

thoroughly Irish, so for him a change was soon to come. He was even chosen as an opponent to O'Connell in a great debate on Repeal in the Dublin Corporation, 1844. His opposition to O'Connell, however, was remarkable as being free from all that bitterness and bigotry so common to the great Liberator's opponents in those times. Mr. Butt was one of the most successful lawyers in Ireland in his day. The Fenian prisoners sought his powerful aid. His noble heart could not refuse them. For four years he was engaged in their defence, and came out at last a thorough friend of the people's cause. With the fall of the Irish Church he decided to use his splendid talents in endeavouring to bring about a union of all classes and creeds of Irish people, and a final settlement of their difficulties with England. Home Rule was his plan.

Butt's Home Rule movement differed from "Repeal" in some important respects. In the old parliament of Ireland, it will be remembered, there was no responsible ministry. A cabinet could not be removed by a vote of "want of confidence." The new Home Rule plan provided for the establishment at Dublin, not only of a national parliament, but also of a responsible administration, which was to have control over all that related to purely Irish affairs.

This first great meeting could not, however, be said to be a real national affair. The sanction of the Irish people, as a nation, was yet wanting. In the fall of '73, a great national conference was held to consider the new organization's platform, and after some debating and explaining, the whole policy of Home Rule was unanimously accepted. The Irish representatives were now to take an independent stand in parliament, and were to fight unceasingly for Irish reforms, but above all for Home Rule. Home Rule, like every other new political scheme, had its enemies. The two great political parties of England dreaded it, and determined to fight it to the end. Even in Ireland a large number of Catholics, owing to the fact of its having received the ready approbation of so many Protestants, were inclined to regard it with mistrust. They seemed to think that it was simply a scheme of Orangemen to

revenge on the Liberals the loss sustained by the Episcopal Church. Orangemen, on the other hand, saw in the new movement, a subtle attempt of Jesuits to take hold of Ireland for the Pope. Notwithstanding all opposition, however, the new platform found greater favour every day among the masses of the Irish people. The majority of the Fenian-men declared it an organization unworthy of true Irishmen. Some of the more prudent, among them, however, joined heart and hand in the struggle for Home Rule. The bye-elections, too, told wonderfully in its favour.

In parliament the greatest discouragement was met with. Whig and Tory alike set to work with full determination to destroy the "new evil" in its inception. Overwhelming majorities voted down every motion made by members of the new party. Finally with a view to completely crushing all the efforts of Home Rulers, the government, without a whisper of such an intention, even the day previous, dissolved parliament, January 24th, 1874. This move, it was thought, would break all hope of the unprepared and yet poorly organized Home Rulers. The news was flashed across to Ireland and was received with a feeling akin to despair. But "there was not to reason why; there was but to do or die," and manfully they closed up their ranks and plunged into the fight. Never before in Ireland were such efforts made on all sides. The new party had come to stay, and the advocates of Home Rule were on all sides triumphant. Beyond the most sanguine anticipations were they successful. They had hoped to win thirty, or forty seats at the utmost. The full returns credited them with having captured forty-eight. The Gladstone ministry suffered everywhere, and in the new parliament Mr. Disraeli was called into office.

Now came the tug-of-war. Mr. Butt would have none other than a policy of conciliation, and the British parties would meet him with nothing but hostility. The Irish millions were all the while watching midst alternate hopes and fears. It was the critical moment. If the people once lost confidence in the new party all was lost. Many regarded Mr. Butt's conciliatory policy as a hopeless one. He,