

IRISH NATIONAL CONVENTION IN DUBLIN.

Continued from Page Three.

9. To secure the election of county councils which will faithfully represent the determination of the Nationalists of the country, never to be content with less than Mr. Gladstone's measure of Home Rule as a minimum, and which will come together once a year in a National Council to agitate for: (a) the control of the police by the representative of the people as in England; (b) the transfer to the county councils either singly or in groups of any funds devoted to the development of agriculture in Ireland, the promotion of technical education and the encouragement of deep sea and inland fisheries; (c) the transaction of Irish Private Bill legislation in Ireland; (d) such amendments of the Local Government Act as will enable district and county councils to maintain the roads and public works by the employment of direct labor, if they see fit, to wherever it may be found practicable; (e) the removal of the present system of vexatious interference of the Local Government with the decisions of the representatives of the people; (f) the conferring on the Irish County Councils of all other powers enjoyed by the county councils of Great Britain, which are withheld by the Irish Local Government Act, and especially of all compulsory powers of acquiring land for the purpose of cottage allotments.

10. A National agreement for the use of Irish manufacturers, and a preference for articles of Irish manufacture in public contracts, so far as practicable.

11. The preservation of the Gaelic language as part of the struggle for the recovery of our National freedom; its right to be treated as to all school and college endowments of a public character on the same footing as any modern language, and its adoption as the vehicle of primary teaching in the districts where the use of the Gaelic language predominates.

12.—Membership of the United Irish League shall be open to all sections of Irish Nationalists alike, without any distinction of class or creed.

13.—The United Irish League shall consist of a branch in each parish, or a recognized division of a parish, governed by a chairman, treasurer, secretary, and committee, to be elected annually.

14.—Each branch shall elect annually six delegates to represent it on a divisional executive, established or so to be established in each Parliamentary division, and to include the clergy of all denominations in addition to the elected delegates of the branches. Each of the divisional executives shall meet from time to time in some central town within the division, and shall elect annually a president, treasurer, and secretary, and shall be entitled to hear and decide all complaints, and direct common action in all matters arising within the division, and generally to transact all the affairs of the League within the division, and to receive 75 per cent. of the subscriptions contributed by the branches, the remaining 25 per cent. being retained by the branches for the purposes of defraying the local expenses.

15.—Each divisional executive shall elect annually a delegate who shall be their representative on the provincial directory. The directory for each province shall consist of the delegates so elected by each of the divisional executives within the province, together with the president and vice-president, if the delegates desire to elect to these offices or either of them a person or persons who are not members of the directory by direct election.

16.—Pending the election of a directory for all the provinces of Ireland, the general government of the organization shall be administered by the members of provincial directories already appointed, or who may be appointed, together with the Chairman and officers of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

17.—As soon as the directories for the provinces of Ulster, Munster, Leinster, and Connaught shall have been duly established, the members of the four provincial directories, together with the Chairman and officers of the Irish Parliamentary Party, shall formulate a scheme for the appointment of a permanent National Directory to serve as the supreme governing body of the United Irish League, and shall submit same for the consideration of the National Convention, to be summoned as soon as may be convenient after the general election.

Canon Shinkwin continued—They all must see—every honest politician must see—not only the advantages, but the absolute necessity, for an organized and united Ireland. (Cheers.) Did any man doubt after that little resume of Irish political history that an organized Ireland was an absolute necessity for Ireland? (Cheers.)

Mr. Adams, chairman of the Tullamore District Council, seconded the resolution.

The Chairman then proceeded to put the articles of constitution to the meeting, and called on Mr. William O'Brien to speak to the first.

Mr. William O'Brien, who was received with loud and long cheering, said: I was not anxious to interfere to take part more than was feasible in the proceedings of this Convention, for some of us have already done our humble best to give the Irish people a united organization. And it is now for the Irish people to decide whether it was worth their while to go on and complete the work. But it is impossible for any man to face this great assembly of the democracy of Ireland without feeling that this Convention represents a mighty—even a

