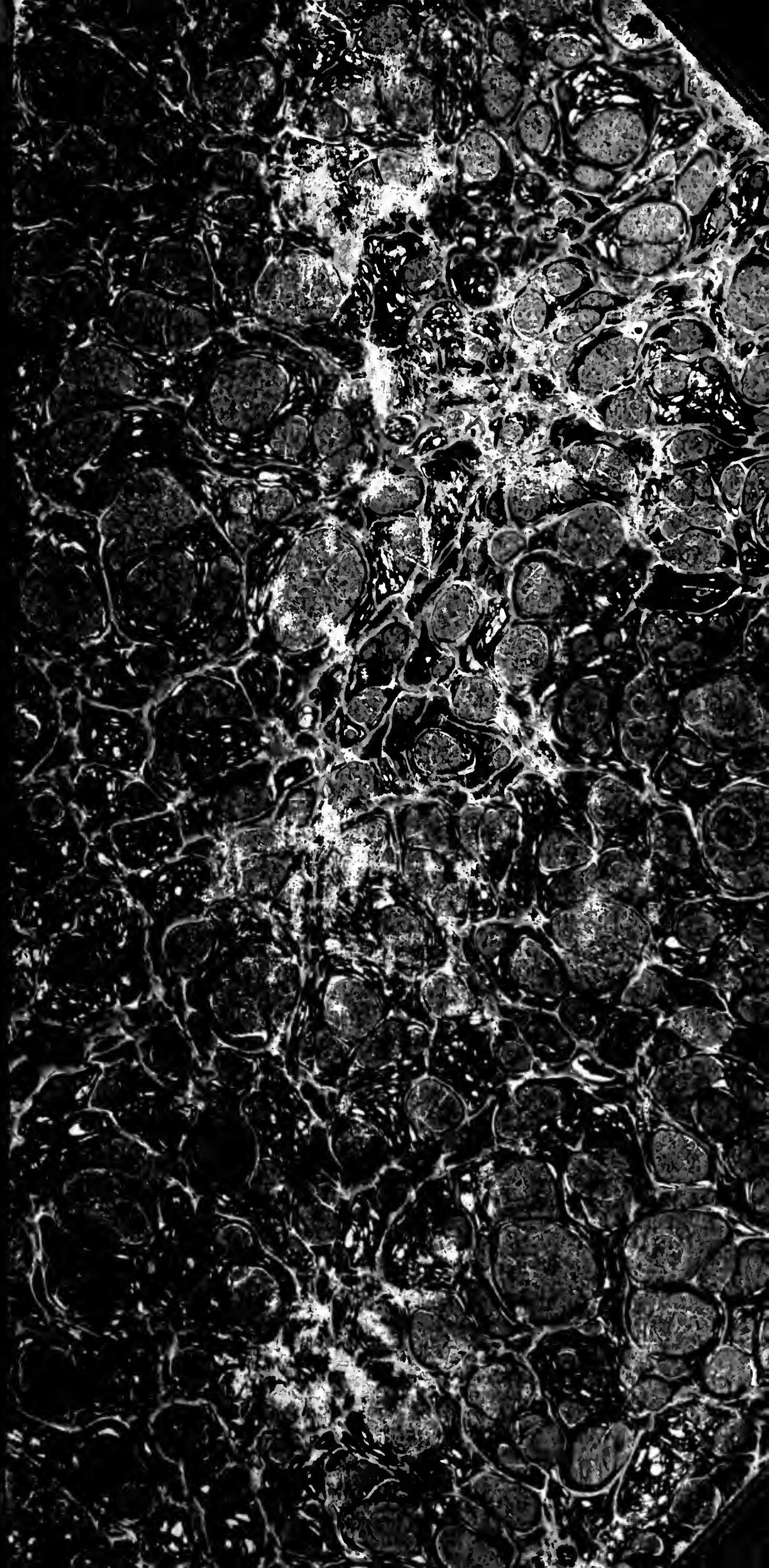

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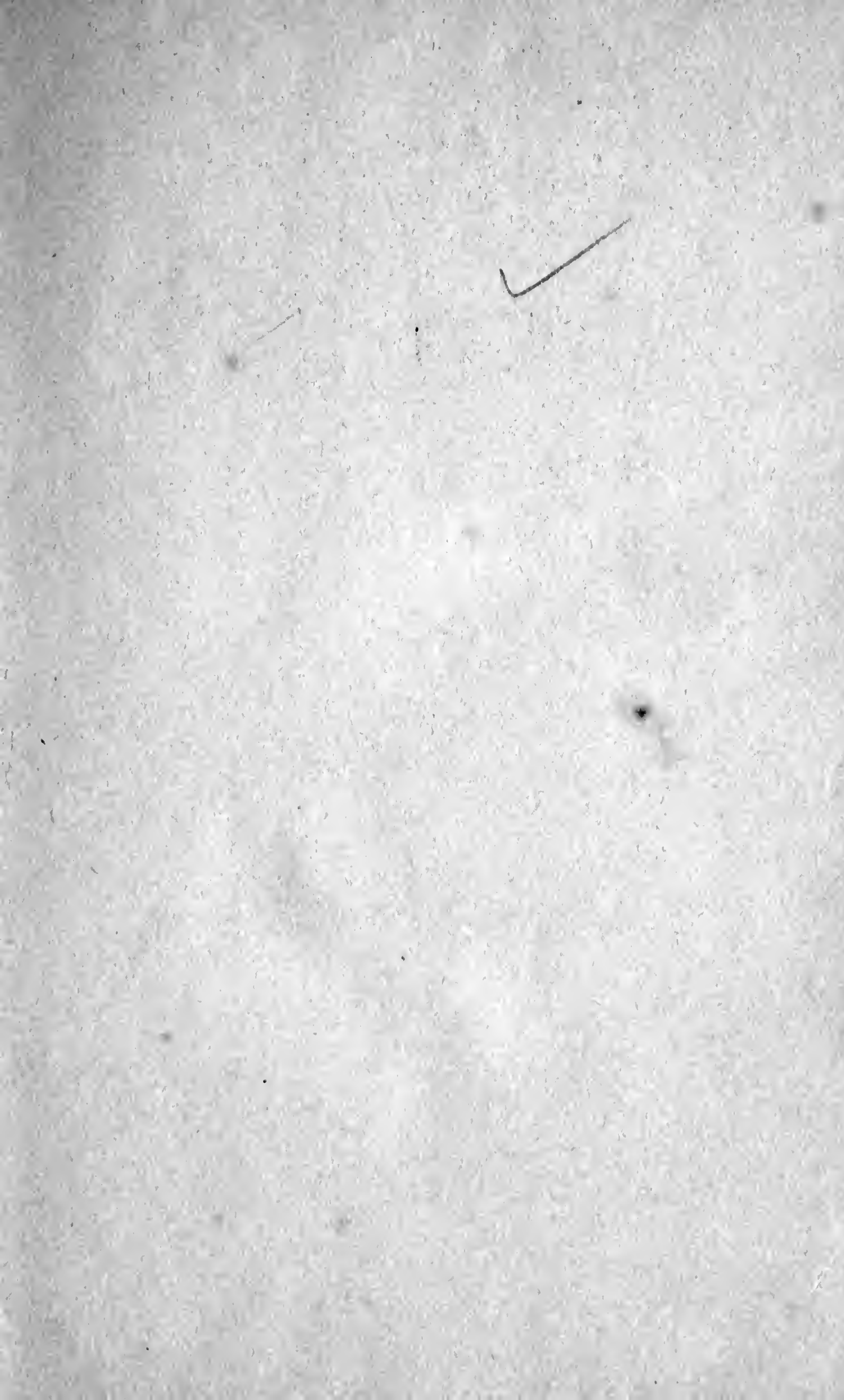

SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES

DELIVERED AT THE

ELECTION OF 1865.

BY THE

RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.,

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

"He'll shape his old course in a country new."—
KING LEAR.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1865.

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SPEECHES.

SPEECH AT MANCHESTER ON JULY 18th.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said: Mr. Bazley and Gentlemen, —At last, my friends, I am come amongst you. And I am come—to use an expression which has of late become very famous, and which, if I judge the matter rightly, is not likely soon to be forgotten—I am come among you "unmuzzled." After a long and anxious struggle of eighteen years, during which the unbounded devotion and indulgence of my friends maintained me in the arduous position of a representative of the University of Oxford, I have been driven from that seat. I have no complaint to make of the party which has refused to me the resumption of that high and honourable trust. I cannot say that I am glad of it, or that I think they have acted wisely; but they are the majority, they were entitled to use their power, and they have used it. And as they have used it, I appeal to you, the men of my native county, to know whether that which has disqualified me from representing the University of Oxford has also disabled me from representing you. But, gentlemen, do not let me come among you under false colours, or with false pretences. I have loved the University of Oxford with a deep and passionate love; and so I shall love it to the end. If my affection is of the smallest advantage to that great, that ancient, that noble institution, that advantage, such as it is, and it is most insignificant, Oxford will possess as long as I live. But we must not mistake the issue which has been raised. The University has at length, after eighteen years of self-denial, been drawn by what I might perhaps call an overweening exercise of power into the vortex of mere party politics. Well, you will readily understand why, as long as I had even the faintest hope that the zeal and kindness of my friends might keep me in my place, it was impossible for me to abandon them. Could they have returned me by a majority of one, painful as it is to a man at my time of life, and one feeling the weight of public cares, to be incessantly struggling for his seat, nothing would have induced me to quit that University, to which I had so long ago devoted my best care, and my misjudging, perhaps, but yet loyal attachment. But now, by no act of mine,

I am free to come among you. And, having been thus set free, I need hardly tell you that it is with joy, with thankfulness, and with enthusiasm that I now, at the eleventh hour, a candidate without even an Address, make my appeal to the heart and the mind of South Lancashire, and ask you to pronounce on that appeal.

Mr. Bazley and gentlemen, as I have said, I am aware of no cause for the votes which have given a majority against me in the University of Oxford, except this fact, that the strongest convictions which the human mind is capable of receiving, that an overpowering sense of the public interests, that the practical teaching of experience, to which from my first youth Oxford herself taught me to lay open my mind; that one and all of these have shown me the folly, and, I will say, the madness, of refusing to join in the generous sympathies of my countrymen, by adopting what I must call an obstructive policy. Now, when I speak of an obstructive policy, I necessarily speak in some degree of those by whom it is conducted. But, do not let me be misunderstood. I have known, certainly, as I think, in happier times—in times when Sir R. Peel was the leader and head of the Conservative party—that the materials of which it was composed included then, as I firmly believe that there are now in the ranks of that party, not only many excellent and many able, but many enlightened, men—many men who, if their circumstances and position were more propitious, would be ready to concur and co-operate in every work of public improvement. You may find them below the gangway of the House of Commons; you may find them, though perhaps more sparsely scattered, even on the benches behind the principal Opposition bench; you may find them on the Opposition bench itself. It would be invidious were I to name them. In some of them this county has a deep and affectionate interest; and Lancashire, without distinction of party, looks upon men, or upon a man, as her own, who still sits upon that bench. But I speak of the machinery of the party; I speak of those who lead, and of those who pull the wires; I speak of the daily, ordinary, habitual action of our parliamentary system; and I tell you, and wish to place this issue distinctly before you, that it is because I have been unable to concur in that system which marks and fixes definitively the general character of the present parliamentary Opposition, that I now come before you to ask, and with joyful trust I await the answer, whether you approve or whether you condemn my conduct.

Gentlemen, I am in one sense glad, in another sense sorry, to say, that my own experience of public life extends over three-and-thirty years, and those three-and-thirty years perhaps among the most remarkable, and the most momentous, so far as the triumphs, not of merely defensive, but of peaceful and progressive legislation, have been concerned, that ever have been known in the history of this country; possibly I might even say, in the history of any country

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in the world. What have been the characteristics of that legislation, and what have been its results? Some of you are old enough to remember the ministerial reign of Lord Sidmouth as Secretary of State for the Home Department, and to recollect what was the spirit of Manchester—the spirit of her upper class, of her middle class, and of the masses of her population, in those unhappy days. Now, on the contrary, we have lived into a time when every man that represents public authority, every man who bears office under the Crown, may come among you, and may be sure that he will be received in every thoroughfare of your vast and crowded community, not merely with respect and with kindness, but even, it is not too much to say, with affection and enthusiasm. And how has this change come about? It has come about because a conviction has been gradually, slowly, but firmly engendered in the English mind, that, after granting every fair allowance for the defects of human institutions, and by no means renouncing the hope of making by wise measures that which is now good to become better still, but subject to these reserves, and looking back upon the past, you live under institutions in which the legislature and the constituted authorities labour, in the main, for the good of the people, with honesty of purpose, and with an enlightened view. Now, without entering into details, without unrolling the long record of acts and stages connected with the great measures that have been passed, I will simply remind you that they comprise the emancipation of Roman Catholics, the improvement of the representation, the emancipation of the slaves, the reformation of the poor-law, the reformation—I had almost said the destruction, but it is the reformation—it is the destruction in point of bulk, but in no other sense—of the tariff, the abolition of the corn-law, the abolition of the navigation law, the conclusion of the Treaty of Commerce with France: and, to cut short a list threatening to be almost interminable, the laws which have relieved Dissenters from stigma and from almost ignominy, and which in doing so have not weakened but have strengthened that Church to which I humbly but gladly belong. All these great acts have been accomplished, taking them as a whole, with something that resembles the silent and majestic, I had almost said sublime, tranquillity with which your own vast machinery performs its appointed task, in the strength of perfect repose. All these things have been done; you see the acts, you see the fruits, and it is natural to inquire, who have been the doers? Well, gentlemen, in a very humble measure, but yet according to the degree and capacity of the powers that Providence has bestowed upon me, I have for many years been desirous, and increasingly with increasing age, not to obstruct, but to promote and assist, this beneficent and blessed process; and if I first entered Parliament, as I did enter it, with a firm and anxious wish to maintain the institutions of my country, I can

truly say that there is no period of my life during which my conscience is so clear, and renders to me so good an answer upon that very point, as for those years in which I am thought to have co-operated in the promotion of Liberal measures; with the conviction that not merely notwithstanding that they are Liberal, but, much more than this, because they are in the highest and best sense Liberal, they have been the true measures, and they have indicated the true policy, by which the country has been made strong and its institutions have been not only preserved but strengthened.

