right; let them then strive on, and leave the result to a higher Power. And when they read the history of their beloved country—of Ireland—and knew how in every age men had been ready to lay down all that made life dear—to sacrifice all domestic ties—to give up life itself, in what they believed her cause (not indeed alone in past ages but in our very day), was it anything that we should be called upon, nay, was it not a privilege that we should be permitted, to sacrifice a few poor hours, a few paltry pounds in her service.

Mr. JOHN O. BLUNDEN said: Mr. Chairman, at a great and all important meeting such as this, it is always a pleasant thing for the proposer of a resolution to be able to feel that his resolution is one which requires neither eloquence nor ability on the part of the proposer to secure its passing unanimously. I am about to propose such a resolution. But, before doing so, it becomes necessary that I should move that you, Sir, do leave the chair, and that Mr. Kenelm Digby be called thereto. [This having been done Mr. Blunden continued.] I beg leave to propose

That the best thanks of this meeting are due, and are hereby given, to Mr. William Shaw, M.P., for his kindness in presiding, and for his distinguished conduct in the Chair.

A vote of thanks to a chairman is generally a mere formal matter; it is no formal matter on this occasion. I am certain that everyone in this

large assembly feels that thanks are due in no measured degree to the gentleman who has left the chair; and not only the thanks of everyone in this crowded assembly, but the thanks of every Irishman throughout the length and breadth of the land, who hopes and trusts in his heart to be permitted to see the day, when the doors of the old House yonder shall once more be thrown open, and the thundering voice of the Irish nation shall proclaim the fact that our country is "a nation once again." I feel confident that no words of mine are required in support of this resolution.

Mr. ROBERT B. BUTT seconded the resolution.

Mr. DIGBY put the resolution, and it was carried by acclamation.

Mr. SHAW, M.P., said he felt greatly obliged for the manner in which the resolution had been received by the meeting. He had consented to take the chair after much hesitation, but now, after four days of earnest discussion on questions the most important, he could say with truth that there was not an expression used from beginning to end, not a statement made, to which exception could fairly be taken. The manner in which they had discharged their duties at the Conference was a presage of success in the future. The action of a great principle and a great hope was similar on an individual and on a nation. It cleared the intellect, elevated the moral nature, directed and ennobled the practical life. So I trust it will be with them. They have grasped a great principle—they have undertaken a great work. Let them go out of the room to think and work worthily for their great cause. Again he thanked them most heartily for having selected him to preside over a meeting in its importance to Ireland second to no other meeting ever held within these historic walls.

Mr. BUTT rose and said, I have to move, Sir, that this Conference do now adjourn. I cannot attempt to give utterance to the emotions which press on my own heart, and which I know thrill the breast of everyone around me. I had looked to this Conference with anxiety. I felt that its assemblage was a solemn step—that any confusion, or dissension, or distraction in its proceedings would have discredited our cause and retarded our success—while regularity, order, and moderation in these proceedings would immeasurably advance it. We have passed through four days which were a crisis in the history of Ireland, and never were days more nobly passed by a nation and a people on their trial. The moderation, the dignity, the self-control, I will say the wisdom, of these proceedings have more than answered the hopes of our friends, and more than disappointed the malignant expectations and prophecies of our enemies. Our meetings have been presided over in a manner worthy of the old Roman senate, and not a word has been uttered which any of us have need to desire to blot out from our records.

In the same spirit of reverence in which in my opening words I offered up a prayer for that guidance without which all human effort is

in vain—in these closing words I say that the God of our fathers has looked down upon us. We will go forth from this under His blessing, and with that blessing the efforts originated in this Conference will achieve the liberties of our native land.

Mr. MARTIN, in seconding the motion for the adjournment of the Conference, remarked that he was now an old man, he might say, in the service of his country—at least, having tried to serve his country—and it gave him pride that he had been rewarded in his old days by being present at such debates as they had heard, and marked by such wisdom and moderation, and, he hoped, determination on the part of the Irish nation. He hoped to live on to see the day when some constituency in Ireland—might he hope the constituency that had already been so generous towards him?—would return him as their representative to the House of Commons in College-green.

The proceedings of the Conference were then brought to a close.

THE

IRISH HOME RULE LEAGUE.

Resolutions of National Conference.

