

IRISH INTELLIGENCE

MR. S. O'BRIEN'S ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

Many of those who are zealous advocates of the Legislative Independence of Ireland are comparatively careless. If not wholly indifferent in respect to the measures affecting this country, which are brought forward in the British Parliament. Such indifference has never been shared by me. Even those who deny that the British Parliament is entitled de jure to make laws for Ireland, must admit de facto the well-being and happiness of this country depend upon the character and details of its enactments. Hence it has always seemed to me to be the special duty of Repealers to suggest useful measures for public consideration. If those measures be rejected an additional argument is afforded in favour of domestic legislation. If they be adopted we gain a certain amount of compensation for the absence of those National Institutions without which Ireland can never enjoy a permanent guarantee for its rights and interests.

Such being my sentiments, I devoted much time, when I was a Member of the Repeal Association, to the deliberations of the Parliamentary Committee of that body. It was the duty of this Committee to examine carefully all Bills brought before Parliament, and to suggest any measures which it might deem to be beneficial to Ireland. Several volumes of Reports emanated from the Committee, containing suggestions, of which some have been since realised and others still deserve to be adopted.

In like manner I persuaded several friends who were ardent advocates of the Independence of Ireland to take part in the deliberations of "The Irish Council"—a body of Irish gentlemen, differing very much from each other in political opinions, who were brought into friendly consultation by the exigencies of the Famine. From this body also emanated several suggestions which if adopted, would have tended greatly to mitigate the horrors of that fearful season, and to prevent the ruin which subsequently overspread the land.

Being still animated by the same impulses and convictions which induced me to adopt this course of action, I propose to submit from time to time, for the consideration of the Irish Nation, my ideas respecting questions of public policy. Various motives which it is not necessary to enumerate render me unwilling to return to the House of Commons, and I am equally reluctant to engage again in what is called "Constitutional Agitation," but I shall cheerfully apply my present leisure in assisting the formation of public opinion upon various questions which affect the well-being of all classes in this country.

Public opinion has of late years found no effective mode of giving utterance to itself. Indeed, it may be said that the voice of public opinion has been wholly paralysed. The popular associations, which in past times were formed in order to give utterance to the requirements of the people of Ireland, have been gradually undermined by the seductive influences which are at the command of the British Government; and your parliamentary representatives, with few exceptions, have been induced to array themselves as subordinates in the ranks of contending English factions, rather than to stand forth as champions of the national interests of Ireland.

The influences which thus tended to paralyse the expression of public opinion having, by the change of administration, been considerably relaxed, the time has arrived, or will shortly arrive, when it will be in your power, if you be so disposed, to re-establish both in and out of Parliament an Irish National Party.

Through what organ ought the voice of Ireland to speak? Through what agency can Irish interests be best protected? To these questions I answer without hesitation—through an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive.

But as we are still far from the attainment of a domestic government we have next to inquire what in the absence of such a government would be its best substitute?

To this question I answer, that it would be desirable that two or three hundred of the ablest and most patriotic men in Ireland, including such Irish representatives as you ought hereafter to choose—including also men selected on account of their intelligence and integrity from each corporation, and from each body of town Commissioners in Ireland, together with other persons who enjoy in a pre-eminent degree the confidence of the Irish people, should meet in permanent session in Dublin, to deliberate upon the special interests of Ireland, and also upon all questions in regard of which the interposition of Irish opinion could promote the general interests of mankind. Ireland is now deeply concerned in regard of colonial policy, for one-third of the inhabitants of the British Colonies are Irish either by birth or origin. Ireland is also concerned in regard of foreign policy, for wars cannot be recklessly or wickedly undertaken without involving Ireland in participation of their consequences. I firmly believe that such a body, sitting in Dublin, would exercise infinitely more influence over the deliberations of Parliament than can be possessed by the few representatives whom you send to London, where they are sustained by no national sympathy, and are subjected to a thousand influences which tend to seduce or to enthral them.