sacred—National power, below which any man with Irish blood in his veins need have no difficulty in bowing down and in submitting himself to whatever may be the outcome of the deliberations, of the wisdom, and of the patriotism of this assembly. We have here again, thank God, practically the whole host of the Parnellites and of the anti-Parnellites of the country meeting here again, not to reproach one another, not to fight one another, but to pledge our united energies to one more united campaign all along the line for the freedom and for the very existence of this unconquerable old race of ours. At the time of the split new and evil elements forced themselves to the front on both sides equally—the grabber influence, the rent office influence, the rotten Whig influence, which had hitherto been obliged to hold down their heads, and to whom, unfortunately, dissension gave a chance. These gentlemen are not satisfied. They are deeply disgusted, and I am glad of it. Their very breath of life depends upon dissension, upon keeping the country disorganized. I am bound to add, and I do so in the most earnest way that for that happy result we are indebted largely, and I should say chiefly, to the Parnellites of the country, because beyond doubt it would have been impossible to give this organization the grip and power it has in the country but for the Parnellite rank and file of the country. I have said to you that I believe you already possess almost in its fulness that essential unity which is the only unity that any country can ever hope to have, especially after such an earthquake as that which has torn this country. Judge it by any test you wish to apply. Judge it by public meetings, and I have no contempt for public meetings—I say that no free public meeting throughout the country has pronounced against the League. Take the elective public bodies of the country; they are in an overwhelming majority with us. Take the test of public subscriptions. Within the last few months something like £5,000 has been contributed, and in exceedingly small sums, and from the poorest parts of the country. If, as I believe, the resolution which stands lower down on the paper in the name of Monsignor McEvoy is carried and that the Convention issues a mandate to the branches of the League, which number something like one thousand—a mandate to collect a general election fund, £10 a branch would elect £10,000, and there are many branches that will not stop at £10, £20, or even £30. I say that the programme of the League is absolutely the only alternative that any human being can suggest, unless the abandonment of constitutional agitation altogether. Then, I say, it is the duty of the democracy of Ireland not to sit and wring their hands but to be in and doing.

Mr. Frank Hugh O'Connell next addressed the Convention. He came forward, he said, earnestly, resolutely, with no other thought but full determination to do all in his power to further the organization of the United Irish League. They knew what they were fighting against; they were fighting against the extermination of their race. If they were to remain longer unorganized, disunited, uncoordinated, the Irish race would cease to exist. The plans of the enemy are laid to depopulate their country and take it from them, and make their name a mockery in history. Alderman Wm. Doyle, Dublin, supported the resolutions.

Mr. Andrew Kettle, who was the next speaker, said that the rents in the West were very largely paid with wages earned in other parts of the world, and consequently the laborer there is defrauded of his hire. The United Irish League had sprung from that. The United Irish League had taken up the fight just where it was dropped by the Land League. All intervening political organizations since in his opinion, did not count for much, nothing had been done by either Whig or Tory, and after running the whole round they were back to the old Irish fighting line again.

The Rev. T. M. O'Callaghan, C.C., Doneraile, said: Needless for him to state that it filled him with feelings of encouragement and of hope to be present once more at a National Convention. Ten years ago Ireland stood united as one man in one grand effort to that great end. That unity commanded the respect and the admiration of the world, such as Ireland had never commanded before. That unity obtained for Ireland a sympathy and a support from the men of every race and of every clime throughout the length and breadth of the earth. That unity it was which compelled England to listen to the voice of Ireland, and to consider seriously the question of Ireland's wrongs. The Commons of England passed the third reading of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill simply and solely because that Home Rule Bill was demanded by a united Ireland. If that unity had lasted Ireland would have Home Rule to-day, and there would have been no necessity for this Convention. But, unfortunately, that unity did not last. The old curse of disunion came upon them in the very moment of victory, and from that time almost down to the present the petty quarrelling and the faction-fighting and the everlasting dissension and disagreeing—not so much of the Irish people as of a minority of the representatives of the Irish people—have made us the laughing-stock of our enemies, and have alienated from us the sympathy of the civilized world.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., in the course of an eloquent speech, said: The question of emigration was one of a material loss to the country. I take another side. I am glad my friend, Father Clancy referred to this. I believe the people of this country

in a foreign land possessed some of the great virtues which have possessed and maintained the race before. I believe any race subjected to the same temptations would yield a larger number of victims and outcasts. I believe that this Convention will rightly make an appeal to the Irish priesthood—a solemn appeal—to organize and unite the country again. I speak in the middle of a country that is perishing before our eyes so much so that I am afraid to go back to the streets of the town where I was born, and into the streets of the town in which I spent my boyhood, where I see nothing but ruin and decay, the people gone, and only skeletons of the houses that they had left behind them. No man would more willingly and frankly confess than the gentleman who was in the chair here to-day that a Parnellite rose but once in a generation of mankind. But what was equally true even a Parnellite would have done nothing without a party and country behind him. We cannot produce another Parnellite in our time, but what we can do, and will do, is to give to the leader of the Irish Party in Parliament the same united people, the same popular organization. What we can do and will do is to give to Mr. Redmond, as leader of the Irish Party in Parliament, the same united people, the same loyal and disciplined party; and I promise you that, although we have no Parnellite at our head now, we have once more a united party, backed by a united people. Once more in the lobbies of the House of Commons the voice of poor Ireland will decide the destinies of big England.