At the National Conference held at the Rotunda, in the City of Dublin, on the 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st November, 1873, the following Resolutions were passed:—

I.—That, as the basis of the proceedings of this Conference, we declare our conviction that it is essentially necessary to the peace and prosperity of Ireland that the right of domestic legislation on all Irish affairs should be restored to our country.

II.—That, solemnly reasserting the inalienable right of the Irish people to self-government, we declare the time in our opinion has come when a combined and energetic effort should be made to obtain the restoration of that right.

III.—That, in accordance with the ancient and constitutional rights of the Irish Nation, we claim the privilege of managing our own affairs by a Parliament assembled in Ireland, and composed of the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons of Ireland.

IV.—That, in claiming these rights and privileges for our country, we adopt the principle of a Federal arrangement, which would secure to the Irish Parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, while leaving to the Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the Empire with Foreign States, and all matters appertaining to the defence and stability of the Empire at large; as well as the power of granting and providing the supplies necessary for Imperial purposes.

V.—That such an arrangement does not involve any change in the existing constitution of the Imperial Parliament, or any interference with the prerogatives of the Crown or disturbance of the principles of the constitution.

VI.—That, to secure to the Irish people the advantages of constitutional government, it is essential that there should be in Ireland an administration for Irish affairs, controlled, according to constitutional principles, by the Irish Parliament, and conducted by ministers constitutionally responsible to that Parliament.

VII.—That, in the opinion of this Conference, a Federal arrangement, based upon these principles, would consolidate the strength and maintain the integrity of the Empire, and add to the dignity and power of the Imperial Crown.

VIII.—That, while we believe that in an Irish Parliament the rights and liberties of all classes of our countrymen would find their best and surest protection, we are willing that there should be incorporated in the Federal Constitution articles supplying the amplest guarantees that no change shall be made by that Parliament in the present settlement of property in Ireland, and that no legislation shall be adopted to establish any religious ascendancy in Ireland, or to subject any person to disabilities on account of his religious opinions.

IX.—That this Conference calls on the Irish constituencies at the next general election to return men earnestly and truly devoted to the great cause which this Conference has been called to promote, and who in any emergency that may arise, will be ready to take counsel with a great national Conference, to be called in such a manner as to represent the opinions and feelings of the Irish nation; and that, with a view of rendering members of Parliament and their constituents more in accord on all questions effecting the welfare of the country, it is recommended by this Conference that at the close of each session of Parliament the Representatives should render to their constituents an account of their stewardships.

X.—That, in order to carry these objects into practical effect, an association be now formed, to be called "The Irish Home Rule League," of which the essential and fundamental Principles shall be those declared in the resolutions adopted at this Conference, and of which the object, and only object, shall be to obtain for Ireland, by peaceable and constitutional means, the self-government claimed in those resolutions.

XI.—That, in addition to the ordinary resources of the League, it is essential to raise a large special fund for the purpose of promoting the organization and success of the movement throughout Great Britain and Ireland: That such fund be vested in the following trustees, whose sanction shall be required to its expenditure by the Council of the League:—

Archbishop of Tuam, Most Rev. Dr. MacHale,*
Roland P. Blennerhassett, M.P.,
William J. O'Neill Daunt,
Kenelm T. Digby, M.P.,
P. M'Cabe Fay,
John Ferguson,
Rev. J. A. Galbraith, F.T.C.D.,
Mitchell Henry, M.P.,
Bernard M'Anulty,
John Martin, M.P.
Rev. T. O'Shea, P.P.,
Joseph P. Ronayne, M.P.,
William Shaw, M.P.,
Laurence Waldron, D.L.,
Alfred Webb.

That such sanction of the trustees be given by a resolution, duly passed by a majority of those present at a meeting to be convened and regulated in such a manner as the trustees, or a majority of them, may by a general rule approve. That whenever three vacancies shall have occurred in the number of trustees, a special meeting of the League shall be convened for the purpose of filling them up.

XII.—That an appeal be made for aid to our Irish brothers in all parts of the world, and to all persons who have at heart the early success of the Federal movement.

XIII.—That the annual subscription of each member of the Irish Home Rule League shall be £1, and that steps be also taken to enrol the great mass of the people in the League.

* Since the above resolution was passed, the Archbishop has intimated that the functions of his office preclude his taking part in this trust.