Ireland can scarcely be said to be represented, at all in the House of Lords; and in the House of Commons the Irish members do not constitute one sixth of the whole body of that assembly; so that even if they were incorruptible and united they could never hope to carry any measure by the direct action of Irish opinion. They could only aspire to the attainment of an indirect influence by acting as arbiters between the contending factions of England, by throwing their weight into the scale of whatever party might be most inclined to forward the interest of Ireland. To me it seems that the Irish nation would occupy a position, not only more dignified, but also more potential, if it were to speak out

its opinions directly upon its own soil through organs whose voice could neither be purchased nor misunderstood.

To establish, however, such a Consultative Council, as I have here contemplated, it would be necessary that there should prevail in this country a very different spirit from that which at present exists. I am, therefore, compelled to assume that we must use the agencies which we have been accustomed to employ rather than devise a new and abnormal mode of giving effect to Irish opinion.

Previous to the last general election I took the liberty to address you, with a view to induce you to select as your representatives men who would be prepared to act in Parliament as members of an Independent Irish Party, not as adherents of any of the English factions which occupy the arena of political conflict in the metropolis of the empire. I ventured to assume that fifty or even one hundred men of competent ability could be found in Ireland who would be willing to accept seats in the House of Commons, with a view to serve their country rather than to serve themselves and their connections; and I still think that such men could have been found if you had been disposed to select and support them. When you elect a town councillor or a guardian of the poor you choose persons who will administer these functions with integrity. You justly abhor and denounce jobbing when it is discovered in the operations of local boards, and of grand juries. Is it too much to expect that you should discourage jobbing on the part of those who are deputed to exercise the high functions of legislation as the parliamentary representatives of your country?

Similar advice was tendered to you by Mr. Sharman Crawford, whose opinion is entitled to much weight, and whose public character deserves the respect of every Irishman.

Mr. George Moore and the Tenant League also recommended a course of policy not very dissimilar, but limited to the attainment of one particular measure.

The address which I wrote upon that occasion was favourably received by the public, and more than one constituency adopted the principle of action which I recommended. But I cannot conceal from myself that a very large majority of the Irish members, probably at least ninety out of one hundred and five, were chosen upon the understanding that they were to enter Parliament as adherent either of the Whig minority or of the Conservative Opposition.

It is now for you to reconsider this question, and to determine what shall hereafter be the national policy of the people of Ireland. It seems highly improbable that Lord Derby's Government will be able to hold office for more than twelve months without making an appeal to the country, in order to determine whether it possesses the confidence of a majority of the electoral body of the United Kingdom.

It is for you now to consider what principle you ought to adopt, in the event of a dissolution, in the selection of your representatives. If you are Imperialists, you will choose Conservatives or Whigs; and I am far from denying that there are to be found amongst both Conservatives and Whigs many able and honorable men. If on the other hand, you are Nationalists, as a majority of you have in times past professed yourselves to be, you will avail yourselves of this opportunity to lay the foundation of an Irish National Party both in and out of Parliament.

If at the next election you fail to obtain an efficient body of representatives, you are entitled to lay such failure to the account of no power or party on earth except yourselves. If you select a candidate, as your representative, because he possesses a large fortune, and can afford to spend much money at an election, you must expect that he will feel himself at liberty to use for his own ends the privileges which he has purchased from you. If you select a candidate because he will by his influence with Government, be able to procure situations for those who shall have brought him into Parliament, you insure the immediate prostration of his independence, because you stipulate that he shall at once become a supplicant for ministerial favours. If, on the contrary, you call into public life men, because they are able, zealous, and upright, even though such men may not, as candidates solicit your suffrages—if you return such men to Parliament, free of expense, as has been done to their immortal honor, by the electors of the county of Wexford, in the case of Mr. McMahon, you may then hope that your country will enjoy henceforth the respect of mankind to an extent which it has not attained since the year 1782.