Now, so far as depends upon me, I want to ask and to learn the opinion of South Lancashire upon that subject. There is no district of the country, perhaps, that has known so much, there is none that is in such a good condition to give an answer, there is none that will be more deeply responsible for the answer that within these few days she may give. But, gentlemen, we have lived into a period that is indeed singular. The rules of my old university, and although perhaps I have slightly suffered by them I much revere them, forbid the active interference of candidates in academical elections. That state of things has been favourable to my acquiring, while the elections have been going on, a knowledge of what is done, and also a knowledge of what is said, in different parts of the country; and I don't know whether you have been struck, but I have been struck in a degree that I could hardly describe, with the marvellous character of what has been said in various portions of the land. You read the speeches of multitudes of candidates for seats in the interest of the Opposition, and you find that they found their claim to support upon their approval of the measures of the government. They very naturally say, and they always wind up with the conclusion, either tacit or expressed, that that government ought to be displaced. But really upon that subject I, for my own part, have no clear or strong opinion to give. We have been for six years in office. I do assure you that I want a holiday; and I think it is perfectly possible, and a very fair thing to argue, that the general spirit—what I may call the political health—of the body of the Liberal party would be improved if, during this fine summer, they were to travel, by way of watering-place, into the clear and pure air about the benches of the Opposition. Upon that matter, therefore, I do not address you. I do not believe Old England—or the United Kingdom, which we mean when we speak of England—will ever perish for want of men to give effect to her mature convictions. If one man is not forthcoming, another will be; there is pith enough, and virtue enough, and intelligence enough in the country to conduct its public affairs. Therefore I am not here, notwithstanding the distinguished claims of some among my colleagues, to preach to you the merits of any particular set of men. If you think it can be shown that those who sit opposite to us are better disposed, better

qualified to carry on the policy that is essential for the happiness of the country, by all means let them take our places. But it is for that policy that I speak; and certainly, unless I am required to efface from my mind altogether the recollection of what has passed within the last six years, and to read backwards every record of our parliamentary proceedings, I am astonished at the delightful unanimity with which the principal measures of the party now in office are applauded by the candidates who seek to supplant them.

Now, it is much better to fly at high game than at low; and therefore, instead of burrowing among the declarations of small agricultural or borough members here and there in holes and corners of the country, I will just illustrate what I have said upon a topic or two, by reference to the declarations of the great Coryphæus of the Opposition; to those declarations with which Mr. Disraeli has kindly furnished us, with admirable candour, and in unexceptionable abundance, while addressing his Buckinghamshire constituents. It would appear that he has been terribly misrepresented or misunderstood. Do not let us suppose that in this country the public is well informed about the views and actions of its statesmen. I will give you a proof, in a conspicuous instance, that we know nothing at all about them. For Mr. Disraeli tells us it is a delusion to suppose that, if he had been in office, we should never have had a treaty with France; nay, he says, "a treaty with France was the very thing which it was the supreme object of our desires to accomplish." Now, Mr. Bazley, you are my witness, and others whom I am happy to see upon this platform are also my witnesses, that it would have been a mighty convenience to us all if Mr. Disraeli had been kind enough to communicate to the House of Commons, in the opening of the Session of 1860, those views with respect to the treaty of commerce with France which he has unfortunately reserved in the deep recesses of his mind until the dissolution of 1865. Why, what was the history of that treaty? Let us endeavour to analyse a little the representations which are placed before the country. No doubt Mr. Disraeli said, and others near him said, "We don't object in the abstract to treaties of commerce, but you have managed this thing so abominably ill, you have so entirely neglected to obtain what was required, and to preserve what was necessary for England, that, instead of approving, we condemn the whole affair." Mr. Disraeli says he would have had a treaty of commerce with France. I should have liked to have seen Mr. Disraeli negotiate that treaty face to face with the French negotiators, and to have noted what he would have said and done. I know what Mr. Cobden did. (Prolonged cheering, the audience rising.) Mr. Cobden presented himself to the Emperor of the French, without disguising for one moment the real nature of the transaction in which he was about to engage. Mr. Cobden never took up the ludicrous position of those who say to a foreign

country, "We deliberately withhold from ourselves what we admit to be a benefit to ourselves, unless you choose to confer another distinct and independent benefit upon yourselves." Mr. Cobden thoroughly well understood the nature of the business he had in hand. He stipulated for nothing on behalf of England; he persuaded the French government as far as he could. But what would have been the position of Mr. Disraeli? I do assure you, gentlemen, that when I, by a violent effort of imagination, represent to myself Mr. Disraeli standing in the presence of the French negotiators, my heart is overflowed with a gush and torrent of compassion. What would have been Mr. Disraeli's language? The French would have said to him what they said to us: "We want to give you a guarantee for peace. We want to promote manufactures in France. We are poor in one of the essential constituents of manufacture—we are poor in fuel; our manufacturers are desirous to come nearer to the British Channel, but they must be assured that no false superstitious notions concerning the export-trade will interfere with their supply of British coal. You must engage, at least for the moderate period for which this treaty is to last, not to prohibit or impede the export of coal." "Oh," Mr. Disraeli would have been obliged to say, "coal is a mineral that is exhaustible; and though it is perfectly true we consume seventy millions of it ourselves, and only send two or three millions of it abroad"—(that was the then state of things)—"yet at the same time, though we have never at all found it necessary to economise upon the seventy millions we consume, we are dreadfully afraid lest this two or three millions, or any increase it may receive, should deprive England of the essential commodity of coal; consequently we cannot put into the treaty any article assuring your supply of coal, and that you must be content to drop." Well, I think, for myself, that the French negotiator would have been very apt, under those circumstances, to take up his hat, to put on his gloves, and to say, "Sir, I wish you good morning." But suppose that he was a man of extraordinary patience; suppose he said, "Well, after all, my friend is evidently well disposed; this may be a single or particular crotchet; I will try him a little longer. This point perhaps may be disposed of by some subsequent understanding; we will see how we agree with regard to other matters." The French negotiator might then have said, "At any rate, you won't object to the free and immediate introduction into England of the chief manufacturing product of France; I mean of silk goods?" Ah! what would Mr. Disraeli have had to say upon that? Mr. Disraeli's friends have been profiting by the discontent of the silk trade. His friends have won two seats in Coventry from the Government, and from the Liberal party, in consequence of the discontent of the silk trade. And here let me tell you in passing, that, if there is one title more distinct than another that I think the party and the Govenrment have to the approval of the

country, it is this, that, unfortunately for Coventry, and unfortunately for other places, we have lost seats which it would have been a discredit to us to gain, and the reason we have lost them is, that we refused to sacrifice the interests of the country to the supposed interests of a class. But then it must be recollected that the loss of the first seat at Coventry on the death of Mr. Ellice, and afterwards the loss of the second seat at Coventry on the death of Sir Joseph Paxton, were among the conclusive demonstrations that were naturally enough trumpeted to the world, and made to do duty as proofs of a great reaction in the country on behalf of the Opposition, and of the disinclination of the country at large to maintain the principles which had theretofore been in favour. Therefore Mr. Disraeli, if he had let in the silk goods, would, to use a homely phrase, have cut his own throat; and he would have been obliged to say to the French negotiator. "Free trade is a very excellent thing, but after all it must be applied with a good deal of reserve and a good deal of qualification and circumspection." And perhaps he would have spoken, as he spoke the other day on the Roman Catholic Oaths Bill, when he assumed the character of an intelligent and enlightened Roman Catholic, and, speaking in the character of such a Roman Catholic, stated that he did not think he should desire that Oaths Bill at all; so I have no doubt, with his inexhaustible ingenuity, he would have said, "I put myself in the condition of an enlightened free-trader, and I am quite certain that no enlightened free-trader, whatever his abstract opinions might be, could think of giving immediate and free admission into England to the silk goods of France." But, gentlemen, I do ask and entreat you to conceive in your minds, if you can, what chance Mr. Disraeli, with all his good intentions, would have had of negotiating a treaty of commerce. Why, he would have been obliged, at every step that he went, to reserve this and reserve that, not upon grounds of revenue, but upon grounds which, call them what you may, are grounds of protection sheer and pure: upon reasons which, so far as they show anything at all, show a supposed necessity of maintaining special taxes for the supposed benefit, for it is not the real benefit, of particular classes, but taxes levied upon the people of England. This I might illustrate not only by the article I began with, the article of coal: not only what I went on with, the article of silk: I might have various other chapters: for example, I might have a chapter upon paper. There is the export of rags; you know, all of you, without doubt, the terrible blunder that Mr. Cobden made in not stipulating for the free export of rags from France; that is to say, in not saying to the French Government, "We will refuse to conclude this treaty unless you remove your prohibition, and permit that free export;" because that is the meaning of the accusation, if it has a meaning. Again, besides the rags, there were the ships; heaven only knows how many blunders we did not commit about the ships. They were to go in, or

to come out, with equal duties, or unequal duties—I cannot tell now—thank God it has all passed away from my recollection; I have other things in plenty to remember. But I know this, that, although a French treaty in the abstract was the best thing in the world, the actual French treaty in flesh and blood, or in pen and ink and paper, seal and sealing wax, as it stood before them, was found to be the worst thing in the world; and to throw discredit upon the authors of that treaty, and to work every possible mine and vein of prejudice against them for the purpose of disparaging it, was the great and principal business of the Opposition party, considered as a party, in the somewhat memorable Session of 1860.

But, gentlemen, Mr. Disraeli likewise says, and I confess I was greatly interested in the statement, that, if his Government had continued in office, the paper duty would have been repealed. He proves it in a manner that I do not quite understand. The demonstration rests in part on the confessions of his opponents; but be the mode what it may, he proves it entirely to the satisfaction of his own mind, and to the satisfaction possibly of the farmers of Buckinghamshire; I know not whether to the satisfaction of the papermakers of that county. Well, I must say, if there ever was a commercial question second only to that of the corn-law, which was the source of the deepest anxiety, and which was encountered with the greatest difficulties through the persevering opposition of the party led by Mr. Disraeli, it was the repeal of the paper duty. And nothing can be more unfortunate than that it should have been his lot to testify his approval of the measure, at the time when that approval would have been of real value, only by condemning and resisting it. But now, I ask you, what has been the effect of that measure? I speak now not only of its economical, but of its political and its social effect. Economically it was the abolition of a mischievous, I might almost say a barbarous impost. Economically, when we repealed the paper duty, we were treading in the footsteps of those who had repealed the soap duty, the glass duty, the brick duty, and all other duties of excise upon manufactured articles. But, over and above the relief of industry from burthen and restraint, I ask you what has been the advantage of that repeal? Talk of Conservative measures! Never was there a measure so Conservative as that which called into vivid, energetic, permanent, and successful action the cheap press of this country. To the most numerous classes of the community it was like a new light, a new epoch in life, when they found that the information upon public affairs that had once been either the exclusive property of the higher, or the higher with the middle class, or else had been doled out to them through the rare and questionable medium of Sunday papers, came to them morning after morning, gave them a new

interest in the affairs of their country, and, with a new interest in those affairs, a new attachment to its institutions.

Now, I must not detain you too long, but, as I know that I am here in the very heart and centre of the best political economy of England, I will say one word upon another subject. Perhaps you will be surprised at my mentioning here the subject of the malt-tax; but you will find that in the speeches of many gentlemen connected with the Opposition there is a most cruel complaint in connexion with it, of a mischievous personage called the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as being a persecutor of what is still called the agricultural interest. And I beg leave to say, for myself, I know nothing at all about the agricultural "interest," any more than I know about the manufacturing interest or the commercial interest. There is one interest which it is our duty resolutely to place and steadily to keep in view, and that is the interest of the nation. Still, there are a certain number of gentlemen who seek to obtain favour with special classes by professing to legislate for the interests of class; and among those gentlemen it is the fashion to complain that with a cruel indifference we pass by the distresses of the farmer, who sells his barley now under the influence of free trade for better prices than monopoly ever gave him; who sees the consumption of beer growing year by year till it has almost reached the standard of the golden age; and these clamorous friends would contrive to persuade this farmer—but the farmer is getting far beyond the operation of such means of persuasion—that, if only they had been in power, they would have done something (as it is called) this year with respect to the malt-tax. Now, the first thing that I should presume to say to these gentlemen, and I think the only concession I should like to ask of them, would be this; that they assent to the principle that you cannot eat your cake and still have it. If they grant me this, I think I can promise in return to make mince-meat of the proposition that if they had been in power they would have done something for the farmer. Well, what did we do? We had a surplus, I am thankful to say, of four millions. Speaking in round numbers, out of that surplus two millions were given to the reduction of the tea duty; and few indeed are those, even among the class of candidates to whom I refer, that have ventured to go even before a farming constituency, and to say that that reduction of the tea duty ought to have been withheld. Now it is quite plain that the question lay between reducing the malt-tax and reducing the income-tax. Therefore, there were two millions available, in round numbers. That sum of two millions was sufficient for the favourite measure of Mr. Disraeli, the measure he proposed in 1852—I mean, for reducing the malt-tax by one half; and what I want to know is this—why these enthusiastic friends of the farmer, when we proposed to take the income-tax down from 6*d.* to 4*d.*, did not propose, instead of so lowering the income-tax, to leave the income-tax alone, at the rather

moderate rate of 6*d.*, and to take off half the malt-tax? Why, the thing is transparent—there was not a man among them that did not want to have the income-tax reduced; and, on the other hand, I won't say there was not a man among them—because some I believe there are, but they were very few, elect and secluded spirits—not the leaders of the party, nor yet the rank and file, but one here and there, the true specimen of the pure old agricultural mind—these were the only individuals that cared about the malt-tax. And they cannot say that it was not pointed out to them, because in my place in the House of Commons, when these complaints were made of the Government by the Opposition, that we did not reduce the malt-tax, twice over I took the pains to point out, in the most distinct terms, how they might have reduced the malt-tax if they pleased. They had nothing to do but make that proposal which I have described: namely, to leave the income-tax alone, and to take off the half of the malt-tax. There were several gentlemen on our side of the House, and gentlemen, too, of great weight and authority—I believe your excellent member (Mr. Bazley) was one of them—who thought that if we were to have an income-tax it might as well remain at 6*d.*; and of course he and they would have been compelled to vote with the friends of the farmer, if the friends of the farmer had proposed to leave the income-tax at that amounnt. Of this I had not a doubt: and, accordingly, I ventured twice, in the most distinct terms the English language can supply, to state across the table of the House of Commons, "Here is a distinct section of the Liberal party who are keenly attached to direct taxation, and who, if you will only for a moment pluck up your courage and just propose to take off one-half the malt-tax, instead of 2*d.* off the income-tax, will vote with you; you will be in a majority, we shall be in a minority, the farmers will be relieved, and the golden age will return." Now, Mr. Bazley and gentlemen, when I look at the course of the county elections, as far as they have yet gone, I am strongly impressed with the belief that the farmer himself, who is a very different being now from what he was when he was coaxed and cradled with monopoly —he is now a man—resting, as you in Lancashire rest, upon his own energies, his own intelligence;—I think that he is coming to have a very shrewd comprehension of these matters, and that something like the sceptical feeling which has taken possession of the 19th century in certain quarters, is gradually acquiring rather a strong hold over the British farmer,—with regard to the sincerity—I mean the political sincerity—of his friends about the repeal or reduction of the malt-tax.