XIV.—That the Irish Home Rule League be now constituted—1st. Of all existing members of the Home Government Association who may desire to be members of same, subscriptions already paid to the Home Government Association to be considered as subscriptions paid to the League. 2nd. Of all persons present who may now enrol their names with the honorary secretaries, and pay a subscription of £1. 3rd. Of all persons who have signed the requisition, and who may so enrol their names and pay their subscription on or before 1st of December—admission of members thereafter to be regulated by the rules.

XV.—That a committee of seventeen be appointed to prepare rules and bye-laws for the regulation of the League, and that such rules be submitted to a private meeting of the League, to be held in this building on 2nd December, and that such meeting do then proceed to settle these rules; and that the first officers of the League be elected at such meeting, or some adjournment thereof.

Formation of the Irish Home Rule League.

The League having been formed in pursuance of Resolution X. the Committee appointed by Resolution XV. met and drew up rules and bye-laws for its regulation. These rules were amended, approved of, and adopted at a meeting of the League assembled for that purpose on the 2nd December, 1873, in conformity with Resolution XV.

General Principles.

I.

It is hereby declared as the essential and fundamental principles of the League, that the objects and the only objects contemplated by its organization are :—

To obtain for our country in accordance with the ancient and constitutional rights of the Irish nation, the privilege of managing our own affairs by a Parliament assembled in Ireland, and composed of the Sovereign, the Lords and the Commons of Ireland.

To secure to the Irish Parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland.

To leave to the Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the Colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the Empire with Foreign States, and all matters appertaining to the defence and stability of the Empire at large; as well as the power of granting and providing the supplies necessary for Imperial purposes.

To secure to the Irish people the advantage of constitutional government, by making it a part of such Federal arrangement that there should be in Ireland an administration for Irish affairs, controlled, according to constitutional principles, by the Irish Parliament, and conducted by Ministers constitutionally responsible to that Parliament.

To obtain these objects by legal and constitutional means.

II.

The League invites the co-operation of all persons who are willing to join in seeking for Ireland a Federal arrangement based upon these general principles.

III.

The League will endeavour to forward the object it has in view by using all legitimate means of influencing public sentiment, both in Ireland and Great Britain, by taking all opportunities of instructing and informing public opinion, and by seeking to unite Irishmen of all creeds and classes in one national movement in support of the great national object hereby contemplated.

IV.

It is declared to be an essential principle of the League, that while every Member is understood by joining it to concur in its general object and plan of action, no person so joining is committed to any political opinion, except the advisability of seeking for Ireland the amount of self-government contemplated in the objects of the League.

Laws.

MEMBERSHIP.

1. The League shall consist of an unlimited number of Members, who shall pay £1 annually. In addition to the subscription of Members, the League invites contributions to aid it in carrying out its objects.

2. Members shall be admitted at meetings of the League, by resolution and by open vote; but no person shall be proposed as a Member until his name has been submitted to a meeting of the Council, approved of by it, and the amount of his subscription lodged.

3. Members' annual subscriptions shall be due on the first day of the month in which they were admitted.

4. The Council shall, unless they see reason to the contrary, remove from the list of members any one whose subscription is six months in arrear.

5. If for any reason it should appear to the Council inexpedient that any member of the League should continue to be such, they shall have power to pass a resolution recommending that he should cease to be a Member. If such recommendation is adopted by a meeting of the League the person named therein shall immediately cease to be a Member.

6. It shall be the duty of the Council of the League, with the approbation of the League, to devise means of adding to this constitution an organisation to combine all classes of the Irish people.

COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE, AND HONORARY OFFICERS.

7. The affairs of the League shall be managed by a Council and Executive Committee, four Honorary Secretaries, and a Treasurer.