In the meantime it is desirable that your present representatives, and those who aspire to the honor of representing you hereafter in Parliament, should be made to understand fully what is the line of policy that you expect them to pursue, and what are the measures which you expect them to support as requirements sanctioned by the opinion of a large majority of the Irish nation. Assuming that it is possible to form in the British House of Commons a party which shall not be connected with either the Whigs, the Conservatives, or the Radicals, but shall act as an Independent Irish Party, its members must be contented to take their places on the opposite benches, and to remain there for an indefinite period—not factiously opposing any administration but strenuously resisting all bad measures, and encouraging the enactment of good laws as well as the practice of good government—though the influence which would speedily be obtained by a body of high-minded, able, and disinterested men, whose weight could at any time disturb the balance of power in relation to the rivalries of contending factions. It would, perhaps, be too much to expect that all the Irish members would consent to the abnegation of personal interest which such a course of action would impose, but if only fifty or sixty of our representatives would take up such a position in the House of Commons, with the consciousness of being sustained by the public opinion of the Irish nation, they would become arbiters of the fate of successive administrations, and would be enabled to confer countless advantages upon their country and upon mankind.

promised in the first part of this address that I would enumerate some of the measures to which a body of independent Irish members ought to apply their immediate attention; but the preliminary observations which I have been tempted to introduce, have occupied so much space that it has become necessary to postpone this enumeration to a future occasion.

I am not so presumptuous as to believe that my suggestion will affect in any considerable degree the destiny of my country, but if they carry with them any weight in influencing the opinion of a portion of my fellow-countrymen, a pause for reflecting upon what I have already said will be conducive rather than otherwise to the results which I seek to attain.

I remain your faithful friend,
WILLIAM S. O'BRIEN.
Cahirmoyle, March 29, 1858.

PROVINCIAL SYNOD IN TUAM.—His Grace the Archbishop, the Metropolitan of Connaught, has convened a Synod of the Prelates of the province, to be opened in this town on the 10th of August next. The usual form of Convocation has been posted at the principal entrance of the cathedral church.—Tuam Herald.

THE SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.—We have been informed that the above Religious are to arrive in our city, during the ensuing week, to take charge of the inmates of the Magdalen Asylum.—Waterford Chronicle.

Mr. Maguire, M.P., has been honoured by the receipt of a Brief from His Holiness Pope Pius IX., constituting him Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory.

Mr. Bagwell has given notice of his intention to move, after Easter, for a select committee to inquire into the distress in Donegal.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF MEATH.—It is said that the Hon. Mr. Plunket has resigned.—Meath People.

We regret to announce the death of Hogan, the celebrated Irish sculptor. The Freeman says—"He was troubled for some time with asthma, which, however, did not prevent his usual application—for poor Hogan was one of the most hardworking of men—but his disease assumed a dangerous form in the beginning of the week, and on Saturday morning he died. It is no exaggeration to say that his death is a national loss. He was emphatically the Irish sculptor; and had his life been spared, he would have graced many of our cities with the finest specimens of art. He was engaged up to his death on two commissions—the Mathew Testimonial in Cork, and one of the bas-reliefs for the Wellington Monument in the Park—illustrative of the Duke's concession of civil and religious liberty. John Hogan was in his 68th year, having been born in 1800. His birthplace was Tallow, county of Waterford, though Cork claimed the honour.

DEATH OF ST. JOHN MASON, Esq.—Death has at length stricken down, in the 89th year of his age, this highly gifted and accomplished Kerryman. The contemporary and cousin—german of Robert Emmett he was arrested shortly after that chivalrous but mistaken man fell into the hands of the authorities, and though no evidence could be adduced against him, he was, in the spirit of those evil times, subjected, to use his own nervous words, to "three years of entombed existence in the prison of Kilmalsham"; a period of his life of which, we believe, a scathing narrative from his own pen is still in existence. He retained his fine intellect to the last.—Tralee Chronicle.

We (Western Star) feel proud in being able to announce an authority, that the proposal to confer the dignity of a Borough on Ballinasloe has been favourably received by the Earl of Derby and his Cabinet. Why should the Agricultural Metropolis of the Empire not have a voice in the Legislature? We are glad to hear the news, and rejoice, if it be true, that Lord Derby has manifested so much of a reforming tendency. But Ballinasloe was said to depend on the contingency of Galway being deprived of a member in order to entitle it to representation in Parliament; but that is not the case as yet, nor is it likely to be.—Galway Mercury.