Gentlemen, the true friends of the reduction of the malt-tax are the friends of public economy. It is only by a sedulous, jealous, faithful application, upon every opportunity as it presents itself, and I would that they were more frequent and effectual, of the principles of thrift to the administration of public money, that either the malt-

tax or other taxes can be reduced. True it is that the country is prosperous, that the revenue increases, but along with the increase of the revenue there increases something else, and that is the disposition to feed upon and to consume it. And I cannot, standing as I do before you now, refuse myself the use of this opportunity to repeat what I have often felt it my duty to urge upon the late House of Commons, that we are passing into the dangerous state of things in which the House of Commons, instead of being the jealous, vigilant, effectual controller of those proposals for expenditure, which it is the duty of the executive government to make, tends itself to become the promoter and the stimulator of public expenditure, forcing it upon the executive government in every form of question, of motion, of suggestion, and making it impossible for any government, and for any minister of finance, to stand that continual pressure, which, like the dropping of water, is at work by day and by night, and which has its causes lying deep in human nature, and ever actively tending to make invasions upon the public purse. But if I deeply lament this state of things, which I look upon --I am Conservative enough for that—as fraught not only with great practical mischief, but with great constitutional danger to the purity of the life of the House of Commons—I am bound in justice, sir, to you—in justice to others whom I see around you—in justice to those who are called the Liberal party, to say that it is hardly, as far as my memory enables me to form a computation, in one case in ten, that the pressure has proceeded from that quarter. Nor has it come, I am bound also in justice to say, from all gentlemen who sit opposite. One in particular there was to whom I willingly render a tribute—he has but lately passed away from us—I mean Sir Henry Willoughby, as true an economist and as faithful a guardian of the public purse, as pure an adminis trator of the great trust of Parliament with respect to public money, as ever sat upon the benches of the House of Commons. But, unfortunately, the great majority of those who have made it almost impossible to apply vigorously the principles of thrift and good husbandry to the expenditure of this country, are gentlemen who have sat upon the side of the House opposite to you, and to those by whom you are now surrounded. Most earnestly do I hope that in the new Parliament we shall witness a different state of things, and that the representatives of the people will, especially among the Opposition, resume their legitimate office of limiting and confining, not of promoting and enlarging, public expenditure.

But, Sir, however this may be, we have to consider of our future course: and I avow my opinion, that we cannot do better, if we want to arrive at a clear understanding of the terms upon which we propose to contract together, than recollect those old words announced five-and-thirty years ago, the words "Peace, Retrenchment, Reform."

And, if I add a fourth principle, and I think it ought to be added, it is the promotion of that civil and religious liberty which is perfectly consistent, at least in my heart I hope it is consistent, with a deep attachment to the Church of this nation; perfectly consistent, even with a fair and equitable regard to all her temporal institutions as an establishment. These are to be clearly distinguished from what belongs to her religious character as a church; yet they have a root, and a deep root, in the habits and in the attachment of the country, and they are not to be lightly tampered with. But I am for the policy which steadily refuses to seek either to extend that Church, or to defend it, by means of imposing disability, or of maintaining odious distinction against our Roman Catholic or Dissenting fellow-subjects. Now, here sits my hon. friend Mr. Hadfield, lately re-elected, after his faithful and active services, by the electors of Sheffield. Mr. Hadfield and I do not always find ourselves in the same lobby upon religious questions. I think Mr. Hadfield is a stout anti-State-churchman; and he is moreover a man who has the habit of saying what he thinks; in consequence we become well acquainted with his opinions—a great deal better acquainted with his opinions than we can contrive to be with those of many leading persons who are now addressing the constituencies. But I now look upon Mr. Hadfield with reference to those matters in which he endeavours to relieve his fellow-religionists from stigma or from inequality, and to place them upon a political and social level with the members of the Established Church; and I do not hesitate to say,—often, too, has he heard me say it while I represented the University of Oxford,—I believe no greater error can be committed by those who call and think themselves friends of the Church, but who are in reality least of all its friends, than to endeavour to maintain its preponderance, not by the free adhesion, not by the cordial love and admiration, of the people to whom it ministers, but by miserable legal contrivances that are available for no purpose whatever except that of placing some offensive badge on certain members of the community, and of taking security, as far as human folly can take it, that those members of the community shall be, from age to age, bitter enemies of that Church, which, I am thankful to say, notwithstanding all the devices of this short-sighted policy, is still the Church of the nation. Well, my hon. friend Mr. Hadfield has sent up a measure to the House of Lords—how many times, six? [Mr. Hadfield: "Six."] My memory is good, you see, in that case. He has laboriously brought into the world one of the most modest, inoffensive little infants you can conceive,—and he has done it six times over; nay, six times over he has overcome the difficulties of the nursing period. He has carried it through all its stages in the House of Commons, and when he thought it had arrived at an age when it ought to be sent to school—that is to

say, an age when he could with propriety present it at the door of the House of Lords—the unfortunate and unoffending infant has been ignominiously kicked back into his arms; and he has been told that the declaration he wants to remove is a thing of no value at all in itself, but a thing necessary and essential to maintain upon the statute-book as a testimony to the superiority, or the ascendency, of the Established Church. I most seriously deprecate this line of argument and of language. I hope my hon. friend will not be discouraged. I trust that a seventh time, if necessary, or an eighth time, he will go through the same pains and cares of paternity, and I feel confident that, at last, he will succeed in rearing the infant to full age and stature, and in bringing him out entire and vigorous into the world. And then, gentlemen, it is easy to tell you what will happen. That will happen which has happened with respect to the repeal of the corn-law, the repeal of the navigation law, the treaty of commerce with France, the abolition of the paper duty, and a hundred other measures; the same men who have obstructed my honourable friend, the same men who, in the days when they could resist him, have resisted him to the uttermost, will, when he has gained his object, claim credit for the very work that he has done, and will end by kidnapping the child which they at first attempted to smother.

Sir, I will not detain you long upon the subject of the parliamentary franchise; but that is a question upon which, if your patience be not yet wholly exhausted, I will offer a few words. I entirely agree with those who are of opinion that the question of the franchise cannot possibly be settled by any mere naked allegation of abstract rights. Yet I do not agree with those who say that there are no such things as abstract rights. I believe that they exist, and that they are deeply rooted in the relations of man, but I believe also that they are subject to modification from time and circumstance. Indeterminate in themselves, they take form from deliberation and public authority. The health and welfare of the community is the supreme law of legislation. But those who legislate cannot legislate justly and prudently, unless they endeavour to satisfy, as well as they can, rights morally inherent in the members of the community and anterior to all legislation.

Now I want to know how we stand with regard to this matter. In the first place, it is one to which more administrations than I can easily remember, more Queen's Speeches than I could readily count, have been solemnly and deeply pledged. Promises have been recorded in the face of the English people, which promises either ought not to have been made, or else ought to have been redeemed; and if such promises remain over long in suspense, if, after being profusely tendered in times when it was politically convenient, they are cast aside when it appears to be safe to make short work with them, the inevitable consequence is, I will not indeed say discontent and disaffection in the mass of the community, but

certainly loss of credit, loss of dignity, loss of confidence, in the powers and institutions of the country as regards their relation to the mind of the nation at large. In 1832 was passed a Reform Bill. Since that time what has happened? The fitness of the labouring class for the franchise has increased; the proportion which the labouring class enfranchised bear to the rest of the constituency I greatly fear has diminished; and there is a third element in the case, which is this—a very large part of that limited portion of the labouring class that now have access to the franchise obtain it in the character of freemen. In my opinion it is impossible to give it them in a worse manner, because the distinction drawn between freemen and non-freemen is an arbitrary distinction; it depends upon some mere accident of birth, or other local circumstance, which has no relation to superior character, to superior skill, to superior property, or to superior morality. None of the tests that could form, if they were available, a legitimate basis for drawing the line between the enfranchised and the unenfranchised, apply in the smallest degree to the line between freemen and non-freemen. Gentlemen, I have ever been, and I still am, opposed to every sudden and to every violent change. Never have I spoken a word which, fairly interpreted, gave the smallest countenance to the schemes, if such schemes there be, of any who would favour or promote the adoption of precipitate and wholesale measures, that might endanger by their very suddenness the true and just balance of the powers of the constitution. But this I say, that the true and just balance of those powers would be, not destroyed, but improved, by a fair, and liberal, and sensible, though not a sweeping nor an overwhelming, admission of our brethren of the labouring community to the privilege of the suffrage. And I must say I could heartily wish that it might still be possible to keep this question out of the vortex of party politics. There was a time when the question of parliamentary reform—it was in the days of Mr. Pitt—hardly could be called a party question. When it comes to be a party question it also comes to be associated with, and encumbered by, a thousand difficulties, which render formidable, or even dangerous, that which might have been easy in comparison, and simple. I know not whether it is destined to become a party question or not; I can only say that so far as I am concerned I have ever desired, and I shall ever desire, to have it treated calmly, impartially, upon social grounds, upon a rational view of the characters of our fellow-countrymen, upon a calm estimate of the experience we have had of them; an estimate which shall not omit to take into view, as it deserves, their conduct during the difficulties of the last few years. I should earnestly desire to see an extension of the franchise, not wrung, not extorted, as it was in 1832, at the cost almost, certainly at the hazard, of something like revolution, but given freely, generously, spontaneously; given in that way which excites confidence and gratitude, instead of engendering, by

the animosities and the soreness of a protracted struggle, something, perhaps even much, of resentment, or even of disaffection. But, gentlemen, this question, like all others, is at the present moment not in our hands; it is in yours. In my opinion we ought to draw a lesson from the manner in which it has been taken up and abandoned by various governments. Any government that should again take it up in deference to the supposed feeling of the moment, or to the wishes of their supporters, but without a well-considered prospect of carrying it through to its conclusion, would, I am persuaded, not perform, but abandon their duty to the country; and, above all, their duty to the labouring class. Let us have no more of this promising without redeeming. If there has been slackness in the parliament, it is a slackness which I for one have been glad by every fair effort of argument and persuasion to try to remove; but, on this you may depend, it has only been the mirror and the representation of a corresponding sentiment, and of a flagging interest in the country. If you, the constituencies, desire that this question shall be taken up and carried through to a satisfactory conclusion, with you the matter rests. The House of Commons never has yet refused, and I am sure it never will refuse, to give effect to the well-considered wishes and convictions of the people of this country. And now, gentlemen, I will detain you no longer; my time I fear is, and your patience must be, entirely exhausted. I will only say this in conclusion. It is my desire to state broadly to you the question that I ask you. I have spoken of some of the points of public interest which have come before the parliament that has just been dissolved, and which now occupy the public mind. The country in general, if we may judge by the events of the last few days, seems disposed to give a verdict upon the past which shall be perfectly intelligible. I have been one of those who for many years past have laboured to promote that system of beneficial legislation which I believe has your cordial, nay, your almost unanimous, approval. I ask you, then, to consider whether you, by the voice you are to give on Thursday, will utter a note discordant from what I may now fairly say appears to be the prevailing sense of the constituencies; or whether South Lancashire, which, better than any other portion of the country, has followed, understood, and promoted the cause of right and justice from the beginning of the controversy until now, will send forth a sympathising echo to the sound that the nation has given forth, and register her judgment on the men and measures of the time in faithful correspondence with the judgments of the people of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland.

SPEECH AT LIVERPOOL ON JULY 18th

Mr. Gladstone said:—Mr. Rathbone; At eight o'clock to-night, the very hour when I have the honour of appearing before this crowded assembly, the poll has been appointed to cease for the University of Oxford. The very last thing that I could think of would be to connect that circumstance at Oxford with one single word either of disrepect or indifference as regards that ancient, great, and venerable University. Gentlemen, during eighteen anxious years I have been a representative of Oxford in Parliament. It has been my duty in her name to deal, as well as my feeble powers would permit me, with all the questions, bearing upon the relationship of religion and of education to the State, which this critical period has brought to the surface. Gentlemen, I have endeavoured to serve that University with my whole heart; and with the strength or weakness of whatever faculties God has given me, it has been my daily and my nightly care to promote as well as I could her interests, and to testify to her as well as I could my love. Long has she borne with me. Long, in spite of active opposition, did she resist every effort to displace me. At last she has changed her mind. God grant it may be well with her, but the recollections of her confidence, which I have so long enjoyed, and of the many hours and many years that I have spent in her service, are recollections that I can never lose. And if now, gentlemen, I appear before you in a different position, I do not appear as a different man. I have not forgotten the course of my former existence. In this free and happy country I know of no opposition between its various classes and various interests; and there is no reason why the man who has been, to the best of his poor ability, the faithful representative of the University, should not also to the best of his poor ability, if the constituency should be disposed to grant the trust, be the faithful representative of the electors of South Lancashire. In representing that University my task has been one of no small difficulty. The desire of my heart has been to minister to her strength and to her prosperity; and in devotion to her truest interests I will not yield to my favoured competitor. As to the mode of promoting these interests, as to the best method of testifying to that attachment, there may be, and I fear, from what has occurred, there are, great differences between us. My earnest desire, my heart's prayer, is that her future may be as glorious as her past, and yet more glorious still. But if it is to be so, that result must be brought about by resolutely following a certain method of action; by enlarging her borders; by opening her doors; by invigorating her.

powers; by increasing her return of work done; by endeavouring, wherever an opening shall be made for her, to rise to the height of that vocation with which I believe it has pleased the Almighty to endow her; that as in other times the Universities of the land, and Oxford as the first of them, led the mind and thought of the country along the path of improvement, so now they, and she in her especial place, may still prove worthy of that high office. But if I am told on the other side that it is only by embracing the narrow interests of a political party that Oxford can discharge her duties to the country, then, gentlemen, I at once say I am not the man for Oxford.