Mr. T. Harrington, M.P., said:—I desire just to say a few brief words in support of the resolutions that have been submitted to you. I agree with the speakers who have preceded me in recognizing the national character of this Convention, and I agree with them that speaking as the Convention does for absolutely a united Ireland, nothing should stand in the way of the Convention completing the organization of the country. I think I am entitled to say to my fellow-countrymen that it is not by threats it is not by tramping over brother Irishmen, that you can win the service of men either for the Parliamentary Party or the National movement. It is by broadening the doors, by calling for their help, and if you do that, I have no doubt, as Mr. O'Brien said, everything that is just and honest and worthy in Irish politics will be on your side in the movement. I recognize already how much unity has been promoted. Let us not stop half way, and let us not leave outside our ranks any man whose services can be useful to Ireland, but whatever he may say or whatever he may do, whatever his quarrels with any other man may be, I say that his patriotism cannot be sincere so long as he obtrudes those differences upon the progress of his native country. If the feelings which animate this conference are carried back by you from this meeting, we shall not merely have an organized country, but a country absolutely enthusiastic, determined, and resolute to support the Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, and above all, to support on public platforms the right of the people to live on their native soil.

Mr. T. J. Condon, M.P., said they had no personal hostility to any man in Irish politics, no matter who he may be; no matter what he may have said; they were not going to resurrect the past ten years, but there must be finality in things.

Mr. John Fitzgibbon (Castlereagh) said that as one who took a prominent part for the past ten years on one side against another, he thought the present was a fortunate moment for appealing to his fellow-Nationalists throughout the country to forget the past and unite together in the cause of Ireland and their native land.

Other delegates having spoken, the Convention adjourned until Tuesday.

TUESDAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

The meeting of the Convention was resumed on Tuesday. The first matters taken in hand were the definition of the object and the constitution of the United Irish League.

The question of making it a part of the programme of that body to facilitate the purchase of their cottages by laborers gave rise to some discussion. Mr. Harrington objecting to the proposal on the grounds that laborers would then be tempted to sell their cottages to publicans or farmers, and the public money would have been spent to no purpose. The meeting, however, was against Mr. Harrington, who withdrew his amendment by permission.

On the question of financial relations, a resolution was adopted by which the policy of seeking a differentiation of taxation between England and Ireland was by implication abandoned, and the claim of Ireland was expressed in the demand that the £3,000,000 of over taxation wrongly extorted from Ireland should be de-

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voted to strictly Irish purposes, particularly the abolition of landlordism, the endowment of a Catholic University, and the provision of agricultural and technical education. A special clause appealing for the endowment of a university such as Catholics could conscientiously make use of was supported in an able speech by Mr. Hugh A. Law, son of a late Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

After some minor points relating to the local governing bodies and to the funds of the League had been dealt with, a question of importance was raised by Mr. Edward Blake. It was to be provided in the constitution of the League that the supreme governing body should consist of the provincial directories plus the chairman and officers of the Parliamentary Party. This would place the latter in a hopeless minority, and give the League absolute control of the electoral organizations of Ireland. Mr. Blake urged that the League should either take full responsibility, and admit no representatives of the Parliamentary Party at all, or else admit them in equal numbers to the members of the League.

Mr. William O'Brien met this proposal, or at least the latter (which was the really effective) part of it with an uncompromising resistance. He declared that he could not deal with the reasons for the subordination of the Parliamentary Party without going into controversial matters, but to make them again the predominant and supreme authority would be the death of the party and the movement. Mr. O'Brien said that members of Parliament might get returned to the directorate by League branches if they liked, but the people were masters, and would remain masters, and meant to found an organization which no man could defy. Mr. Harrington, who spoke amid some interruptions, argued that the people were just as much responsible as the party for the dissensions of the past ten years.

Mr. John Dillon denounced the proposal to plant in the very midst of their organization, and in the citadel of their power, men who would run and wreck their whole movement. After Mr. Dillon's speech, the chairman, in a short speech, emphatically supported the original proposals against Mr. Blake's suggested amendment. He protested against the attempt to force on the temporary governing body of the League persons who perhaps reside entirely out of the country, or who may shortly be leaving public life altogether. He then put the resolution, and declared it carried unanimously.

A resolution appointing Dr. O'Donnell, Mr. John Redmond, and Alderman Stephen O'Mara trustees of the Parliamentary Party was next carried without amendment.