We believe we may state, with confidence of its truth, that the directors of the Dublin and Drogheda Railway intend to present to apply to parliament in the next session for leave to construct a branch line from Navan to Trim; and that the Midland Great Western Company will take them up and undertake the construction of the line from Trim to Fernslock. The advantages and conveniences of such a line of communication have been dwelt on at large to us.—Meath People.

The report of the directors of the Limerick and Foynes Railway, states that the opening of the entire line of Foynes will take place about the 1st of May. Negotiations for a steamer to ply between Kilrush and Foynes have been renewed. The communication by coach between Askeaton station and Tralee has been in operation for some months, and will be much facilitated by the further opening of the line to Foynes; therefore a considerable increase of traffic may be fairly looked for during the approaching summer and autumn.

There was not a single prisoner in the city jail for trial before J. R. Corballis, Esq., Q.C., the Assistant Barrister, on Friday, at the city quarter sessions.—According to the rule followed at assizes, the worthy chairman of the county should be entitled to the presentation of a pair of white gloves by the sheriff.—Kilkenny Moderator.

TRINITY COLLEGE ELECTION.—Mr. Lefroy, as was expected, has been successful in the contest for the representation of Dublin University. At the close of the poll on Saturday evening the numbers were—For Mr. Lefroy, 586; for Dr. Gayer, 548; majority, 238. At the close of the election Dr. Gayer was caught up by a party of the students, and chaired across the quadrangle to the Dining Hall, into which he was borne in triumph, followed by an immense crowd, to the astonishment and dismay of the fellows and students therein assembled, and whose dinner was thus unceremoniously interrupted. Having safely deposited the learned doctor at the fellows' table, they retired, and soon after quietly dispersed. Thus ended the Trinity College election.

The College inquiry has been transferred from Dublin Castle to the Police Office in College-street, where information against Colonel Browne and the police have been tendered to the divisional magistrates. Messrs. McDermott and Stronge. Six days have already been occupied in opening and proving the case of the students against the police, and very probably the defence and cross case of the police against the students will be quite as protracted an affair. The evidence at present published is all ex parte; but, so far as it goes, it shows that considerable force was used in repressing the disturbances on the occasion; but whether or not there were unnecessary violence and cruelty, we have still to ascertain by hearing the evidence on the other side. There can be no doubt that several students, some, perhaps, not among the rioters, were severely hurt by the police batons; but, on the other hand, some of the police were as severely injured, and one of them lies still in a precarious state, while the most severely injured of the collegians were able to attend the court and give evidence. At the conclusion of the case for the students on Thursday, an attempt was made to have the informations returned for trial without hearing the evidence for the police; but, after a good deal of discussion between the bench and counsel of either side, it was resolved to hear the evidence before coming to any decision. Mr. Lynch undertook to prove that Colonel Browne did not give the order. Draw sabres and charge; and that the specific order he did give was perfectly justified under the circumstances.—Tablet.

There are 495 paupers in the Tipperary Union, being a decrease of twenty from the same period last year.

There are twenty-nine paupers in the Cashel workhouse, being a decrease of 148 from the same period last year.

The Protestants of Dublin make a great parade about a society they have founded in that city for the purpose of providing a residence and a pension to such Priests who, having been suspended by their Ecclesiastical Superiors for some offence, may wish to add to their sins by consenting to apostatize. A correspondent of the Freeman states that "the Rev. Patrick O'Brien, the only Priest who has for some years past been under the auspices of the Priests Protection Society, who has this week fled to his Diocesan in the county of Limerick. He had not time to regain his former locale, and the bosom of the Catholic Church, when death terminated his career."