I hope, Sir, it will not savour of vanity if I detain you yet a moment longer upon this subject. We see represented in that ancient institution, represented more nobly, perhaps, and more conspicuously, than in any other place, at any rate with a more remarkable concentration, the most prominent features that relate to the past of England. I come into South Lancashire, and I find here around me an assemblage of different phenomena. I find the development of industry; I find the growth of enterprise; I find the progress of social philanthropy; I find the prevalence of toleration; and I find an ardent desire for freedom. But, Sir, if there be a duty that more than another should be held incumbent upon the public men of England, it is, so far at least as I am able to conceive, the duty of establishing and maintaining a harmony between the past of our glorious country, and the future that is still in store for her. In my humble and insignificant person, on the one hand representing that ancient body, on the other hand placed now for many years in the administration of the most responsible offices connected with the material progress and well-being of the country, I have honestly, I have earnestly, although I may have feebly, striven to unite that which is represented by Oxford and that which is represented by Lancashire. My desire is that they should know and love one another. If I have clung to the representation of the University with desperate fondness, it was because I would not desert that post in which I seemed to have been placed. I have not relinquished it. I have been dismissed from it, not by academical, but by political agencies. The great majority of the teaching body of Oxford, the great majority of those who devote their nights and days and the best years of their lives in rearing youths, have been at all times my supporters in the election, and have not now abandoned me. I do not complain of those political influences by which I have been displaced. The free constitutional spirit of the country requires that the voice of the majority should prevail. I hope the voice of the majority will prevail in South Lancashire. I do not for a moment complain that it should have prevailed in Oxford.

But, gentlemen, I come now to ask you a question; the question whether, because I have been declared unfit longer to serve the Uni-

versity on account of my political connection with the Liberal party, there is anything in that position, there is anything in what I have said and done, in the arduous office which I hold, which is to unfit me for the representation of my native county. It is sometimes said, and even upon high authority, but I really know not whether it is said in jest or in earnest, that the present Parliament has been distinguished by a series of attacks upon the Constitution, in Church and State. It may be so. It may be that these attacks have been made; but if they have, they have not much fallen under my notice or knowledge. I do not mean to say that I concur with every opinion that is pronounced in respect to the Church in the House of Commons, and he would be a very ingenious man who could concur with all of them; but I do say, gentlemen, that we, as a Government, and that I, as the representative of the University, have not been unmindful of our and my duty to study the interests of the Church. I admit that this is the special duty of those who are chosen to that high trust, and I want to know in what respect the interests of the Church have suffered during the administration of the Government, and during the progress of legislation, through the last six years. There never was a time at which the Church enjoyed freedom of speech in the degree in which she now possesses it. Her bishops and her clergy are permitted to meet, to discuss the questions in which they feel an interest, and to give utterance to their views, according to the old forms of the constitution. It is quite true that they do not exercise coercive powers, and I am sure that they are too wise to wish it; but, at any rate, that freedom of speech, permit me to say, is of itself a valuable privilege and an effective power, to a body, which must necessarily depend upon its moral influence; for it cannot be defended, much less can it gain possession of a continually extending sphere, by mere professions, by written law, or by prescriptions from a former time. If the Church of England is to live among us, she must flourish, and she must grow, and God grant that she may do both, by making herself beneficently known in the discharge of her Apostolic offices, by the faithful custody of the word which she has received, by causing her ministration to be felt as the friend and consoler of all in every rank of life; so that there shall not be a man to whom her assistance can be available, who shall not find her in a moment at his side. These are the functions in which I have cordially desired to promote her usefulness, these are the functions in which I believe she is growing stronger from day to day; and on my part, as the representative of Oxford, on the part of those who have been honoured with the confidence of Parliament, we say we have in no respect betrayed our duty with regard to the Church of England.

But, Sir, there is another view conscientiously entertained. I have no doubt there is another view as to the proper mode of promoting the

interests of the Church of England, from which we essentially differ. If it is thought that the Church of England's interests are to be promoted by maintaining some odious stigma, I care not whether it be upon Protestant Nonconformists, or upon our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, I disclaim and repudiate all such modes, recommend them who may, of defending the Church. And I say that the misguided persons who, in their folly, would use such weapons for the purpose which they have in view are merely contributing to defeat their own dearest wishes, and are not to be reckoned, as far as their acts are concerned, among her friends, but among her foes. Therefore, Sir, I hold, that the promotion of the civil and religious freedom of our fellow-countrymen, so far from being a sign of disloyalty, is a very sure proof of that affectionate and intelligent service, which a body like the Church of England ought to desire at the hands of her children.

Well, gentlemen, I will not go into details. I will not trouble you by arguing questions which have lately been under the consideration of the Legislature,—questions about the qualification of Dissenters; questions about the oaths required from Roman Catholics. These are measures, with respect to which, in my opinion, a generous and conciliatory policy is the only policy of wisdom; and, whether I sit for Oxford, or whether I sit for South Lancashire, or whether I don't sit at all, I desire and I intend to act upon that policy so long as my life shall last.

But now, Sir, I turn to secular matters; and I will make some observations upon one or two of the questions that have been brought copiously before the attention of the public during the course of the present elections. Let me add, Sir, that I will endeavour to do this in a manner as respectful and considerate as I can towards the feelings, not only of those who hear me, but towards the feelings of those out of doors who differ from me. The issue, gentlemen, which is before you I take to be this. I am a member of a Liberal Government. I am in association with the Liberal party. I have never swerved from what I conceive to be those truly Conservative objects and desires with which I entered life. I am, if possible, more fondly attached to the institutions of my country than I was when, as a boy, I wandered among the sand-hills of Seaforth or frequented the streets of Liverpool. But experience has brought with it its lessons. I have learnt that there is wisdom in a policy of trust, and folly in a policy of mistrust. I have not refused to acknowledge and accept the signs of the times. I have observed—and who could fail to observe?—the effect that has been produced upon the country by what is generally known as Liberal legislation. And if we are told, as we are now truly told, that all the feelings of the country are in the best and broadest sense Conservative, —that is to say, that the people value the country and the laws and

institutions of the country; if we are told this, I say honesty compels us to admit that this happy result has been brought about by Liberal legislation. Therefore, I may presume to say that, since the year 1841, when Sir R. Peel, then placed at the head of Her Majesty's Government, thought fit to place me in a position in the Board of Trade which brought me into direct, immediate, and responsible contact with the commercial interests of the country, from that time onward I have not swerved nor wavered, but have striven to the best of my ability to advance in the work of improving the laws, and to labour earnestly and fearlessly for the advantage of the people. Like all who had opportunities of observation, I have been delighted to witness the progress made in their condition, and therewith their growing attachment to the laws under which they live. Every year has brought with it its reward. We have seen the result of what has been done, not only in the growing wealth, but in growing contentment, in growing industry, I would even trust we may presume to add, in the growing morality of the people. And blind, indeed, must that man be, who, after having been once privileged to take part in processes such as these, withdraws his hand from the plough, turns back his eye from the noble prospect that is before him, and reverts to methods of thought and action, for which, before our late experience, there might have been some apology, but which have been proved to be so detrimental to the real advantage of the country and to the permanent maintenance of its institutions. I venture to put it to this meeting that, although we may have been—I mean the members of the present Government may have been—the members of a party, yet that in associating ourselves with this work of beneficial legislation, and in endeavouring to the best of our power to carry it forward, we have not been labouring for the mere interests of that party, but for the interests of the country at large. Nay, I may, perhaps, without impropriety be permitted to say now, when the elections have been for eight days in progress, that the country in its various districts and divisions has recognised that truth, and has been pleased to seal our conduct with the verdict of its general approbation.

I wish, however, to set before you more particularly one or two of the points upon which we are disposed to make a claim to your confidence. One among them is that we have been enabled to effect at least some degree of retrenchment in the expenditure of the country. Now, on the other side I have observed this answer made, that we have not reduced the expenditure of the country below the point at which it stood in the year when the party now in Opposition were at the helm. The plea from that quarter is this: that the expenditure of the country in that year—namely, 1858-1859—was under sixty-five millions, and that it is now over sixty-six millions; and therefore that we have not only not really reduced, but have increased, the

expenditure of the country; and if we have made a diminution of taxes, it has been made, as some ingenious gentleman has stated, by taking off taxes which we had first put on. Now, gentlemen, let us see how that matter really stands; and before I enter into it I will say that I am not satisfied, as far as I am individually concerned, that the expenditure of the country has yet been reduced to the lowest point which may be found, under the improved and I trust improving circumstances of the day, consistent with its honour and security. But to this declaration I must add a further one. I will say this, and say it without the smallest doubt, that, if the electoral body of this country desires that further reduction shall be effected in that expenditure, they have only to send to Parliament men who sympathise with that view, and the result which they wish for will be infallibly attained. At this moment, however, we are upon a point of fact; and the allegation made is this, that a sum of no more than sixty-five millions represents the public expenditure during the year for which the Government that preceded us was responsible. Now, how does the matter really stand? Pay a little attention to the facts and the dates. In the month of April, 1859, on the 1st of the month, a new financial year began. We were not then in office. Another Government was in office. That Government, when challenged upon its general conduct two months later, founded a vindication, and even called for a vote of confidence and thanks from the House of Commons, upon the ground that, discovering the inefficient condition of our military and naval establishments, they had set on foot what was rather pompously called the reconstruction of the navy. This was in the month of April or May, 1859. Now, it was not until June, 1859, that we came into office. It was not until July that the administration, then just formed, were able to examine the condition of the finances, and to propose measures for meeting the demands of the public service for the year. We had then before us the boast of our predecessors that they had set on foot the reconstruction of the navy; and now I make the assertion, to which I challenge contradiction, that when we came into office in 1859 we found the expenditure going on and the Estimates and plans of the year fixed, and three months of the year already gone by, not at the rate of sixty-five millions, but at the rate, in round numbers, of sixty-nine millions a year. Now, I confess I am surprised to see that some of the very same gentlemen who glorified themselves and took credit in the face of the country for the immense energy they had displayed in setting on foot the building of a number of perfectly worthless wooden line-of-battle ships—can actually think that we have forgotten all these boasts,—that we are disposed to travel back with them to the expenditure of a former year, from which they themselves considered and declared it their highest honour to have departed. It was at sixty-nine millions a year, then, and not at sixty-five millions, that we found the

expenditure proceeding when we came into office. In truth, gentlemen, the legacy which was bequeathed to me as Chancellor of the Exchequer—and most earnestly do I hope that no one of all this vast assemblage ever may have such a legacy left to him by the kindness of his friends—the legacy bequeathed to me in the month of July, 1859, when between three and four months of the year were already passed, and a corresponding portion of money already spent, was how to find the means of meeting a positive deficiency of between four and five millions of money. Well, but even this was not all, gentlemen: because we are told, and told but too truly, that the expenditure did not stop at sixty-nine millions, high as was that amount, but that in the year 1860 it went up to seventy-two millions of money. It was indeed nearer, I think, to seventy-three millions. But how came that about? Why, gentlemen, it was due to the very same reason; we owed it to the kindness of our predecessors. In the exercise of their diplomatic wisdom—they had to instruct an ambassador to sign a treaty with China; and it appeared to them that the signing of a treaty in that part of the world was an operation which could not possibly be performed in a satisfactory manner without the presence of a large fleet, to give assurance, as they thought, of our abandonment of all warlike intentions. The people of China, in some way or other, did not understand the necessity of a large fleet for the signing of a treaty, and thought that this large fleet might possibly have some other object in view. However that may be, as you know, a great disaster occurred in the month of June, 1859, at the mouth of the Peiho, under the instructions of Lord Malmesbury, almost, I think, before the present Government had assumed their offices; at any rate, before it had been able to consider or direct any measure in reference to China. The consequence of that disaster at the mouth of the Peiho was, that we had to find six millions of money in order to restore our position with China. And observe, I am not dealing with this subject as matter of praise or blame, but simply as matter of fact. And, viewing it in that light exclusively, I aver that the undivided credit of the expenditure of from seventy-two to seventy-three millions, which we reached in 1860, is not with your humble servant, but lies with those who preceded us in our offices. Well, gentlemen, since that time we have effected something, at all events, in the way of retrenchment. The expenditure, which was in 1860 nearly seventy-three millions, is now reduced to, I think, between sixty-six and sixty-seven millions. I do not say whether that is satisfactory; I do not say whether it is all that could be done; but I think I may say this, that it was something. And now the question is—How has this been done? And here, again, I have read with considerable astonishment statements that this reduction of expenditure which has taken place has been forced upon Her

Majesty's Government by motions made from the opposite side of the House. Now, gentlemen, upon the opposite side of the House there sit many excellent, many sensible, many enlightened men. In this happy country all parties, fortunately but also naturally, entertain in common much of sound principle and of sound opinion; yet still we have preferences among ourselves, and specially so when we speak, not of the characters of individuals, but of the combined and corporate action of parties. Now, gentlemen, I venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that the influence exercised from the opposite side of the House has in the main, in the vast majority of cases, not been an influence to reduce, but an influence to increase the expenditure. I know what I say: I am confident it can be proved on careful examination of the records of Parliament. A list of the motions which have been made, of the questions which have been put, of the divisions which have taken place, would show how, beyond all doubt, the powerful influence which has been exercised from the opposite side of the House in promoting the giving of public money to Mr. A, or Mr. B, or Mr. C, or to Class A, or Class B, or Class C, or, I might almost say, to whoever wanted it—to every class and every clique, in fact—has been an influence not favourable, but constantly, though noiselessly, most adverse to retrenchment. I will give you, gentlemen, a single instance—I quote the name of the person because I quote it with respect. He is an old member of Parliament, and a man of considerable ability—a man respected by all, one of the most respected members of the opposite party, whom anybody might be well pleased to call his friend—Sir John Walsh, member for Radnorshire, who has been in Parliament for thirty or forty years, and who should know what he is about. But, gentlemen, I tell you this. In 1864 or 1863, I forget which it was, Sir John Walsh thought the moderate reduction made by the Government in the Navy Estimates so alarming, that he deemed it his duty to make a special speech on the subject; and I assure you—for my own ears heard it—that he did not only state that the Navy Estimates, such as they are now, were totally unequal to the wants and necessities of the country, but that the proper way to bring them up to those wants and necessities would be to double them. The instance which I here quote to you was one of the most conspicuous; I am by no means sure that it was one of those attended with the greatest real danger or power of mischief.