8. The Council of the League shall be constituted in the following manner:—

a. By the 17th December, in each year, the Council shall forward to each member a circular, notifying him that he is at liberty to propose any number of persons, being members of the League, not exceeding fifty, to be members of the Council; said proposals to reach the Secretaries before 1st January.

b. Immediately after the 1st January, all the proposed names are to be printed in a list in alphabetical order, with a distinctive number attached to each name. The list is then to be forwarded to all members by the 8th January, with a ballot book containing fifty leaves.

c. Upon the leaves of this ballot book each member shall write the numbers corresponding to the Members for whom he votes to form the Council. Any leaf upon which more than one number is written shall be void; and no member shall be at liberty to vote for any person whose name is not on the list of proposed candidates, and any vote so given for such name shall be thrown away.

d. Three scrutineers (appointed by the Council), shall proceed to arrange all ballot books received up to 15th January, and by 25th January shall declare to the Council the result of said ballot. The report of said scrutineers shall be final; if they be not unanimous on any question the existing Council shall decide it; and in the event of two or more persons having an equality of votes upon the scrutiny for the fiftieth place on the Council, the Council shall decide which of them shall be duly elected.

e. The fifty members so elected, shall meet on or before first Monday in February, on a day to be appointed by the existing Council, and those present at such meeting, shall then proceed to select by ballot fifty other members of the League to constitute with themselves the Council for the ensuing year.

f. No election shall be vitiated by reason of any unintentional mistake, or error of the post.

g. The names of the new Council shall be declared at the annual meeting of the League which shall be held on the first Tuesday in February, and a list of same shall be sent to each Member within one month.

h. A copy of this rule to be printed at the head of the list of candidates sent to each member.

9. The new Council shall at its first meeting appoint by ballot from amongst their number an Executive Committee of twenty-one persons.

10. The election of members of Council, and of the Executive Committee, under paragraph (*e*) of rule 8, and rule 9, shall take place on the appointed day by a succession of ballots, so arranged that not more than ten persons shall be elected at one ballot; the ballots to be continued in immediate succession until the election of the whole number is complete.

11. The four Honorary Secretaries and Treasurer shall be appointed at the annual meeting of the League. Any vacancies in these offices occurring during the year shall be filled up by the Council.

12. Honorary Officers, and Members of Council, Executive Committee, and all sub-Committees, shall hold office, subject to the provisions of the laws, until the January meeting of the League.

13. The Council shall have power, if they think fit, to elect as members of the Council, in addition to the hundred members, any Peer or Member of Parliament who may be a member of the League ; and in addition shall have the power, if they think fit, to elect from time to time any number of persons, not exceeding twenty, members of the League, to be supernumerary members of the Council, but no person shall be elected under this rule except by a vote in which two-thirds of the members present concur; and all such elections shall be subject to the approbation of the League.

14. Vacancies occuring in the Council and Executive Committee shall be filled by the Council, subject, as to members of the Council, to the approval of the League.

15. Standing or occasional Committees may be hereafter appointed by the Council for such purposes as may appear necessary; also, such paid officers as may be necessary for the due execution of the business of the League; such officers to hold place at the discretion of the Council. All honorary officers shall be ex-officio members of the Council and of the Executive Committee.

16. The Council and Executive Committee shall have power from time to time, as they shall see fit, to make rules and regulations for the guidance of their own proceedings and those of any committees, and shall from time to time make rules fixing the number necessary to form a quorum at their several meetings.

17. The Council shall hold a stated meeting on one day in each month : such day to be fixed from time to time by rule made by themselves. They shall also hold meetings at such other time as they may appoint. The Executive Committee may at any time convene a Council by giving three days' notice by post to each Member.

18. In the interim between the meetings of the Council, the business of the League shall be managed by the Executive Committee. All their proceedings shall be submitted to the Council at each monthly meeting and shall be subject to the control of the Council.

19. The Executive Committee shall have power to incur all ordinary and reasonable expenses which it may be necessary to incur at a time when the sanction of the Council cannot be obtained; but all such expenditure shall be submitted to the Council at their next meeting.

20.—All the acts of the Council and Executive Committee shall be subject to the control of the League, and may be brought by any member, on due notice, before a Meeting, which shall have full power to direct the future action of the Council and Executive Committee in reference to same.

FINANCE.

21.—All the ordinary revenues of the League, derived from the annual subscriptions of Members, or donations to its funds, shall be under the control of the Council, and applicable by them in forwarding the objects of the League as they shall see fit. All acts of the Council in this respect to be subject to the same control of the League as is hereinbefore generally provided.

22.—A full statement of the receipts and expenditure shall be made up to the first of January, April, July and October; such statements shall be audited by a paid Auditor appointed by the League, and submitted to the Monthly Meeting of the League in each of those months.

SPECIAL FUND.