The police having received information that a man named Edward McCallion, of Magilligan, and his sons had been carrying on illicit distillation, the force at Articlave, under the superintendence of Sergeant Rusk, proceeded on Thursday last to make a search. On arriving at the spot an encounter took place between the smugglers and themselves, the former attacking the police with grapes and pitchforks. The latter having, as is stated, been put on the defensive drew their bayonets, and in making a charge, old McCallion received a wound in the region of the heart, and at once fell lifeless to the ground. One of the sons was also seriously wounded in the lower part of the abdomen, and is now lying without any hope of recovery. The police, particularly the sergeant, received several wounds, and much harsh treatment. One of them had a most narrow escape. Young McCallion aimed a blow at him in the stomach with a grape, but one of the prongs coming in contact with the buckle of his belt, he was thrown on his back; and thus escaped almost certain death. An inquest was held by the coroner on the body of McCallion, and a verdict of wilful murder returned against Sergeant Rusk and Sub-constable Reilly. These two policemen were lodged in our county jail yesterday.—Derry Standard.

Referring to the Derby-Israeli proposal to give to Belfast the privilege of returning a member of the Indian Council, the Dublin Evening Post says—"The selection of Belfast, in preference to Dublin, is explained by the influence of Sir H. Cairns, the English Solicitor-General, who has thus conciliated his Tory constituents. But, at the same time, the Government has placed Messrs. Grogan and Vance, the members for the metropolis, in a very unpleasant position."

The Banner of Ulster tells this touching tale of the woes attendant upon the sudden acquisition of place and upon the presumed ability of its holder to satisfy the ravening demands of all those who indirectly contributed to his greatness—"Sir Hugh McCalmont Cairns, Her Majesty's Solicitor-General, does not, it appears, find his new situation and the inevitable concomitants of honour a bed of roses. He has been only about three weeks in office, and during that short period has, it is reported, received upwards of 200 letters and memorials from Belfast, soliciting, and in some cases claiming as a right, his influence with the heads of various Government departments with a view to securing all manner of small local appointments for the applicants. Not a single vacancy exists, or is likely soon to occur, in any of the offices on which the letter-writers have set their affections. If the Solicitor-General—as in honour and duty bound—punctually and civilly keeps pace with this tremendous correspondence, he will have well earned his pension, however brief the reign of the Derby Ministry may be."

A PROTESTANT PROTEST AGAINST SOUPRIEM.

The High Sheriff of Kilkenny has addressed a public letter to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, of which we give the principal passages, which are well worthy of attention, as giving the deliberate opinion of a resident Protestant gentleman on the degrading mischiefs of Souperism. He writes:—

"I wish to direct your Excellency's attention to a grievance of a sectarian nature which is an insult to the Roman Catholic community, and an outrage upon the charity and liberality of Protestantism. The degradation of the Protestant Church, the wanton indignities heaped at the Roman Catholic religion, form by no means the smallest item among many of the hardships and injustices which oppress this country. The subsidising of the ignorant, reckless, and unordained street preachers of the Irish Church Missions proves the supineness, the laxity, and the inefficiency by availing themselves of such respectable substitutes. But there are many noble-minded Clergymen in the diocese of Ossory and elsewhere throughout Ireland who have no sympathy with the ranters and other ignorant hirelings that have been lately introduced into this country, as the propagators of the Protestant religion—Clergymen who will not suffer such an intrusion upon their sacred duties, and who humbly, faithfully, and conscientiously perform the offices of their respective parishes.

"I wish to lay before your Excellency a short sketch of the grievance to which I want to draw your attention. The Irish Church Missions Society has for its object the conversion of the Irish people from the Roman Catholic religion to Protestantism. If those who supply the funds only knew the set of men employed for this work in Ireland—if they only knew the ridicule to which it exposes Protestantism—if they only knew the ill-feeling and disunion which it creates amongst those of different religious denominations in this our native land—if they only knew the hell of hate which it engenders, while it does not bring one single convert to the Protestant faith—if they knew all this, I have no doubt that they would cease to subscribe to a fund which is productive of nothing but social rancor and sectarian strife, and which destroys that national harmony which should link Irishmen of all creeds in one common brotherhood.