Gentlemen, it is quite true that upon one occasion—I think in the year 1862—the House of Commons took a step in favour of retrenchment. By whom was that step taken? A motion was proposed recommending that attempts should be made to reduce the public expenditure. That motion was made by Mr. Stansfeld. I never saw the face of Mr. Stansfeld on the benches opposite. Those who sit on the benches opposite do not seem

to me to have exhibited any great love for Mr. Stansfeld, or to have appreciated the services he rendered to the cause of retrenchment, if we may judge from the steps which they afterwards took with so much zeal and vigour to procure the removal of that excellent man from office. Gentlemen, what I do claim is this,—that to the efforts of the Government and the efforts of their friends, and also occasionally, I admit, and gladly admit, to the exceptional efforts of enlightened men on the Opposition side of the House, is due the retrenchment that has been effected. And further. I have read in the report of the speech of Mr. Disraeli—and I speak of him with all the respect due to his position and talents—I read in the report of his speech to his late and present constituents a statement that retrenchment has been forced upon Government by motions made from his side of the House. I cannot explain that extraordinary statement, which he will have the opportunity, perhaps, hereafter of explaining, if he thinks fit, on the floor of the House of Commons. I really think that the reporter of that speech must for once have been asleep, or some of the heavy drafts, in which Buckinghamshire is sometimes, though unjustly, accused of indulging, must for a moment have bewildered his brain. I think it absolutely certain that he must in some way or other have turned inside out and upside down in the report of the speech the assertion that had been made by Mr. Disraeli; for it was totally impossible that the statement I have referred to could have proceeded from the lips of a gentleman possessing such means of information as belonged to the leader of the Opposition. But then, gentlemen, I go from retrenchment to other matters. And it is very fairly said that good harvests are not the work of Her Majesty's Government. That, gentlemen, is perfectly true, but I recollect a time when instead of good harvests we had bad harvests; when, in consequence of the miserable harvest of the year 1860, there was a deficiency of two millions in the proceeds of the public revenue as compared with the estimate. Did I at that epoch hear anything of the sound doctrine that the harvests are not the work of the Government? At that time, I do assure you, the Government, and especially the unfortunate Chancellor of the Exchequer, were held responsible in full for the character of the harvest. There was not, you would have supposed, a waterspout opened in the heavens which he had not discharged upon the fields beneath; it was he and he only that had opened the windows of the skies. And what a progress, gentlemen, does it show in physical knowledge and training, I might even say in civilization, that a body of most excellent and respectable persons, who in 1860, when there was a bad harvest, were really so much bedarkened as to suppose that harvest was the work of the Government—for they said that the deficiency was its work, and that was the same thing—now, such is the progress they have made, when in 1864-5 there happened to be good harvests, they

have awakened to the perception of the important truth that the harvest is not made good or bad by this or that Administration, but comes as it pleases Providence to send it. Well, but, gentlemen, somehow or other, there is a word, I think a very questionable word, called luck, which has an immense effect upon the minds of men; and they say that the Government is the luckiest of all Governments, and that the Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer are the luckiest of all Governments and of all Chancellors of the Exchequer. It seems that all the circumstances of the country since we took office have been so excessively favourable to economy, to saving, to moderate expenditure, to large revenue, that to that source alone is to be ascribed the happy state of things which exists. But now let us come down from cloud-land, and for a while consider what our state has really been. I have told you our friends who preceded us left us a legacy of six millions of expenditure in the war with China. That I don't call a remarkably good piece of luck. Well, then, the country, gentlemen, went into a state of great and real apprehension, whether well founded or not, in the year 1860, with regard to its defences, and it determined to have a large expenditure upon fortifications for the security of our arsenals. Well, under the measures taken for that purpose we have spent several millions of money. However right or otherwise such expenditure may be in itself I am not now considering. It was the plain undeniable desire and wish of the people of the country that these costly fortifications should be erected, and sure I am that, when the people of England wish to expend their money, why, they will spend it; but you will admit with me it was not to be considered a great piece of luck for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But that is not all. It was in the year 1859 that the Admiralty set about that remarkable work, the "Reconstruction of the Navy," which was a very favourite phrase at the time, though you do not hear quite so much of it now. Well, it is rather an expensive description of amusement for the First Lord of the Admiralty, this reconstruction of the navy; together with the building of useless line-of-battle-ships, there was undertaken what was really an attempt at something amounting to reconstruction; an attempt rendered wise and necessary by the remarkable transition from the use of wood to that of iron in the building of vessels. This remarkable, and, on the whole, I trust, very beneficent transition has for the moment entailed great cost in the provision for the defences of the country. That is not "luck" for the finances of the country. Well, gentlemen, again, four years ago, by an awful visitation of Providence, which rent for a time in twain the great Republic so nearly and deeply associated with us, beyond the waves of the Atlantic, there came upon Lancashire that which is familiarly known by the name of the Cotton Famine. When we look back upon the Cotton Famine, and when we consider the noble qualities that

were displayed in the times of that most searching affliction—when we recollect how we were then, for the first time perhaps, awakened to the consciousness what a treasure we possessed in the factory population of this country, we recognise the wisdom of Providence in drawing good from that which seemed at the time to be unmitigated evil. But that is not my present point. I want to know how that Cotton Famine was to be considered as a piece of financial "luck." I find, on the contrary, it cut down our revenue, when it was at its greatest intensity, by from one to two millions in a single year; and, beyond that, it was one of the most special inflictions, from its peculiar nature, to which the Exchequer of this country ever has been subjected. Further than this, I thankfully join with you in acknowledging the bounty of Providence vouchsafed to us in the abundant products of the earth. I cannot admit the doctrine that our situation is owing to luck; I acknowledge that in all good which befalls us, we should recognise a hand higher, and a counsel wiser, than our own: yet, speaking as a man to men, I do believe that we, as a Government, are enabled upon the period of the present dissolution to show our face before our fellow-countrymen, and that without a blush for the financial condition of the country.

Now, Sir, as to the points on which I have last been addressing you, I admit them to be points that more or less touch our distinctive professions as we sit on the right hand or the left hand of the Speaker's chair. I am not ashamed to touch them; I do not lament, I do not regret, I do not mean to abandon the political association in which conviction and experience have placed me. But I do say to you, and I say through you to the people of South Lancashire, that to the Liberal party of the present generation, and with them to those members of the Conservative party, like Sir R. Peel, who preferred the interests of their country to their place and power, has been committed the extraordinary grace and favour of being enabled, while they have held office, to address themselves, and to address themselves with effect, to the promotion of measures which ascend far above the height and descend far below the depth of every party consideration, whatever it may be. There are objects, gentlemen, which belong to our common country—to this England in which we live. We have around us a vast population. These teeming masses live under the ordinary dispensation which affects the lot of human kind; and experience teaches us that it has not been always possible for the bulk of the community that live by toil upon this bounteous earth to secure to themselves abundance of the first necessaries, much less of the first comforts of life. We know that in this free country, that we admire and love so much, but half a century ago great part of the peasantry were ground down almost to the very dust; while the manufacturing population was tainted with a dis-

affection that it is unfortunately too easy for us to understand, and too difficult for us to condemn. We know that at that time few were the labouring Englishmen who could see their wives and their children decently lodged, sufficiently fed and clothed, and of fewer still, and fewer far, can I say in addition, tolerably educated. What is now the state of things? Much may yet remain to be done. My belief is, that there will always be ample scope for all the best energies and all the best gifts of legislators and public men, as well as of private benevolence and philanthropy; but something at least, by the mercy of God, has been achieved. Education has gone forth through the length and the breadth of the land. Voluntary institutions for every purpose of good, and because voluntary, the best of all, have sprung up in multitudes. Wise laws, abolishing the mischievous restraints upon capital and labour, have enormously added to the wealth of the country. In so short a period as the last ten years the foreign trade of England has become nearly double what it was. It is more than triple what it was five-and-twenty years ago. With the series of acts relating to the material condition of the country have been joined, as I have said, numbers of others bearing upon its moral and social condition, and tending to set the masses of the community free in some degree from necessary and servile attention to their bodily wants; to wants charging and overcharging each day as it arose; that they might care for their higher interests, for the cultivation of their intellect, for their position as rational, as moral, and as spiritual beings. But, gentlemen, this is no party matter. The contemplation of it, if only for a moment, carries us above the close and loaded atmosphere of party into a higher and a purer air. Oh, what folly it has been, if there has existed any party in the State that has allowed to its rivals and opponents the glory of almost monopolizing the prosecution of such a work! But how happy, on the other hand, are they who have been permitted to bear even the very humblest part in it! Never can I be too thankful that, not owing to any deliberate choice of my own, but rather to the circumstances in which, without my own suggestion, I have been placed, I have been as it were compelled to enter into that beneficent work, and to make the prosecution of it the main study and purpose of the best years of my life. It has been a work, of which the vibration, so to speak, is felt throughout the United Kingdom, and felt not only in the United Kingdom, but felt, I rejoice to say, upon many a foreign shore; and those who formerly regarded England with jealousy or with hatred for the selfishness of her commercial legislation, are now by degrees unlearning their ancient prejudices, and are glad to follow the beneficent example that has been set them by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It has been felt, then, through the world, it has

been felt through the dominions of the Queen, it has been felt through those islands in which we live, it has been felt, if in any one place more than another, in the very district, and in the very place, in which we stand. In Liverpool, in Manchester, on every heath and hill, and in every valley, in every haunt and hive of this industrious and stirring county, has been felt the impetus thus given to the industry of man, and the influence thus brought into play for bettering and advancing his position. Gentlemen, it would be the height of arrogance in me were I to forget that I am no more than a young, a late, a feeble labourer in this happy, I will even say in this holy cause. Many have gone before me, many have exceeded me; but, with sincerity of heart and purpose, I have given myself to the prosecution of the work; and I come before you who have fostered it in its beginning, known it in its progress, and enjoyed it in its more ripe results, and I ask you to pronounce whether those who have been privileged to take part in such a work are or are not disabled and disqualified from sitting in the Parliament of England, from receiving the suffrages, from being honoured with the confidence, of the electors of the county of Lancaster.

SPEECH AT NEWTON AT THE DECLARATION OF THE POLL ON JULY 22nd.

Mr. High Sheriff and Gentlemen,—I am physically disabled from using any effort to address you to-day. I am entirely dependent upon your indulgence. On the Exchange in Liverpool, on Wednesday last, I had the honour of addressing a company almost countless, in hearing of the roar of Dale-street and of Castle-street, and, I am sorry to say, the result was that I left my voice behind me. Now, it is just to the two or three who stand in that neighbourhood (*pointing*) that I wish plainly to say, if they are willing to hear me, I will endeavour not to abuse their indulgence. I see one gentleman in particular; he has been very active. His lungs are in a much better state than mine; but if I may address myself to you, my friend, I tell you plainly, on another day when my chest is right, I would not mind having a tussle with you in voice, not to say in anything else; but to-day I am totally unable to undertake anything of the kind: I am at your mercy, so to your mercy I make my appeal. Mr. High Sheriff, having premised thus much, I need hardly add that both upon this and many other grounds I shall endeavour not to abuse the indulgence that I may receive. I have no doubt that the speeches of my two successful colleagues have been models in point of taste and feeling, but I unfortunately have not caught the purport of them as much as I could have wished, and I beg them to believe that, if any omission in what little I have to say—any omission of reference to them—should appear to be disrespectful, they will assign it to the true cause.

Mr. Sheriff and gentlemen, as politicians we live a life of contention; because in Parliament it rarely happens that our time is occupied in dealing with the many great questions — upon the deep and important principles—upon which, thank God, as Englishmen, we are all agreed. It is our happiness to dwell in a country where the principles of liberty, liberty of person, liberty of property, liberty of belief, liberty of speech, liberty of assemblage, and liberty of petition, are better understood than in any other country of Europe; and I rejoice, gentlemen, to think that the strongest politician amongst us, the most ardent partisan on either side, has no hesitation in sharing the feeling of satisfaction with which I at this moment in particular reflect upon the large inheritance of political belief that is common to us all as Britons, by whatever name we may think fit to call ourselves. Well, now, gentlemen, if I say one word upon mere politics, it will be said, I hope, in accents that cannot give offence; and I must already interrupt the course of these few remarks by rendering my thanks to

opponents as well as friends who are present for the patient kindness with which they are hearing me. Gentlemen, if you ask me for a political motto, in my search for one I should be very apt to borrow it from a character well known and much respected among us—I mean the policeman. When the policeman in London—and I suppose it is the same elsewhere—when the policeman finds a number of people blocking the footpath, he jogs one or two of them gently by the elbow and just says, "Keep moving." But, gentlemen, when the policeman says "Keep moving," he does not mean "Rush out into the street and fling yourselves under the wheels of the omnibuses and the cabs." Neither does he mean, "Overturn as quickly as you can, and as far as your ability will permit, everything that comes in your way:" what he means is really and simply this, that the people who are upon the footpath want to get on, that they have good reason for wanting to get on, and therefore it is a great pity that they should be compelled to stop. Well, now, gentlemen, that motto, familiar as the illustration may appear, I presume to think is a just and a sound motto in political affairs. It is all very well to say, "Things are very prosperous; why can't you be content?" But in all human institutions there is an element of taint and corruption—a principle of lapse and decay—that is continually at work: and not only the popular doctrine of politics, but the truest and soundest philosophy of human nature, teaches, in my opinion, that it is the duty of public men to make it their care and study to apply to these dangerous powers and tendencies, which are in sleepless operation, a corrective, as persistent and as wakeful as they are themselves, in the shape of vigilant attempts to amend and an anxious desire to advance. And now, gentlemen, having said so much, with your kind indulgence I think I have said all that is necessary for the occasion. I mean all that is necessary for the occasion which can partake of a controversial nature. I have said that our life is a life of contention. It is well that in the midst of it there should be some days of repose and peace. I don't think that Mr. Egerton, Mr. Turner, and myself are met here to fight our battles to-day. No doubt when we meet on the floor of the House of Commons we shall all be ready to perform our duty to our country, according to our respective convictions, and to the best of our abilities. I, gentlemen, for my own part, with the help of the Almighty, shall certainly endeavour, during what remains to me of political life, to persevere in a course which I think has met, under circumstances sufficiently remarkable, in my own person, with the approbation of the electors. Gentlemen, I am as deeply indebted to you, the electors of South Lancashire, as it is possible for any man in my position to be. If I came here a wounded man, you have healed my wound. It was an active, though I have no doubt a perfectly loyal canvass of twelve months, carried on as Englishmen

had a right to carry it on, by the whole strength of a political party, which deprived me of my seat for Oxford: but it has been a campaign of two days, and no more, that has given me my seat for South Lancashire.