Mr. Blake's resolutions providing (1) for payment of indemnities to members of Parliament on condition of satisfactory attendance, as certified by the member concerned; and (2) for choice of candidates by divisional conventions, summoned by the central body, but without suggestion by the latter as to the candidate to be chosen, were then passed. The rest of the agenda was rapidly gone through, and a cordial vote of thanks to the chairman (who certainly filled his trying post with unflinching tact and dignity) was carried.

The following subscriptions were handed in to the Parliamentary Fund: Mr. E. Blake, £200; Mr. W. O'Brien £100; Mr. Byrne (of Belfast), £50; Mr. Mahoney (of Blarney), £20; and several smaller subscriptions.

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TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION

For some time past there has been considerable writing and talking about technical instruction and an institution specially devoted to that purpose. As yet the scheme is in its infancy as far as we are concerned; but infallibly the time is approaching when this country will be obliged in order to keep pace with the requirements of the age to have its technical industrial college or colleges. For the present, however, it would be well if preparation could be made to such an extent, at least, that the elementary stages would be passed by all students. This can only be done by having technical instruction of a preparatory kind given in all our schools. Possibly the idea we wish to convey is not thus expressed as we would like it; but we will give an explanation of our meaning in the words of one who has a special interest in this question.

Recently, the Right Hon. Horace C. Plunkett, P.C., M.P., and Vice-President of the Education Department, had a conference with the Technical Education Committee of the Corporation of Belfast; and in the course of his remarks, he said:

"Now, there are just three points that I would like to put before you. They embody conditions that the department feels are material to the success of a scheme of technical instruction which will be truly comprehensive in its scope. You should in the first place secure by every means in your power that your technical instruction scheme is co-ordinated with, and in a sense complementary to, the scheme of general education in the city of Belfast. Now, the sum of £10,000 (it may be more, but that we shall know next week)—this sum of money, whatever be its precise amount, is to be applied in aid of schemes for the purpose of technical instruction, but ought not to be applied solely for the purposes of your

technical college. It should be available for existing institutions; any institution which is giving science and art teaching, or which in any way may be engaged in preparing pupils for the technical college. It is clear to me that, whatever your technical college may be in itself, its success must very largely depend upon the extent or degree to which the pupils are prepared to avail themselves of the instruction it provides. Indeed, as you probably know, the greatest difficulty in starting a system of technical instruction is that pupils come up whose time and the time of whose professors has to be taken up, not in the education for which the new institution was designed, but in purely preparatory and even elementary work, the foundation of which ought to have been firmly fixed before the pupils reach the age of, say, sixteen years. Yes, gentlemen, the class of schools to which I refer will prove the best "feeders" of the college you contemplate establishing. Therefore you ought at once to examine what the existing facilities in Belfast actually are, and what schools need assistance in order to fit them more fully for the most important work of preparing what may be called "the first crop" of students for the proposed technical college."

In Belfast they are about to have an industrial college, hence these remarks concerning the existing schools. It is otherwise with us; here the prospects of a grand, central industrial institution, is a question that must await the future for its solution, and one that is more speculative than actual; still the same logic applies. If ever we are to have such an institution, it is expedient that preparations therefor should at once be commenced; and if we are never to have one, then our youth need whatever technical training the schools of the hour can afford.

A second point in that address is well worthy of our attention, although we would make a different application of it under our different circumstances. The Rt. Hon. gentleman said:—

"The second of the points on which I am insisting is that it is essential that the college should be closely related to the chief industries of Belfast. I suppose the chief industries are the linen industry, including bleaching, dyeing, and so forth; the engineering industry, and all that it includes in the shipyards and elsewhere, and, I think, looking to the future."

Entirely apart from any question of technical industrial education, it appears to us that greater efforts should be made in all our schools, to have the instruction imparted to the pupils in "close relation" with the chief industries of our country. In other words, that the course of studies in each school should be so arranged as to aim at sending forth young men thoroughly equipped for the business and commercial pursuits most in vogue in Canada. Every hour of study should be so taken up that it would be calculated to advance a youth towards a thorough fitness for the position, or positions, that he is likely to see once his school days are over. This seems to us a subject of the gravest importance, and one that should awaken the attention of our educators.

AN OPEN LETTER

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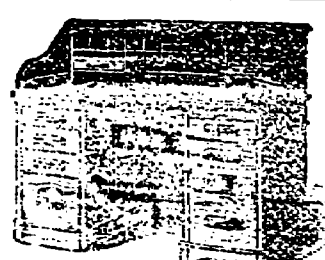
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