

for the future of her parliament ; she looked forward to a day as certainly near when, the spirit of the people triumphing over the greediness of the boroughmongers, Ireland would enjoy the merited boon of a truly national parliament. The Irish people, moreover, understood too well that miserably as fared their interests in their own parliament, far less could they expect, when their affairs would be placed in the hands of a nation from whom they had received anything but sympathy.

That the apprehensions of the Irish were well founded, the history of the century just expired is conclusive proof. The facts are glaring. The Union itself was not consummated without confirming the worst fears of the people. For, not only were the Irish robbed of their parliamentary independence, but, horrible to relate ! theirs was the money that rewarded the miscreants who committed that frightful deed. From the Irish treasury, in fact, were drawn the sums that were spent on the hundred and twenty-six thousand soldiers that were maintained in the country to overawe the people ; thence Castlereagh drew the immense sums that persuaded the Irish Commons to support the Act of Union.

This however was but a prelude to the drama of injustice and iniquity that was about to begin. At the time of the Union, the national debt of Ireland, owing to the liberality of Castlereagh, was £21,000,000; while that of England was £446,000,000. By the terms of Union, England was to bear forever the burden of those four hundred and forty-six millions ; while Ireland was to stand responsible for her twenty one millions only. Have those terms of the Act been complied with ? No. To-day Ireland owes that stupendous sum. But how did this happen ? This way. The debts were to remain separate, but each nation was to contribute to the actual expenditure in a certain proportion, 2 from Ireland against 15 from England. As soon, however, as the respective debts should be brought to bear to each other the proportions of the contributions, that is to say 2 to 15, they were to be consolidated, and the two countries to be taxed indiscriminately by equal taxes. That the 2 to 15 proportion would exhaust and impoverish Ireland in a few years, no one, knowing the great poverty of Ireland at that time, could possibly deny. Many Irish lords knew the state of Ireland, and vainly protested against the 2 to 15 rate as exor-