I take this opportunity of expressing to you, gentlemen, my deep regret that it has not been in my power in the usual and constitutional manner to appear as a candidate before assemblies of my fellow-countrymen at all the different points of the southern division. But, gentlemen, I am, as I have reason to be, all the more thankful for the result. Perhaps I may offer with sincerity, and without suspicion, a word of condolence to the defeated candidates, because I have myself been so recently in that position, that, though I recollect it without malice, yet I recollect it with a tolerably lively sense of what it is; and therefore I offer to them the sympathy of one who has suffered like themselves. I offer to the late member for South Lancashire, whom I have been the means of displacing, the tribute which I believe he deserves, of my sincere personal respect and regard. Nay, gentlemen, I will go further, and I will wish him heartily a seat in Parliament, subject to two considerations. One is, that he wishes it himself—and the second is, that he does not displace some politician more nearly of the same colour as myself. Gentlemen, with respect to Mr. Heywood, his abilities, his experience, his services in Parliament, the assistance that he has given in promoting important changes and important measures of improvement, I can truly say—even though upon every one of those measures he and I may by no means entirely concur—have given him a distinguished place, and make his exclusion from Parliament a legitimate subject of regret. As to Mr. Thompson, I entertain not only the fervent hope, but the confident expectation, that at some early period a gentleman of so much ability and so high a character, anxious to devote his life to the service of his country in our free and open Legislature, will find an easy and a secure way, and an honourable way, into Parliament. As to my honourable friends (Messrs. Egerton and Turner), from whom I am separated by too great a distance to expect them to take the hand that I hold out, I am sure that we shall all cordially desire to co-operate together where we can, and that, where we cannot, we shall, with a perfectly good understanding, fight out our differences like men. And now, gentlemen, I thank you from my heart; I thank you without reserve and without distinction. I thank those who, at the head of the committees, pursued a canvass under the almost unexampled disadvantage of being liable to the imputation that the candidate whose name they had placed first on their card was nothing but the name and shadow of a candidate. I return my cordial thanks to those who compose the committees of the wards and districts, who, I believe, have laboured, and especially have laboured during the animation of the last stage of the canvass, with that energy

and that straightforwardness of purpose which belong to Englishmen, and which every Englishman, whether he be friend or whether he be opponent, must admire. I thank the voters of the Liberal party, who have come up with such energy and zeal, and in such numbers, to my support. I know that with respect to some of them, too, it was not merely for their favour, it was also for their indulgence, and their truly liberal indulgence, that I had to look. And lastly, gentlemen, you will think I discharge no more than a debt of gratitude when I say, I also thank those who kindly and generously, whatever may have been their ordinary party associations, have thought fit, in the exercise of their electoral franchise, to give their support to one who did not wear the same colours as themselves, so as to assure to me the seat that I now honourably occupy. And one step further, gentlemen, I must go—I must thank, without exception, the whole of those who have been opposed to me in this election for the kindness, and fairness, and moderation—I might almost say something more—in many cases for the favour, with which I have been treated. I have seen, gentlemen, nothing at all said against me in any local journal which has met my eye—and if any other local journal has said anything worse, I hope none of you will tell it me—I have seen nothing at all said against me in any local print except this—that I am an erratic politician: and that is a thing, gentlemen, that I have been accustomed to hear said of me as long as I have lived. But, gentlemen, erratic or not erratic, for more than a quarter of a century I have led an active life—a great part of it in those very offices of the State which place a man in the closest relations with the very sharpest sense and perceptions of his fellow countrymen. And for my part, if a man is erratic, I would advise him not to try his erratic propensities upon either the trade or the finances of this country. But, gentlemen, in referring to the use of that most inoffensive epithet—it may be just—God knows whether it is or not—I did it only to show how tenderly even opponents and adversaries had been disposed to deal with me. Gentlemen, I venture to trust that the recollection of that tenderness will go with me to Parliament, where you have sent me, and that, if I am ever tempted, in the heat of party conflict, to think unkindly of any one who may sit over against me, the recollection of this election for South Lancashire may act as an effectual corrective, and may tend to cherish or to revive in my breast a quality that is too often forgotten in our political contests, but which, we may depend upon it, is of as much value, or of more value, in public life perhaps, than even in private life—and that is the homely quality which goes by the name of Christian charity. Gentlemen, I trust we shall part in Christian charity to-day. In this country we may call ourselves Liberals, or we may call ourselves Conservatives. But you are aware that our friends who call themselves Conservatives contend that they are in reality more liberal than we are; and you

likewise know that we retaliate upon them by saying that we who are Liberals are a great deal better Conservatives than they are. We think —I won't say we are right—but we think we prove our case by pointing to the present condition of the country, the present sentiments of the people, the present relations between class and class, compared with what they were in the days of the corn-laws of 1814 and of the Six Acts of Lord Sidmouth. For the moment, gentlemen, let that matter of dispute remain as a drawn battle between us. Let every man then to-day, without stint or scruple, abound in his own sense; let every man drink his own health with three times three. Honesty of purpose, manliness of proceeding, straightforwardness, truth, and energy, have hitherto been — and I trust will continue to be—the distinguishing characteristics of my countrymen. As for our battles, let us fight them out fairly; as for our agreement, let us never cease to remember and to rejoice that we have a common country—a glorious country—a noble country—a country with a past that has given her one of the most distinguished places in the history of our race; and a country with a future awaiting her, before which, I will not presume to hope, even her past may grow pale—but of which at any rate I will venture upon saying so much as this, that we may well hope the generations of Englishmen who are yet to come, and the annals of our country yet to be unrolled, will not be unworthy of those that have gone before. Let us each in our several stations labour for that noble end, and rely upon it we shall have cause to be thankful, alike for that which we have received from our fathers, and for that which we may hand down to our children. Gentlemen, I have only further to repeat, and to repeat most cordially, the thanks which I ventured to tender before for your extraordinary patience, forbearance, and kindness. Even the smallest minority of this assembly might, if they had been so disposed, have prevented my being heard. They have allowed my feeble voice the privilege of uninterrupted speech, and I beg to tender to them the tribute of my warmest thanks.

SPEECH IN ANSWER TO AN ADDRESS FROM THE PRINTERS AND COMPOSITORS OF NEWTON ON THE 22nd OF JULY.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said: Mr. Ball, Mr. Palmer, and Gentlemen,—I am extremely thankful to find that the arrangements of the day have been so made, and likewise that the indulgence of the great meeting out of doors was so unbroken, as to leave me a little fragment of time, and a little fragment of voice, to acknowledge the remarkable address that you have just presented to me. I must refer first, gentlemen, to the closing words of that address, which are affecting words. I do not know that it is unseemly to introduce them on these occasions. I hope it is not so. The opportunities when we can meet are not numerous. We do not meet very often. It is not a matter of every day. Although I am too happy to seize the rare occasions that are permitted me of coming into immediate contact with great bodies of my fellow-countrymen, yet it is but very rarely that they can arise, by reason of the increasedly absorbing nature of public business in the present age. And therefore, gentlemen, I do most cordially thank you for the high Source to which you have referred me in this address as the only source of good. The labours that we do in this life—how poor they are! How much cause we have to be ashamed, in looking back upon them, that they were not better done; and how deeply convinced we all must feel, from the marks which it has pleased Providence to impress upon our daily experience, that for us all—for those of us who are old, and for those of us who are young alike—this world is nothing but a school, where we are put for a little while to learn our lesson, and that there is a place beyond the grave where it will be proved whether we have learned it or whether we have not. Well, now, gentlemen, passing from that subject—that solemn subject—I cannot help referring particularly to two of the phrases that I find in this address. You kindly give me credit for "a pure and honest wish to do all the good I can for the moral and social improvement and elevation of the working classes of this great nation, as well as acting justly and consistently to all those in the higher spheres of life." Now, gentlemen, I cannot say that these sentiments of equal regard for the interest and welfare of all the classes which compose society, coming from you—I am now addressing you as an assembly of working men, and I presume the bulk of you correspond with that description—I cannot say that your receiving me with such a declaration in the slightest degree surprises me. On the contrary, it

is in thorough conformity with what I hear from the working classes whenever I am placed in contact with them in whatever part of the country. They are just as sensible as any one can be—and I trust and believe they will always remain so—that what is called mere levelling, that is to say, the mere pulling down of what is above us, is a mistaken and even an abominable system. It never really implies a genuine and earnest desire to lift up what is below us. But the working men of this country—the working artisans of this country—have many that are below them as well as many that are above them. You know that society is, as you have gone on to describe it, like a well-built, well-ordered fabric, with many stones and many timbers, many doors, many windows, many parts and portions of the structure, all and each having their separate offices, some of them above and some of them below, some of them larger and some of them smaller, but all built and framed by the mind of the builder to serve one common purpose; and that if you are to suppose that good is to be done by bestowing excessive and exceptional prominence upon some one portion of the building, or, to quit the metaphor, if our scheme of policy be to grant a monopoly of power or of favour to some one class or clique in society, it is not for the benefit even of that part, and it is the ruin of the whole. It is not, I say, for the benefit even of that class. The interest of every class is to have justice done to every other class; and, gentlemen, that is the test to which I am sure you are disposed, and to which I hope you will always determine, to bring the deeds of the public men of this country. Well, then, gentlemen, you go on to say—and this pleases me particularly, though it rather leads me again to the subject I have just been upon—you go on to say that the public man ought to be regarded as an architect. That is the best answer you can give to any who suppose that the profession of popular principles makes a man justly liable to be called a destructive. Certainly, gentlemen, an architect is not a destructive, and a destructive is not an architect. An architect may find it his duty, as you go on to point out, to pull down what is old; but not because it is old,—no, not a bit. If it is the fine old architecture of the past times he reveres it the more because it is old, and the good architect you will find even passionate in his admiration of what is old, providing it is good as well as old; but if it has become worthless, either from being or in spite of being old, and if, being worthless, it attempts to shelter itself under the pretext of its being old, then the architect says, "No; I cannot listen to that, I must pull you down;" and so he pulls down that which is old if it is worthless. But why does he pull it down? Not for the sake of pulling down, as if pulling down could, except in the case of things evil, be a purpose in itself; but for the sake of building up in its place something which is better, something which will more effectually serve the use for

which the building was erected. Building up is the business of the politician, the business of the minister, the business of the member of Parliament; my business, as knight of the shire, now that I have been elected a member for the county of Lancaster; your business as citizens, your business as electors, your business in every opinion you give on public affairs. There have been countries, unhappily, where, from the course of affairs having gone long and obstinately awry—there have been countries—and such perhaps was the state of France before what was known as the great revolution—where a great sweeping work of destruction was necessary, almost, perhaps, absolutely necessary, before any good could be done, because the defects and the diseases were incurable. That is not our case. This is no such country. Our business is chiefly to build. I admit it is to repair; but besides repairing, it is to extend, it is to raise higher up, it is to spread wider and wider the lofty and noble building which we fondly call the British Constitution. This is the nature of the function to which public men in England are called. It is a happy duty, gentlemen. They are supported in it by the indulgent favour of their countrymen. I will say that nothing has struck me more in the course of a long public life than the general fairness—nay, the more than fairness — the ordinary and usual generosity of the judgments that are passed, not by one class or another, but by the whole community, on the character and conduct of public men. I am quite certain of this as matter of personal experience—that if sometimes it has happened to me to think that in one or another particular I have been unjustly condemned, ten times more numerous have been the occasions when I have felt that I was unjustly and unduly praised, and far in advance of what I had deserved. Well, gentlemen, this is the work that has been before us. And I now cannot help saying one word upon your particular duty and business. It is one in which I feel a special interest. One of the sharpest passages in my political life, gentlemen—perhaps I ought to say the sharpest of them all—was that which was connected with the repeal of the paper duty in 1860 and 1861. I know not how it was, but that was a period when even friends seemed in some cases to become lukewarm—many who had said before, at least, that they were friends, seemed to become lukewarm or abashed, and when opponents seemed to grow more and more confident. It was then, I assure you, my frequent duty to sit in the House of Commons, and not only to hear the Government, or, it might be, myself, called rash, reckless, and profligate, for sacrificing without a sufficient end the revenue of the country, but to hear it said that the paper duty did no harm to anybody, that it restricted no trade, that it was no burden upon commerce, that the additional dearness of paper could have no effect of what was called a sensible

description; and forgive me, gentlemen, if, in the attempt to describe, I abandon detail, and say simply, in my homely language, that there was at that time a copious venting of all the trash and all the nonsense, which, if it had been good for anything, was perfectly good against the repeal of the corn-laws, against the repeal of the navigation laws, against the repeal of the soap duties, against every good measure of that kind which had been carried in our time: the whole of this trash came out reburnished and done up again to oppose and obstruct the repeal of the paper duty. And now, gentlemen, what have we seen as the result? Why, we have seen—and I acknowledge it with thankfulness in the face of God and man—that the repeal of the paper duty has been a greater blessing even than any of its promoters anticipated. I did, gentlemen, to the best of my ability, fight a battle, and I will even say a hard battle, for its repeal. And I find now that in its repeal not only was there involved the liberation of a great branch of trade—a branch of trade which is already great, and which I believe will, as years roll on, become very much greater—but there was involved a seed of social and moral good that has sprung up with rapidity and has borne a harvest such as I confess I was by no means sanguine enough to expect. We said to-day at the hustings that the Liberal policy is conservative. Look at the daily penny press. What is the daily penny press? The daily penny press is an organ that finds its way into the house of the working man; that keeps him well-informed, without the least disparagement to other classes, upon the course of public affairs; for the daily penny press is not destructive nor licentious more than any other portion of the press—if possible, it is even less so; but its office is to keep the working man daily informed of all current public transactions. Why, what is that but creating a new interest in the mind of the working man—an interest that is refreshed from day to day—in the affairs, the laws, the institutions of the land? What is that but making him feel that he has become in a new sense a citizen of his country, that his country owns in a new manner his title to a share in public affairs? He feels it; his bosom enlarges with the sense of it; and in that bosom, so enlarged, there spring up a continual growth and increase of love and attachment to the Queen, and to the institutions of the country.

ADDRESSES.

ADDRESS I.

To the Members of Convocation in the University of Oxford.

Gentlemen,

After an arduous connection of eighteen years, I bid you respectfully farewell.

My earnest purpose to serve you, my many faults and shortcomings, the incidents of the political relation between the University and myself established in 1847, so often questioned in vain, and now at length finally dissolved, I leave to the judgment of the future. It is one imperative duty, and one alone, which induces me to trouble you with these few parting words: the duty of expressing my profound and lasting gratitude for indulgence as generous, and for support as warm and enthusiastic in itself, and as honourable from the character and distinctions of those who have given it, as has in my belief ever been accorded by any constituency to any representative.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obliged and obedient Servant,
W. E. Gladstone.

Hawarden, Chester, July 18, 1865.

ADDRESS II.

To the Electors of the Southern Division of the County of Lancaster.

Gentlemen,

I appear before you as a candidate for the suffrages of your division of my native county.

Time forbids me to enlarge on the numerous topics which justly engage the public interest.

I will bring them all to a single head.

You are conversant, few so much so, with the legislation of the last twenty-five years. You have seen, you have felt, its results. You

cannot fail to have observed the verdict which the country generally has, within the last eight days, pronounced upon the relative claims and positions of the two great political parties, with respect to that legislation in the past, and to the prospective administration of public affairs.

Without the least disparagement to many excellent persons, from whom I have the misfortune frequently to differ, I humbly but confidently ask you to give your powerful voice in confirmation of that verdict; and to pronounce with significance as to the direction in which you desire the wheels of State to move.

Before these words can be read, I hope to be among you, in the hives of your teeming enterprise.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

W. E. Gladstone.

Hawarden, July 18, 1865.