23.—The Council of the League shall have power at any time to pass a vote for the application of any sum out of the special fund, raised in pursuance of resolution XI. of the Conference, and to submit same for the sanction of the Trustees. The Council shall have power, in conjunction with the trustees, to make regulations as to the mode in which such votes shall be passed by the Council, and submitted to the trustees.

MEETINGS.

24.—The League shall hold one meeting in each month, on such stated days as the Council, by a general resolution, may approve, one of which meetings shall be the Annual General Meeting, and it shall be held on the first Tuesday in February. The day of meeting may from time to time be changed either by resolution of the League, or on any particular occasion by vote of the Council or Executive Committee, due notice being given of the change.

25.—The League or the Council may, whenever they shall think it expedient, pass a resolution appointing stated Meetings to be held at more frequent intervals.

26.—Until a regular and fixed place can be obtained for the meetings of the League they shall be held in such places in the City of Dublin as the Council may from time to time appoint.

27.—The meetings shall be open only to Members of the League unless a vote of the Executive Committee, Council or League shall direct to the contrary.

28.—The Executive Committee may at any time convene a meeting of the League by giving three days' notice in two or more daily papers published in Dublin.

29.—The Executive Committee upon receiving a requisition signed by thirty members, shall call a meeting of the League for any special purpose.

30.—All matters relating to the meetings of the League shall be subject to the control of the League itself. The League shall have power at any meeting to adjourn such meeting, or to fix any future meeting. It shall have power at any meeting by resolution either to admit or exclude the public and the press; and no such resolutions regulating the meeting shall require any notice.

31.—No resolution to which any Member objects shall be proposed at any meeting, unless one directly connected with the objects for which the League is formed.

32.—The Meetings of the League shall be governed by the following Standing Orders:

a. The order of the business shall be as follows:—1st. The proposal of new Members who have been recommended by the Council. 2nd. The reading of such correspondence as may be submitted by the Executive, or Council, and the considering of any resolution that may be proposed thereon. 3rd. The disposal of any business which may be recommended by the Executive or Council, to be considered. 4th. General motions, of which notice has been given, in the order in which the notice shall be given.

b. This order of business may be varied by a vote of the meeting, which shall have power, upon the motion of any Member, to give precedence to such business as it shall think fit.

E.L.S.

c. No motion, except one relating to the immediate conduct of the business of the meeting, to which any Member objects, shall be moved unless notice of same was publicly given to and at a previous meeting of the League. When any motion is proposed, it shall be the duty of the Chairman to inquire and ascertain whether notice has been duly given, and if it has not been given, he shall distinctly announce same to the Meeting, and state that any member can object to the motion being put.

d. Even if no member objects, it shall be the duty of the Chairman himself to object, and decline to put such motion, unless he is satisfied, from the numbers attending the meeting, and all the circumstances, that such motion may with propriety be put.

e. In the event of any such objection, the motion shall stand over to the next meeting as a motion of which notice has been given.

f. In matters not provided for by the rules or standing orders, the rules of order and debate at all Meetings of the League, shall be the same, so far as practicable, as those observed in the House of Commons.

CHANGES IN THE LAWS.

33.—Changes in any of these Laws shall only be made at a monthly meeting of the League, on a written notice read at a previous Meeting of the League, and given to the Honorary Secretaries or Secretary.

TEMPORARY RULE

Adopted at Meeting of 2nd December, 1873.

That a Provisional Committee to exercise the powers of the Council and Executive Committee, till an election under the Bye-laws can be held, be now appointed as follows :—The Chairman and Honorary Secretaries of the Conference, Movers and Seconders of Resolutions passed at the Conference, who are members of the League ; the Members of Parliament present at the Conference, who are Members of the League; Trustees and Members of Committee of Rules, who are Members of the League ; with direction to them to add to their number till the total be seventy at a special Meeting duly convened by circular for the purpose ; such meeting to be held within ten days from this date.

RESOLUTIONS

Adopted at Meeting of 2nd December, 1873.

That John O. Blunden, W. J. O'Neill Daunt, J. A. Galbraith, F.T.C.D., W. A. Redmond, M.P., be appointed Honorary Secretaries till the Annual Meeting.

That Alfred Webb be appointed Treasurer till the Annual Meeting.

That Messrs. Craig & Gardiner be appointed Auditors to the League.