

self aloft on an easy pivot eager to catch the slightest breeze of popularity. For this reason he is a radical with a big R. He has no particular love for the masses, and if the truth were told, the masses have no particular love for him. He is a screw manufacturer, and it is said he is a screw at bargains, and that he has screwed some men out of prosperity altogether.

Parnell sits like a Sphinx in the midst of a lot of excitable Celts. When the fire of debate rages and seethes among his little band he does not wince at the heat of the wordy flames. He is cool and quiet as an iceberg. He can say the most cutting things with the most gentlemanly accent; he rarely raises his voice above the conversational tone, and he seldom lifts his hand even to stroke his beard. He is a model of self-possession, and he is the more remarkable in this wise, surrounded as he is by sympathetic followers who do not, as a rule, share his powers of self-control.—*From the Boston Home Journal.*

### THE HISTORY OF THE IRISH UNION.\*

AMONG all the enormous forces which Mr. Gladstone personally brings to the aid of any cause which he espouses, which is the chiefest and most important? For our own part, we have no doubt as to the answer. It is not that stupendous power of labour which we once heard described by one who knew him well as "a capacity for doing sixteen hours' work in each twenty-four, and doing in each of those hours more than any other man could do in three." It is not that unrivalled command of a most powerful party which absolutely at his bidding changes the passionate beliefs of yesterday, so that to-day it rejects them with a passion as fierce. It is not that unrivalled experience of Parliament which he can wield with so dexterous a hand, that it may count to-night for service the very opposite of that in which it told yesterday. It is not even that marvellous felicity of diction which seems always, in each sentence, to prepare an audience for the next; and then in that next only not to provide the very words that seemed inevitable, because those that actually break upon the ear so much more exquisitely fulfil anticipation, that they seem like the thought already awakened, given its apotheosis in language. No; nor is it that widespread and intense belief in his personal character which has survived all shocks. No; nor the tradition of his financial achievements and his financial genius. No; not all these, nor many other sources of power that might be named, count for so much as this,—that to an extent that men hardly realise, Mr. Gladstone determines, alike for his opponents and for his friends, what shall be the assumed facts on which discussion is carried on. The notion of his enormous power of research and the conviction of his integrity of purpose deter men from following him into his authorities, and for him alone that soundest of all sound rules, "Always verify quotations," is not applied. This temptation so placed in the way of any man enthusiastically espousing a cause on which he has set his heart, to see facts as they suit the purpose of his cause, it would be almost beyond human capacity to resist. For a consummate artist, absorbed as every such artist must be in his art, the tendency to catch at just what will persuade an audience, merely because that perfects the artistic finish of the work, must be something that those of us who have never felt that magic sympathy with a great crowd swaying beneath our breath, cannot even imagine. George Eliot has, perhaps, better than any one else made conceivable what that feeling is. Let us realise what the temptation is, but let us clearly realise also that it is one of the terrible dangers of majestic oratory. The present writer's attention was first drawn to the matter in the reference, in the great speech on the Irish Compensation Bill of last autumn, to the Report of the Devon Commission. Actual verification by that not very accessible document showed conclusively that the fact on which the whole speech turned was inverted by applying what had been said by that Commission, and conclusively established in evidence before it, of the subtenants of the tenant-farmers, to the tenants direct, of whom all that evidence went to show that it was *not* generally true. Since that time we have been most anxious that some one should undertake the task of carefully searching the actual records of the history of the Irish Union to ascertain whether all this tremendous denunciation that we have been listening to of all that England in the past has done, is bitter truth, which we must bear to hear with bowed heads, in grieving silence, saying with Mr. Albert Dicey, "Very well! let us grant all that, but then—"; or whether, instead, the story be true which has reached us from Ireland that there still exist numerous specimens of the manifestly genuine petitions which were addressed to the Crown by Protestants and Catholics alike, showing that the feeling of the people was all in favour of Union with England at the time, and that the only money that was paid was to prevent private and selfish interests from barring the way of a great popular movement.

With the greatest possible delight, therefore, we recognise that this task has been fairly undertaken by very competent hands, and that the result is, on the whole, in the highest degree satisfactory. . . . The service which he [Dr. Ingram] has rendered to the country at the present time is very great; and we cannot too strongly urge all those who care to be brought into contact with original authorities, and to have decisive evidence laid before them, to convince themselves how completely baseless most of the charges against Pitt and Castlereagh are.

The case which Dr. Ingram establishes is this:

1. That the effective cause of the passing of the Act of Union was that the wish of the Irish people, Catholic more strongly than Protestant, but both in agreement, had before the passing of the Act come to be strongly in favour of it.