ADDRESS III.

To the Electors of the Southern Division of the County of Lancaster.

Gentlemen,

Within forty-eight hours of my first act of appeal to you, your prompt response has placed my name on the list of your representatives.

I feel deeply, not alone the greatness of the honour, but the generous manner in which it has been conferred.

It will be my study to discharge the duties of my trust in the spirit of the declarations with which I solicited your support.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obliged and most obedient Servant,

W. E. Gladstone.

Hawarden, Chester, July 21, 1865.

APPENDIX.

SPEECH AT CHESTER ON THE 31st OF MAY, 1865.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said: "Mr. Mayor, Electors, and Gentlemen,—Although I have not the honour to be either a candidate or an elector for the city of Chester, yet I hope it will not appear to you strange or unnatural that I should come among you on the present occasion, when the immediate question concerns one in whom I am so nearly and dearly interested, and of whom I at least have had cause to believe that I never shall be ashamed. But, gentlemen, there is a special reason which brings me here, and which makes me feel it to be my duty, if I am favoured for a while with your patience and attention, to explain distinctly the position in which we stand. We have in the field four candidates for Chester; or, if I set apart one about whose return I trust there is no shadow of doubt, and who need not be considered as a party in this contest, we have three candidates for a single seat. That is not at first sight a promising position of affairs. But who are these three candidates? One of them is Mr. Raikes; and Mr. Raikes has all the claim to represent this constituency in Parliament which can be possessed by a man who entertains opinions which are those only of a very small minority of the constituency. And how came Mr. Raikes among you? He came, gentlemen, in consequence of divisions existing in the body of the majority of the constituency; and I am sure you will agree with me that it is only those divisions that could give to Mr. Raikes even so much as the ghost of a chance. Well, then, gentlemen (for I wish to make this a practical occasion), it is a grave matter to consider who is responsible for those divisions. I at least have felt that responsibility deeply; and I have gone, I am afraid, very nearly to the point of giving reasonable offence to many who are the warmest and most influential supporters of my son, by my disinclination—nay, more, by my resistance—to his coming here for any purpose which could involve disparagement or danger to the prevalence of the Liberal party, and of its opinions, in the city of Chester on the present occasion. And what, gentlemen, was the first communication made by my son to his friends, and made by my advice? Generally, gentlemen, I presume to say that I leave him to the formation of free opinions. Never shall I attempt to interfere with his conscientious convictions. I am a lover of freedom in the nation, and I am a lover of freedom in the family. But I did feel, gentlemen, that it was my duty strenuously to urge upon him to adopt for himself this rule of conduct, that he would not be governed in ever so small a degree by considerations of personal ambition—that the flattering prospect of his gaining your suffrages should not bring him into the field to the possible danger of that party which comprises three-fourths of the constituency; that he should not appear there unless

we were convinced by demonstrative evidence that it was by him that the wishes and opinions of that party would best be represented. And therefore his first pledge and promise was, that he could not be a candidate at all unless invited in a manner so unequivocal as to be reasonably and morally sure that he would be the object of your choice. But, gentlemen, it may be said, "That is all very well, but what was to be the test?" Very well, it is a fair question. Each of us has had a test. Mr. Fenton has proposed a test, and we have proposed a test. And, gentlemen, if I refer to Mr. Fenton, and if I show that this responsibility lies not at our door but at his (A voice: "It does not"), I shall endeavour to do so in terms that cannot give offence to the gentleman opposite who just now expressed his opinion, nor to anybody else; and not one word of intentional disrespect to Mr. Fenton, to his friends, or to his opinions, will escape me on this occasion. "Oh," said Mr. Fenton, "decide the case between us two by a meeting of the Liberal electors." Well, now, I frankly own I have no doubt that Mr. Fenton, with his other accomplishments, must be a gentleman of great humour, and that he knew we were very simple—he knew, as has been said of one among us, we were little better than babies; and I really think he considered a fair joke might be passed off upon us; because no one will seriously tell me in earnest that a man could really suppose that the parliamentary representation of Chester was to be disposed of by a meeting, called, forsooth! a meeting of the Liberal electors. How is a meeting of the Liberal electors to be held? Are there to be doorkeepers, to ask every man as he enters, first, whether he is an elector, and, secondly, whether he is a Liberal elector? Suppose he thinks he is a Liberal elector, and the doorkeeper does not, is the doorkeeper to slam the door in his face? I take it that this is for the most part a meeting of Liberal electors, and right well pleased I am to meet you, gentlemen; but at the same time it would not be very easy to decide at this meeting, crowded and packed as you are, who should be the member for Chester. I think a good deal might depend in some circumstances upon who was in the chair. But it is needless to argue the matter in detail. The truth is, that was a method of declining altogether a reference to any trustworthy criterion. Well, gentlemen, let me now deal with our criterion. We did not entertain the question of the Chester seat at all until a requisition signed by 400 persons was presented, and then we said what I am bound to admit was not very civil; we then said, "That will not do." We said, "There is no proof in that requisition that my son is to be the object of the choice of the bulk of the party which forms the majority of the constituency; and unless that condition is fulfilled, we will not go into the field—we will not divide the Liberal party." Well, thereupon our friends, not discouraged, and I must say putting a good face upon the matter, went back to their work and raised the 400 to 800. Well, considering that, after all, Mr. Raikes has a party in Chester, and considering that the number that can be polled in Chester is, as I am told, not more than 1900, the presentation of a requisition with over 800 names did appear to show at least presumptively that the man who received it was and would be the choice of the majority of the electors. But even then, gentlemen, we did not hurry to a conclusion; but we said to Mr. Fenton, "Produce a superior or equal manifestation of strength, and we will retire from the field." Nay, more, I say so now. I make that promise again. (A voice: "He can do it.") Well, if he

can do it, by all means let him do it. We made that proposal, and what was Mr. Fenton's answer? Mr. Fenton looked with a critical eye at the requisition. He said, "Here are a hundred men that I knock off upon one plea or another; three have signed thrice, fifteen have signed twice, forty or something like it are unqualified to vote; some have invited him, but do not promise to support him; and that way about a hundred names are made up." (A voice: "More than a hundred.") Don't be in a hurry, my good friend. If you will take one thing at a time we shall get forward all the quicker. As regards that hundred names, I trust to the supporters of my son and the framers of the requisition to deal with those particular criticisms; but for the present, and for the sake of argument, I will suppose they are good, and that a hundred are to be struck off. But then Mr. Fenton took broader ground, and said, "Good heavens! worse than all; here are 294 Conservatives," all of whom this ruthless man proposed to disfranchise at a stroke. That was a terrible proposition. The ground of it was that they had voted for Mr. Humberston at the last election. Now, gentlemen, you know the history of Chester better than I do; but I have been told that of the Liberal party in Chester, not only 294, but probably 500 or 600, voted for Mr. Humberston, and therefore I confess I am not prepared to disfranchise gentlemen who supported your present member for having put their names to this requisition. I do not approve of the policy that is pursued by the party which calls itself Conservative. I do not think its measures usually tend to the conservation of the interests of this country. But for many of the gentlemen in that party I have a great respect, and upon their votes I will not deny that I set some value. But suppose that were all true, did not Mr. Fenton see that it made it not the less but the more necessary that he should accept the test? His business then was to say, "I decline your men in buckram, but your real men I will tackle to, and I will show you a list on my side better than yours." But Mr. Fenton has done no such thing. (A voice: "You didn't wait.") We could not wait for ever, and Mr. Fenton did not say, "I want a reasonable time to do it in;" he said, "I will not do it at all." (A voice: "Not yet.") It is no question of "not yet," my friend. Mr. Fenton, instead of being a man of business and a deputy-chairman of the Great Western Railway, really became altogether poetical and mystical, and discoursed about anonymous and unseen personages and agents, and the large number of his supporters; but he did not produce those supporters in black and white. I hold then, gentlemen, that this demand of ours was a reasonable demand, and that we have thrown upon Mr. Fenton by that challenge the whole and unmixed responsibility of the division that exists in Chester.

Now, gentlemen, that is the part of the proceedings for which I am most especially responsible. If this contest proceeds, if it goes on to its natural consummation, there will be a good deal of controversial matter bandied backwards and forwards in relation to the question who was the cause of this mischief; and as my conscience is now clear, I wish to lay our case before you, that we have not moved except upon a requisition signed by 800 names from a constituency in which no more than a gross total of 1900 can be polled.

Now, gentlemen, you are aware of the manner in which I have been brought into relation with your political interests and proceedings. I am neither candidate nor elector; and it would be most unbecoming in me to attempt to address you on public affairs unless it were in

deference to the general and prevailing wish of this crowded, I fear this inconveniently crowded, assembly. All I would venture to suggest is —and that, I think, is a fair appeal—that if it be the desire of the large majority of the meeting that I should speak upon the state and prospects of this election, the minority of the meeting, the very small minority, will pay some regard to the wishes of that majority. Well now, gentlemen, I take interest enough in this contest to endeavour to improve my mind from day to day by references to the political literature of Chester, and it is with rather a peculiar interest, from the fact that I am the subject of a portion of it. I refer particularly to the speeches that have been made by and in the presence of the gentleman who is called the Tory candidate—I mean Mr. Raikes. Now I must express my regret that the discussions at that gentleman's meetings have not been confined to political matter, but that matter affecting personal character, and even some portion of it matter which I must designate as foul calumny, has been introduced either by the error of the reporters or by the error of the speakers. I shall not allude to subjects of that class. I shall deal with them not here but elsewhere. But I hope, and I give it as my best advice and injunction to my son, and I trust I may put it forward as an earnest entreaty to his friends, that on their part in this contest everything of the kind shall be studiously avoided. But, gentlemen, I pass on from that subject to politics of large and general interest. And these are matters of fair remark in every meeting of Englishmen for a political purpose. I have read Mr. Raikes's speeches. I think he seems to be a young gentleman of considerable readiness, and he has got a good stock of what are termed cut-and-dried opinions on all the questions of the day. Not only so, but he has contrived to form pretty conclusive judgments upon men old enough to be his father or his grandfather, who have been spending some thirty, some forty, some fifty or sixty years in the service of their country. Mr. Raikes is reported to say, gentlemen, that for the last six years there has been no government in this country. It is true that there has been no government of the kind which Mr. Raikes wished to have. There has been no government such as there was fifty years ago, when the Corn Laws were passed, and when the Six Acts unhappily took their place upon the Statute Book. There has been no government of that description: but, gentlemen, I submit to you that there has been a government of some kind or other. Why, who are the prominent men in the government? Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell. Lord Palmerston is a man who has established what I may justly call a world-wide reputation. Almost wherever the name of England is known, his name is known along with it. And I must add that he is a man whose services, whose experience, whose great powers, and whose estimable and popular qualities, have long since given him a place in the favour and affection of his countrymen. And who, then, is Lord Russell? Forsooth, there has been no government for the past six years. I again ask, who and what is Lord Russell? Who will write the history of this country in this generation without giving to Lord Russell in that history one of its very foremost places? Gentlemen, it is the practice, and the just practice, of the Sovereigns of England to decorate the breasts of our soldiery with medals and clasps, for the gallant and good deeds that they have done; and I do not fear to affirm that, if it were the practice to decorate likewise the breasts of statesmen with medals and with clasps for the good laws they

have passed, and for the benefits they have conferred upon the country, the breast of Lord Russell would be one blaze of clasps and medals. And yet, forsooth, there has been no government for the last six years. Well, but there is, I perceive, in a part of the same speech, a statement that something at any rate has come about within these six years: I believe it was a commercial treaty with France. I believe there was a treaty of that kind made in 1860, although there was no government in this country. Says Mr. Raikes, "That treaty has very much disappointed the expectations of its friends and the expectations of its enemies." It is said to be a good rule in this wicked world, just to believe one half of what you hear; therefore I believe one half of what I hear from Mr. Raikes in this matter. I believe that that treaty has disappointed the expectations of its enemies. But with regard to the expectations of its friends, I want to know where in the world Mr. Raikes gets his information about them? I will venture to say there are very few of them standing by his side in this election. Did he come eavesdropping at some of your meetings to gather this intelligence? He may be very well entitled to describe the feelings of the opponents of the treaty, but as to those of its friends he is a bad authority. I will presume to say that I know something of the expectations of the friends of the treaty, and I must say not only that no lawyer but that no dreamer ever conceived a statement more exaggerated or more absurd than that it has disappointed the expectations of its friends. What has that treaty done? It has added to the annual value of the trade between England and France, I think, twenty-three millions of money, and besides adding thus to the value of the trade with France, inasmuch as the legislation founded upon and required by that treaty was not confined to France, I believe it has added at the very least as much more to our trade with other countries of the world. And if we are able to see forty or fifty millions of money of beneficial exchange added to the transactions of this country by the conclusion of that instrument, is that a case for disappointment? For what is the meaning of the words which I have just used? You see these figures in statistical tables—do you reflect upon their deep and pregnant significancy? They mean this. They mean millions upon millions added to the profit of capital, to the reward of skill, to the payment of honest labour in this country. They mean comfort carried into cottages, where, but for the demand thus created for employment, want would have prevailed. They mean this,—that when the great calamity of the American war came upon the world, and a great gap was occasioned in our commerce by the comparative cessation of American demand, a demand from France springing up under that treaty came in to supply its place at the very moment, and kept in action those strong English arms which, but for that treaty, would have hung paralysed by the side of our operatives and artisans and mechanics. Well, gentlemen, that forsooth is the disappointment so pathetically described, and that is just one among the acts of a period when there has been no government in the country. Such appears to be Mr. Raikes's idea of the government of the country. What does he think is the business of a government? Does he think it consists only in the regulation of prisons and workhouses, and in the passing and administration of penal or restraining laws? I hold, on the contrary, that we are in our best and happiest employment when fortunate and providential combinations of circumstances enable us to devise means for raising the condition and

increasing the happiness of the great body of our fellow-countrymen.

However, gentlemen, I need not trouble you more on the subject of the French treaty. But this I must say. Be on your guard against those who, while they just acquit from blame the good deeds of other times, condemn the men who did them, and afford you no prospect of their doing the like themselves: who, when they look back over the legislation of the last thirty years, say, "We make no objection to this and that—the repeal of the corn-laws is all very well; the Reform Act is all very well; the removal of disabilities for religion is all very well—but beware of the men who carried the repeal of the corn-laws and who endeavoured to mitigate or remove these disabilities. Beware too of the men who have taught the doctrine of a renewed extension of the franchise." These are the modest demands which Mr. Raikes makes upon you. But then, by way of compensation, all gentlemen of this class are so kind as to assure you that they are perfectly willing to consent to the "removal of proved abuses." Ay, gentlemen, yes, "proved abuses," no doubt, but who is to prove them? And who is to be the judge of the proof? Mr. Raikes and his friends are to be the judges of the proof. But then we should like to know in what manner they will pass judgment upon the proof. Well, but, if I am to understand in what manner they will pass judgment upon the proof hereafter, I must look to their past acts. And what have they been about? What have they been doing in reference to the French treaty? Offering every obstacle to the making of that treaty that the ingenuity and zeal and vigour of Parliamentary opposition could devise. I have told you its character—I have told you its results. Judge of them yourselves; and judge from them whether you ought to give the honour and practical duty of representing Chester into the hands of those who mean to follow the men that resisted the conferring of those benefits, or into the hands of those who mean to support them and to do their best to promote the pursuit of a like policy hereafter.

