

religion. I say the Catholics of this empire have done nothing to bring about the present state of things; they have been forced into the attitude which they have assumed (hear, hear.) But a few months ago, and our brethren in England were rejoicing in the spiritual favors which the venerable Pontiff who fills the chair of Peter, in the inalienable exercise of his powers as Vicar of Jesus Christ, has conferred on them (loud cheers.) They never imagined that they were committing any aggression, or invading any one's rights; they were violating no law, injuring no one, and they had been led to believe that they had obtained a system of Ecclesiastical government which would be most acceptable to their rulers, and which had been frequently approved of by them or their predecessors. What had our Catholic brethren in Scotland undertaken? Absolutely nothing; they had not moved in any direction, nor has it ever been pretended that they had committed the slightest aggression, or given the slightest offence. In the meantime what was our position in Ireland? This poor country had been visited as no country ever had been before by famine and pestilence; our tale of ruin had excited the commiseration of the remotest regions of the earth; even the Hindoo, the Mahomedan, and the disciple of Confucius had shed a tear over our afflictions, and stretched a hand to our relief (hear, hear.) It is ever to be regretted that one of those enlightened men to whom the destiny of this empire is committed, should have selected such a moment to add to our misfortunes, and to aggravate the burthens under which we were groaning. It is not necessary to refer to the Durham correspondence (groans and hisses.) It excited the dying embers of discord, and stirred up all that was base and filthy in the depths of bigotry and intolerance (hear.) Our religious practices were branded as mummeries of superstition; it was declared that our Church enslaves the intellect and confines the soul. Our sacred mysteries were caricatured, and the grossest insults were offered to the Saints who reign in Heaven, and even to the most pure and exalted of all creatures, the Holy Mother of God. As if to give a legal sanction to such proceedings, a bill of pains and penalties was introduced into parliament against us; we were threatened with a renewal of that penal code which so long disgraced this country; and we were left without any protection under Heaven, except in our own exertions and resources (hear, and cheers.) Should we not, however, be thankful to God, for having given such a turn to late events? If we are threatened with the persecution of violence and force, an end is put to a more dangerous sort of persecution, the persecution of false friends, whose smiles and trifling favors were scattered for the purpose of enslaving us, and gradually depriving us of our religion or our religious rights—who, under the pretence of being perfectly liberal, would put truth and error, light and darkness on the same footing, and who, to propagate their principles more effectually, would take into their own hands the whole education of the rising Catholic generation of the country. (Hear.) It was in this way, not by violence or the sword, that Julian the Apostate persecuted his Christian subjects—it was in this way that the Arian Emperor, Constantius, persecuted the Catholics of his time. St. Hilary describes this last persecution, and declares that it was worse than that of Nero or Diocletian. I will read a few of his words:—"We have to contend against an artful persecutor—a flattering foe; against one who, instead of lacerating the back, soothes and gratifies the belly; who will not doom us to that proscription which gives life, but lavishes the wealth that kills; who assails and surprises the simplicity of the heart, rather than rudely belabor the sides. It is not the head he cares to cut off with the sword, but the soul which he seeks to destroy with his gold; his is not the fierce strife of conquest, but the soft adulation which enslaves. In fine, he will even build up our churches, but it is that he may the more securely sap the foundations of the Faith." Such was the way in which we too were treated by false friends; but they have been unmasked, and we may thank God that the course of events has taught us to put no trust in them, but to rely on Heaven and ourselves. This is one effect of the recent crisis, but there are other consequences equally important. Has not the threatened persecution brought out a great and noble display of the latent Catholic feeling of the country? (Loud and enthusiastic cheering.) Have not the talents and energies of our Catholic members of parliament been called forth, and their zeal for religious liberty fully displayed? Have we not also seen all the talent, the learning, the eloquence, the statesmanship of Protestant England exerted in our behalf? (Loud cheers.) To the Aberdeens, the Grahams, and the other Protestant gentlemen and noblemen, both English and Irish, who spoke so powerfully in our defence, we owe a great debt of gratitude—their services should not be forgotten—(loud cheering.) Is it not also cheering to see that all the Catholics of this country, forgetting their private feelings and interests, join as one man in defence of their religion? Is it not consoling to see that the Catholics of England and Scotland cordially united with those of Ireland in this sacred cause? Perhaps so great an array of names was never affixed to the proceedings of any body as that by which this meeting was convened. We have here to-day, to say nothing of our Irish nobility, gentry, and Clergy—not indeed the presence, (some accident has detained him,) but the promise to be present, of the noble and chivalrous son of England's first duke, the inheritor of the noble blood of the Howards—we have his promise, which, no doubt, he will make good at a later period of the day, to be amongst us, cheering us on, and co-operating with us, and we are honored by the presence of an illustrious, learned, and eloquent Prelate from Scotland—(loud cheers)—and the learned and universally esteemed Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster—(loud cheers)—is assisting us by his counsel and authority, and one of the most zealous and worthy Prelates of the Church—the Bishop of Birmingham—has come to take an active part in our proceedings—(loud cheers.) Truly, when we consider all these things, we cannot but be most thankful to that God who rules and disposes all human events for the benefit of those that love Him. We cannot but exclaim that this is the work of the Most High—that the finger of God is here. (Loud cheers.) God has, therefore, done much for us in the present movement. It now remains for us to do our own part as good Catholics, and to co-operate with the benevolent dispositions of Providence in our behalf.