

the Bill if you wish to avert civil war." The Lords held out for three days until they, too, found it impossible to disobey that imperative "must." Then Wellington took the Bill to the King to secure his signature. Father Tom Burke has left us a vivid word-picture of that celebrated meeting between the "first black-guard of Europe" and his Prime Minister. "The Bill had passed the Lords and Commons and Wellington took it, on banded knee, and offered it to George IV. The king refused to read it. 'You must read it!' He read it. 'Never!' 'You must do it! It cannot be helped!' He took the pen into his hand,—and he burst into tears! He did not weep when he broke the heart of his wife and declared her to be an adulteress. He did not weep at the ruin of every form of innocence that ever came before him—that was destroyed and polluted by his unholy touch. He did not weep when he left Richard Brinsley Sheridan, his own friend, to die of starvation in a garret in London. He had no tears to weep. He had no heart to feel. The bloated voluptuary!—he was never known to weep in his life, only when he was signing the Bill of Emancipation and then he wept the devil's tears." On April 10th, 1829, the Bill became the Act of Catholic Emancipation, and thus in five short weeks from its inception was passed one of the most important bills ever considered by a British Parliament. When O'Connell arrived at Westminster the right to occupy his seat was denied him. He demanded and obtained a parliamentary enquiry into the validity of his election. The Commission decided that he was entitled to his place in the House upon his taking the oath of Supremacy. Advancing to the Bar, the Liberator asked for a copy of the oath wherein he read "that the sacrifice of the Mass, and the Invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints, as practised in the Church of Rome, are impious and idolatrous," and afterwards a reference to the dispensing power of the Pope. Upon reaching the second passage, he drew himself erect and glaring back defiance at the bigots that composed this most Protestant of assemblies "I cannot take this oath," he cried; "part of it I know to be false, part of it I do not believe to be

true." He then withdrew from the House and writs were immediately issued for a new election. O'Connell again presented himself to the electors of Clare, and again was returned with a large majority. He took his seat in the House early in the session of 1830, this time without opposition. One part of his double aim in life had been accomplished by the passage of the Act of '29, and he now turned all his energies to the achievement of the second, Repeal of the Union. In '31, the Ministry endeavored to bribe him by creating him King's Counsel, but little did they know the man with whom they had to deal, if they dreamt that English honors would abate his zeal for Ireland's cause. All the honors of the world could not swerve him from his purpose, as the Ministers soon found to their cost. Indeed, the Premier took occasion, some time later, to complain that the efforts of the government to conciliate O'Connell had not been received in the manner that they had anticipated. The Liberator aided the Scotch Reformers and the English Radicals to secure new privileges for the masses of Britain, hoping thus to enlist their sympathies for the cause of Repeal. These faithless friends, however, deserted him as soon as it became a question of extending the reform to Ireland. Yet far from discouraging him, this desertion seemed to inspire him with greater courage and a sterner resolve. Seeing that he could not count upon the support of the English and Scotch members, and that further delay was dangerous, he determined to bring the question to a decisive issue. Perhaps no scene in all history presents a more inspiring picture for poet or painter than the scene in the British House of Commons on the evening of the 22nd of April, 1834, when O'Connell rose from his place to move his proposition for the Repeal of the Union. As he looked around before commencing his speech, a solemn stillness held the House. Almost every man in his auditory feared him, hated him. Willingly would they have refused him a hearing. Willingly would they have cried him down with shouts of derision. But he overawed them by his superior will, and commanded their attention and respect. Slowly and calmly he proceeded