"There is not a citizen of Kilkenny, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, who will not agree with me that ever since these 'missionaries' were introduced amongst us the social and friendly character of our city has been changed. These illiterate and unordained ranters wander about our streets with Bibles and tracts in their hands, roaring out at the top of their voices the grossest insults to our Roman Catholic brethren; and, what is still worse, while engaged in this unchristian work they are guarded by an escort of police, thus making the Roman Catholic community pay a police force for the special protection of men whose mission is to insult them; and to outrage the dearest feelings of their hearts! The agents of this Church Missions Society approach the doors and windows of Roman Catholics, pouring forth a torrent of abuse upon the Roman Catholic faith, and when entreated to desist from this persecution, or to pass on, they still persist in forcing their unchristian conversation on unwilling listeners. What is, or what can be, the result of this system? It surely is not the way to make converts? Will it soften down religious animosities? Will it make Protestantism more amiable or more acceptable to the uneducated Roman Catholic, or rather, will it not partake of the character of persecution, and poison the minds of the people against a religion which stoops to such means for its propagation? This is my opinion of it; and it is the opinion of every other liberal Protestant in Kilkenny. But what is the result of this system? Not that the Protestant Church is advancing; but that it becomes still more hateful to the minds of the people; not that converts are made, but that Roman Catholics are repelled from us; not that Christian charity and good feeling are propagated, but that hate, and rancour, and distrust, and heart-burning are engendered by this disgraceful persecution.

"The liberal Protestants of Kilkenny addressed our Bishop some time ago on this subject, requesting

remove these disturbers from our city, and restore that peace and harmony which once prevailed amongst all classes and creeds in Kilkenny. We do not yield to any one in our sincere attachment to the Protestant faith; we would wish to see Protestantism advancing; but we would not wish to see it advancing at the expense of that Christian charity which is the foundation of all religion—we would wish to see it advancing by such means as those which are adopted by the agents of the Irish Church Mission in this city.

"Perhaps your Excellency is not aware that one of the paid, unordained agents of this society is at present confined in my prison, undergoing the sentence of three months imprisonment, which was inflicted on him by the magistracy of this city for reluctance after having been previously rejected on account of some physical infirmity; and his prosecutor on this occasion was a high and respected officer in the Queen's service, Captain Rogers, her Majesty's staff officer of pensioners, and recruiting officer of this district. This agent of the society, who is now in prison, was a convert; and it will show your Excellency the class of persons who accept the bribes which this proselytising society holds out to them; and I need not inform your Excellency that such a convert, who is also liable to be prosecuted for perjury, is not likely to add to the dignity of Protestantism in Kilkenny.

Besides the hate and distrust that I have described as some of the results of the mission in this city, I must not omit to mention that of street-rioting.—The appearance of these ranters in the streets is the signal for confusion and strife in our otherwise peaceful city. Here is a picture of these scenes from the pen of the Protestant organ of Kilkenny. Speaking of the street preachers he says:—"These words are very proper words to be used in the proper place, but were not in the proper place in public streets, in the midst of yelling mobs around them, indulging in every manner of profane and obscene exclamation—the whole scene inducing one to reflect, as regarded the religious discussion there going forward, that—

'Tho' sacred names are there,
It has more of blasphemy than pray'r.'

Such is an account of the scenes that occur daily in this city, as described by a Protestant editor; and, as his Lordship the Bishop of Ossory and Ferns, in the evasive reply of a special pleader, declined to grant the prayer of the Protestant memorialists who addressed him recently, requesting his Lordship to remove these firebrands from amongst us, and to put an end to such disgraceful exhibitions, I appeal from the Bishop of Ossory to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in order that your Excellency, in your wisdom and liberality, may get this most desirable work accomplished. And if your Excellency remove these firebrands from our city, you will be entitled to the eternal gratitude of the people of Kilkenny.