Now, gentlemen, I come to say a few words that are very strictly relevant to this occasion. My son appears before you as a young man, and Mr. Fenton appears before you as a man proved by experience in business. I wish to state this part of the case fairly, because my son is a man necessarily without experience in what is termed business. Mr. Fenton is a man of experience in business; and I think, naturally enough, a certain presumption may arise in favour of a man of experience in business. But I wish to state to you some points connected with the nature and functions of the House of Commons. The future well-being of this country depends mainly upon the manner in which the House of Commons is composed. The most critical and important perhaps of all its functions is the management of its relations with the executive government; a large part of which, according to our old and salutary, nay perhaps indispensable practice, must be formed from the benches of the House of Commons. You must therefore have a class of men who take to political life, and who do not merely add the duties of Parliament to those of their business or profession. Now, gentlemen, what is practically a political life? What is the life of a man in office? It is a profession. It is just as much a profession and a trade as any profession or trade driven in this city. And allow me to say that, if you intend to carry that profession on, experience has proved that you must have it carried on in the main by men

who have taken to it when they were young. I will illustrate this, if you please, in a familiar manner. Suppose there is any man among you who is a master carpenter, or master smith, and I go to him and ask him to take me in as a journeyman. He would naturally say, "Do you know anything about the business?" "No, but I am willing to learn." But he would say instantly, "You are a great deal too old—go and think of something else." There is ample space and room in the House of Commons for what are called men of business; not only country gentlemen, but manufacturers, merchants, ship-owners, railway directors, and all other sorts, generally speaking from the towns. There will, I hope, always be a large number of such men. What the House of Commons wants is every available diversity of elements. You see this very diversity of elements in this hall. We want every class, every interest, every quality and capacity of mind; but if you wish to have the business of the country carried on, you must be content to return to the House of Commons a certain number of men who are to make it the profession and occupation of their lives; and in order to be well supplied with the means of choice for the government of the country, it is of vital importance that you should always have in Parliament a sufficient stock of those who have gone there with their minds fresh and pliable, and apt to acquire the varied habits and aptitudes which political life demands. Consequently youth is no valid objection to a candidate: and, gentlemen, I should not in the least degree feel ashamed of recommending—if it were in my power to recommend—to you the choice of one whose education has been such as possibly to qualify him for the discharge of public duty; whose character has always deserved my confidence; whose judgment I know already, young though he be, to be sound and good; and who I am confident will prove himself an honest and a worthy representative of the people.

Well now, gentlemen, I came into the vicinity of this hall at the moment when my son had proceeded far in addressing you. Perhaps you will be surprised if I tell you I am not aware of his precise opinions on several points which would probably be matters of interest among you. I wish to leave them to a free growth in an intelligent mind. And I am confident, from what I know of English constituencies and the character of my fellow-countrymen, that you will be likewise disposed to leave to him some freedom of discretion. You may get a cut-and-dried representative who will answer political questions as if they were his catechism, and will go, with all the fine powers of a parrot, wherever you like to send him. I speak of men in general, and not of those who are rare exceptions. Mr. Raikes seems to think that at a very early period of life he ought to understand the whole wide range of English politics, and be a perfect master of all these vast subjects—nay, not only a master of them, but in a condition to smite every other man with denunciation. I say this, that if he can get to that condition of mind by the age of twenty-five, what a prodigy of knowledge and of wisdom he will be by the time he is fifty or sixty! And I really do think that, if Mr. Raikes's education advances in future years at such a rate as he appears to think it has advanced heretofore, it would be very hard to tell to what enormous dimensions—I mean morally—he may not swell in future times. But that is not the lot of ordinary men. Some degree of trust is what your representatives must

ordinarily ask of you; trust the young man peculiarly demands; and if you look back over the long line of statesmen in this country who have on the whole been the leaders of opinion, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Canning, Lord Macaulay, Lord Palmerston, Lord Russell, and the rest, you will find they are all of them men who have been elected in early youth upon that principle of trust. Having honest English minds, and leading their political life in the light of day, and enjoying from day to day that inestimable privilege which we do enjoy of the free comments of our countrymen in general, and the press in particular, upon all we say and do, rely upon it that, with these advantages, when the conscience and character are right, the result will be right enough too. The mind will open out under the teaching of experience, like the flower under the rain and sun; and from those you have sent to represent you in youth, you will see spring up by degrees in well-sustained succession the men who are to make the name of England respected abroad, and to promote at home the happiness of the people. Now, gentlemen, up to what point do you suppose that my advice has been given to my son with regard to all these questions? I have advised him frankly to declare himself among you as an adherent of Liberal principles—not to measure too nicely or too stringently the application of those principles, but to take the principles themselves. And what do I understand by the Liberal principle? I understand, in the main, it is a principle of trust in the people, only qualified by prudence. But by the principle which is opposed to the Liberal principle, I understand mistrust of the people, only qualified by fear. Perfect honour, perfect sincerity, may exist on both sides, but the dominant idea I understand as I have given it. And why do I make that recommendation? Because I look back over the history of the last fifty years, that is, since the peace of 1815, and I mark to myself the change which has taken place in the condition of this country. Those of us who are old enough to recollect that period have been the witnesses of that change, and all others have the means by inquiry of judging of its extent. What was then, in and about 1815, the condition of the masses of this country? Their food was shortened by unnatural and artificial laws; and those very laws which made their food dear and scarce, made also scarce the employment by which their food was to be paid for. The natural and necessary consequence of such legislation was widespread discontent. And how was discontent encountered? It was met, perhaps of necessity, by laws for repressing the range, and diminishing the action, of personal liberty, and for making more severe the penalties against those who might seem to manifest disaffection. The consequence was serious indeed for that great and venerable monarchy of England, which I trust we shall hand down to our children stronger and healthier than we received it from the immediately preceding generation. Some forty years ago, the ancient foundations of that monarchy were sadly weakened in the hearts and minds of the people. But now a different tone has come over legislation. Another spirit guides the deliberations of Parliament. Parliament has striven to extend franchises, to mitigate penal laws, to improve and enlarge education, to make justice acceptable to the people and the law respected, to remove every occasion of collision and conflict between classes—all these things, and many more of the like description, make up the chapter of the legislation of the last five-and-thirty years.

And not only this, but in another great chapter of politics—I mean the foreign policy of this country—they have endeavoured, while observing every international obligation, honestly to extend the hand of sympathy and friendship to free institutions throughout the world. Now, by whom is it that this change has been brought about? Has it been brought about by those whom Mr. Raikes asks you to support? [Cries of "No!"] No, gentlemen, it has not. It has been brought about mainly by the direct action of the party termed the Liberal party, while in possession of the government; and partly also, I may be permitted and I am in justice bound to say, partly also by the example and the exertions of men like Mr. Canning and Sir Robert Peel, whose minds were too large for the contracted space within which they found themselves confined, and who, because of the benefits they conferred upon their countrymen, had the misfortune to lose the confidence of their party. But the party of which they lost the confidence is that very party which Mr. Raikes invites you to support. Now I do not deny, on the contrary I rejoice, that in that party there are not only many honourable men, but many noble, generous, upright, intelligent, and enlightened men; but of them as a party, it is not what I say but what history has recorded, that the great and beneficial changes which we have seen, which have rendered our people more happy, our laws more respected, and our institutions more secure than those perhaps of almost any other people in the world—are changes which have been made not by the agency, but generally in opposition, to the endeavours of that party.

Now, gentlemen, I have detained you very long, and I do not think there is any reason why I should detain you longer; but, if it be agreeable to your desire, I will say one word upon a subject which I know interests you, and on which I heard the remarks that fell from my son—I mean the subject of the franchise. Now, gentlemen, as far as I can understand the position of that question in this city, it is very peculiar; and the constituency of Chester, if I am rightly informed, is very differently composed from the constituencies—I mean the town constituencies—of the country in general. As I understand the matter, out of about 1900 or 2000 votes in Chester, at the least about 900 are supposed to belong to the working class: that is to say, on a moderate estimate, not very far short of one half of the whole. Well, now, when we look over the country at large, so far is it from being true that one half of the whole constituency is composed of the working class, that the working class only forms an exceedingly small, and a scarcely appreciable, fraction of that constituency. It is very difficult to estimate the fraction exactly, and I will not pretend to do so; but I believe that if we take the whole constituency of the country at about a million, some think that the working men comprised in that million do not much exceed 50,000, and I believe hardly any one thinks they come up to 100,000. That, in my opinion, is a very small portion of the constituencies to be composed of working men. I frankly own to you, gentlemen, that I am against all sudden, violent, and sweeping changes. The characteristic of our country is to go forward surely and steadily; but I confess I lament that the mind of the country is not more fully ripened than at the present it seems to be for a sensible extension of the franchise to the working classes. I am not speaking of Chester. The case of Chester, and all such cases, may require consideration from another point of view. I am by no means sure that a better system will not be found for Chester (prospectively, I mean) than

the present system, which practically, as I understand, admits the working man only in the character of a freeman. But that is quite another question as to the manner in which, the title under which, the franchise is enjoyed. Evidently no one can deny that the working men have a very ample share in the constituency of Chester. Certainly no Government, and no member of any Government, with which I have been connected, would have ever thought it wise to introduce laws which would at once hand over the majority of votes in the country into the hands of working men. Now I say that not through distrust. I have had thirteen years' experience of a working men's constituency in the borough of Newark. It was not a very large constituency, for it contained about 1600 voters, and out of them 1100 or 1200 were working men. Those working men never dreamed of voting together as a class, or setting up a separate interest. But still I say, let us go surely and steadily. Those scot and lot constituencies have been extinguished, and I am very sorry for it. I wish they had continued. It was a good old sound English franchise, and it secured this effect,—that if there were questions in which the working man had a peculiar interest in those boroughs, at any rate they had, when occasion arose, the means, if they thought fit, of making any peculiar wants and wishes clearly known. And that, I think, was not a bad thing, but a good thing for the constitution. Now we are in this singular predicament. I believe that a smaller portion of working men enjoy the franchise now than enjoyed it thirty years ago, after the Reform Bill was passed. But if the electors of the working class have diminished, what has happened to the working class itself? Has the working class diminished? No, it has increased. Has the condition of the working class deteriorated? No, it is amended. Is the education of the people worse? No, it is infinitely extended and improved. Is the loyalty of the working class more doubtful? No, it glows more fervently than ever. Is their feeling towards the Government a feeling of greater hostility? No, as I have the best means of knowing, so far from mistrusting the Government, the Government is the agent that they like to choose for the guardian of their savings. Yet one word more: has the character of the working class been specially tested in that interval? Yes, it was tried in the fire of affliction,—in that fire of affliction which wasted Lancashire, when, in a day, the subsistence and employment of a people were swept away, and yet public order was secure, the laws were revered, respect was paid to every more fortunate class, want was endured with silence, patience, and heroic fortitude. I must say that proofs of competency such as those ought to have some influence on the spirit of privileged classes, and to induce them, not as a matter of conflict and of controversy, not from a regard for abstract theory, but upon grounds the most strictly practical, and with a view of strengthening the laws and institutions of the country, to make some sensible, ay, some liberal, though some safe extension of the franchise. It would be utterly futile to enter now into the question what should be the form of that extension. I cannot but agree that it would be most wise to include in that extension all those who, now being of a class and of a property equal to the possession of the franchise, are notwithstanding excluded from it. That is a measure which has received a name from a very distinguished gentleman, Mr. Disraeli. He calls it a lateral extension; I would rather call it an extension side-ways, and that is a name which abundantly describes its meaning. But the opinion

of her Majesty's Government has been and is, that, though that is very good, it is not enough, and that there ought also to be, speaking of the country at large, an extension downwards, one the effect of which should be that in the borough constituencies in general the working classes should exist as a sensible fraction or proportion of those constituencies, and that their voice should be more freely and fully heard in the Houses of Parliament, in order not only that their interests may be more fully represented in Parliament, but that their feelings may be yet more warmly enlisted in the welfare of our common country.

And now, gentlemen, shall I say a word to you about the Dee and Mersey Railway? That is a great descent, is it not? But I have not the smallest objection to discuss the Dee and Mersey Railway, or any other subject whatever. I have a very clear conscience about the Dee and Mersey Railway; for my interests are the same as yours. I am the owner of what a little man may call a considerable frontage upon the river Dee, but the whole value of that frontage depends upon the navigation of that river. It would play the mischief with me if that navigation was stopped: and therefore my interests are exactly the same as those of the city of Chester. And my agency, I may state, was very actively employed at the proper time to induce the promoters of that bill to place in the bill such clauses for the protection of the river, and the protection of the navigation, that I, as a person whose only interest in the property was an interest in the navigation, should be satisfied with. But, gentlemen, what has my son to do with it? Do you suppose I have been indoctrinating him with the rights and the wrongs of the Dee and Mersey Railway? The rule seems to me to be this: If a man's father has done any good, "Oh," you say, "that is the father;" but if a man's father has done any mischief, you say, "See, the father has done it: depend upon it the son will do the same." Well, but I hold exactly the contrary. And I say this, we have all got faults. I have plenty of them, and I want my son to avoid them. But if I have ever done any service, or been of the smallest use to my countrymen, I beseech him so far, and so far only, to imitate my example. I was going to say—I am member for another place, and he is member for Chester, but that is not true: however, I think it will soon be true, and I am confident that, if he be the object of your choice, it will be the desire and aim of his heart and life to be worthy of your favour; worthy, even in the promotion of those local interests, which are not the things for which you send a man to Parliament, yet which are of considerable importance, and on which you are entitled to be fully and fairly represented. He will be worthy, then, in his devotion to your local interests, and I am persuaded he will be worthy, in a yet wider sense, in a conscientious and enlightened attachment to those principles and that policy which have been proved, by the sure test of experience, to be alike calculated to develop the material resources of this country, to increase the comfort of those by whom the great business of British labour is conducted, to knead and bind together in unity the different classes of the community, to increase the name and influence of England abroad, and to contribute to every good and beneficent purpose for which Providence has given us a place in the family of nations.

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