2. That the evidence that this was the genuine and spontaneous feeling

of the great majority of the people is various and complete; that of the Catholic Bishops, we have all the four Archbishops, thirteen out of nineteen Bishops, and the agent of the secular Bishops, "all declaring by words and deeds that the Union was necessary to save Ireland." Of the inferior clergy, we have everywhere evidence of their being, except in Dublin, eager to head the seventy-four petitions and declarations made in all parts of Ireland in favour of Union. And this is evidenced further by the fury with which Grattan assailed the Catholic clergy as "a band of prostituted men engaged in the service of Government." The writer shows that evidence, as complete as to the general sentiments of the Catholic laity, still exists, and further, that the Catholic electors were in overwhelming majority in almost all constituencies that were not merely pocket-seats.

3. That the condition of representation was such at the time that, alike in England, Scotland, and Ireland, the value of a borough, as an investment, was a thoroughly understood thing; so much so, that it was regularly the subject of settlement, will, public sale, etc., and that the interest on the capital so invested was understood to be the purchase of a seat at each election from the proprietor, by those who wished thus to enter the House. Grattan, both in 1784 and in 1800, purchased his seat from a borough proprietor.

4. That in 1785, when Pitt desired to introduce Parliamentary reform in England, he had declared that it "could only be brought about by two means, by an act of power, or by an adequate consideration which might induce bodies or individuals to part with rights which they considered as a species of valuable inheritance or of personal property," and that he thought the latter the only just mode of dealing with the question.

5. That, in accordance with this principle, precisely as subsequently the slave holders were compensated for a vested interest which now seems at least as immoral as that of the borough-owners, a vote was publicly passed in the House of Commons granting £1,260,000 as compensation for the disturbance of vested interests; but that it is absurd to speak of this as a bribe, because it was distributed with absolute impartiality by a public and independent Court, to those who resisted and opposed the measure to the last, as freely as to those who had voted for the Union.

6. That those who resisted and opposed the Union, and the motives which determined their conduct, are very clearly indicated by the circular which was sent round on January 20, 1800, for supplying the form of petition which was to be signed against the Union. Besides Lord Charlemont, the son of the great Volunteer, the other two signatories are Lord Downshire and W. B. Ponsonby. Now, the Ponsonbys exercised paramount influence, direct or indirect, over the return of twenty-two Members to the Irish Parliament, and Lord Downshire over as many. The essence of their struggle was that of a dominant oligarchy unwilling to abandon a position of power, though it seemed about to crumble under their feet.

7. In the course of the very struggle itself, the orators who spoke for these oligarchs confessed, as they expressed it, that "the people had abandoned them."

8. That, loud as has been the talk about the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, there never was an agent less likely than Lord Cornwallis to be selected by a Minister wishing to carry out an underhand intrigue; that no breath of scandal has ever sullied his personal character; and that yet, throughout, whilst utterly disgusted with the low intrigues which he became aware of as practised by the oligarchic opponents of Union, he never expresses anything in his most private letters but absolute confidence and satisfaction with all that was done on the Government side.

9. That the bribery by the Opposition was undoubted and unblushing; as Lord Cornwallis puts it: "The enemy, to my certain knowledge, offer £5,000 ready money for a vote; if we had the means, and were disposed to make such vile use of them, we dare not trust the credit of Government in the hands of such rascals." That this is proved to the hilt by their own admissions.

10. That the Opposition, with that recklessness of language which was characteristic of the time, flung about accusations of bribery against the Government which they were challenged again and again to substantiate, and were utterly unable to prove.

11. That the only letters out of all the correspondence between the Irish Government and Pitt which have given colour to the accusation of bribery manifestly refer to no such matter, but to the compensation paid to certain merchants who had no power of commanding votes; and that that compensation was paid in consequence of their suffering by the intended change of tariff.

12. That the whole arrangements were only such as a prudent Ministry would necessarily adopt at a time when private interests were liable to suffer severely; and that the object was not to sacrifice the public interest by private corruption, but to gain an end recognised by the whole nation as vital, by cutting the ground from under the feet of those who, on purely selfish grounds, were opposing it.—*From the Spectator.*

THE Directors' Report of the affairs of the Dominion Bank, presented at the Annual Meeting on May 25th, shows the Bank to be doing a safe and profitable business. By an addition of \$50,000 this year to the Reserve Fund, the amount of this fund has been increased to \$1,070,000, with a paid-up capital of \$1,500,000—a position of great strength, which has enabled the Bank to pay two dividends of five per cent. each the past year. The business, the report tells us, is well maintained in every branch; and that it is conducted with skill and prudence may be seen as well from the large amount of net earnings as from the small amount of unsecured overdue debts. The position of the Bank is an unusually strong one: the circulation is moderate in proportion to the capital, the deposits are good; and there is a clear excess of Assets over Liabilities to the Public of \$2,070,842.

\* A History of the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland. By T. Dunbar Ingram, LL.D. London: Macmillan and Company. 1887.