"With every respect and deference, I shall lay before your Excellency a case which will illustrate the position in which the city is placed by the proceedings of the agents of the Irish Church Missions Society—one of the scenes which take place daily in the streets of our city. My Sub-Sheriff, a Protestant gentleman, a retired officer of her Majesty's service, married a Roman Catholic lady. They have two infant children. The mother has been for some time past in a delicate state of health, and the children are suffering from scrofula. On yesterday afternoon some of these street-preachers placed themselves opposite the door of my Sub-Sheriff's house, where his wife and children were lying on a bed of sickness, whilst he himself was employed on the business of the ensuing quarter sessions. The firebrands of the Irish Church Missions planted themselves opposite the door, and in stentorian voices, shouted out their vile and blasphemous ribaldry against the Roman Catholic faith. For nearly an hour this work was carried on to the great annoyance and distress of those who were prostrated with illness. It requires no great stretch of imagination or fancy to picture the torture of that gentleman's mind under such circumstances—his wife on a sick bed and his infants in fever. Throwing down his pen, no longer able to endure the annoyance to which he and his afflicted family were subjected, he rushed out of his house, and came to me to save his family from such unchristian persecution. I referred my Sub-Sheriff to the Mayor, in whose presence the complaint was made, and his worship declared that he could afford my Sub-Sheriff no protection, however anxious he might be to do so, as the power of the magistracy has been completely paralysed, as far as these ranters are concerned, by the acts of the late government.

"Your Excellency, we have done all in our power to remove or mitigate this crying evil; but unfortunately we have failed hitherto; and were it not for the control which the Roman Catholic Clergy exercise over their flock, and the advice of the magistrates, our streets would have been long since a scene of riot and bloodshed. The Bishop of Ossory and Ferns has refused to remove the source of this strife from our city. We, Protestants, hopefully abandon any further remonstrance in that quarter, and respectfully turn to your Excellency. While we look up to you as the guardian of the Protestant Church in this country, we also appeal to your Excellency to protect our Roman Catholic Christian brethren from insult and persecution.

GEORGE HELSHAM,
High Sheriff City of Kilkenny.
"Kilkenny, March 25th."

OFFICIAL REPORT ON THE EXISTING STATE OF THE ORANGE SOCIETIES.—We (Weekly Register) take the following extracts from the Report of the Commissioners appointed by the Lord Lieutenant to investigate the tumults that convulsed the North of Ireland, and especially the town of Belfast, last midsummer.

Description of the Orange Confederacy.—"The Orange system seems to us now to have no other practical result than as a means of keeping up the Orange Festivals, and celebrating them, leading as they do to violence, outrage, religious animosities, hatred between classes, and too often bloodshed and loss of life. These opinions have been forced from us."

Another Pleasing Aspect of the Body.—"It is an exclusive society of Protestants; a leading feature of it seems to be a brotherhood kept up to celebrate the triumph of their class over the Roman Catholics, called in their proceedings Papists. In the proceedings before us the extent of their exclusiveness is apparent in acts of minor lodges, confirmed by the Grand Lodge, of which the following are examples: County Antrim—Expulsion—Thomas Baird, lodge 654, for marrying a Papist. Samuel Warren, 207, for marrying a Papist. Similar expulsions are very numerous in the proceedings handed to us. This strongly-expressed feeling against so large a class of their fellow-countrymen seems a perilous bond of union for a virtually secret society, embracing within it so largely the uneducated, classes of society.—Their proceedings further show the extent of the union kept up by this society, and the means of combined action which it possesses."

Peaceful Tendencies of the Orange Association.—"Mr. Gwynne, speaking for the Grand Orange Society, and expressly sanctioned by the Earl of Enniskillen, announced the great principle of the society to be—'Protestantism, loyalty, and organisation.'—Loyalty should be the principle of every good member of society, and, of course, would be the enunciated principle of any society formed within the law; but that this organisation tends directly to interfere with the peace of this part of the kingdom, we think that the history of the transactions in the North of Ireland during the last few years abundantly evidence. And these late transactions in Belfast are a later lesson, making it clear to the least observant. And further:—"The necessity for organisation of a particular class for defence would be only compatible with a state of things showing the general disorganisation of society. It is only so, be excused by the assumed fact that the class so organised are not safe or protected by the law, in which