—The first thing that I, as a Catholic Bishop, consider myself bound to call on you to do—and I speak to you only in the character of a Bishop—is to put all your proceedings under the protection of the Almighty, and to implore of Him to guide you and to give you the spirit of wisdom and prudence. "Unless the Lord build the city, in vain do they labor who build it—

unless the Lord keep the city, in vain do they watch who keep it." The success of our undertakings depends upon God; and it is only by humble and fervent prayer that we can expect to obtain the lights of Heaven, and to merit the sanction and protection of our Divine Father. We are also to abstain from giving offence to the Lord of Heaven. By our sins (says St. Jerome, speaking of his own times) our enemies have been made powerful. And the Scripture says—"Justice exalteth a nation, but sin maketh nations miserable." (Prov., ch. 34.) Whilst we thus merit the protection of Heaven, the edifying tenor of our lives will produce other great effects: it will merit for us the support and co-operation of every honest man. (Hear, and cheers.) In the next place, I call upon all to lay aside all bickerings and dissensions, and to cultivate that charity which is the characteristic mark of true Catholics. If we were united—were our proceedings always guided by charity, we would be a strong and powerful body. (Enthusiastic cheers.) It cannot, indeed, be expected that we should all take the same view of every question of expediency or detail; but even when we differ, we can do so in the spirit of charity and forbearance. I trust that the institution of a Catholic Defence Association will tend to promote these great objects. It will be one of the first duties of this body to cement firmly and permanently the union among all the Catholics of the empire—a union so closely connected with the interests of all, so necessary for our welfare, and even for our existence—a union commenced under such happy auspices. When we shall be closely united, our efforts to redress our grievances will not fail to be effectual; and here a great field will be opened for the operations of the association. Our poor are to be protected from a heartless proselytism—the Faith of the children of the soldier and the sailor is to be preserved—the state of our workhouses is to be examined—a Catholic education is to be obtained for our people. In a Catholic country like this, there is a great and perfectly organized system of Protestant instruction.—Hundreds of thousands are expended in promoting a purely Protestant education, whilst the sums given to Catholic schools (with one exception) are given only on the condition that the system of the schools which are filled with Catholic children shall be suited to the education of children of every sect who do not frequent such schools, and we are left without any Catholic University. (Hear, hear.) But it would be too long to enumerate all our grievances. By the labors of the association let us trust that they shall be removed, and that we shall be put on a perfect footing of equality with every other class of her Majesty's subjects (hear.) In tending to this great object, I trust it will be accurately understood that no Divine and no just human law is to be violated—that the rights of no one are to be invaded, but that, on the contrary, we are to be ready to protect them—that nothing is to be done to weaken our allegiance to the crown—that no insult is to be offered to those who differ from us in religion, or to any of the Protestant inhabitants of the empire—(hear, hear.) The association must repudiate everything like violence, threatening, calumny, or misrepresentation. Its arms must be the arms of Catholic truth, prayer, patience, and forbearance, justice, and charity. Catholics are continually misrepresented, as if they were the slaves of bigotry and intolerance. Our conduct is to be the best answer to such a charge—(hear, and cheers.) The Catholic Church and all her true children proclaim that there is but one true Faith. They reject heresy and error; but at the same time, in the spirit of our Redeemer, they pray for those that are in error—they have compassion on them—they love them—all we ask for is a full and free exercise of our religion—(hear, hear.) The jurisdiction which God has given us is not to be taken from us by man, and the free communication with the Holy See, the seat, and centre, and fountain of all spiritual jurisdiction is not to be interrupted—(hear, and cheers.) The association is to aid us in effecting these great objects, but it will always in doing so respect the just rights of others—(hear, hear.) One of the important duties of this body will be to have recourse to the press, and send forth clear expositions of our wrongs and a powerful defence of our just claims. (Cheers.) It must in a special manner make every effort to have the rights and interests of our religion properly represented in parliament. (Hear, hear.) I say of our religion, because, were this effected, our temporal concerns would be better provided for at the same time—(hear, and cheers.) For men guided by Catholic truth and charity would understand their duties towards the poor and every other class of people, and would act accordingly. Were it necessary to seek it abroad, France at the present moment would supply us with the model of what zealous and religious representatives of the people can effect in the persons of those noble champions of true liberty and religion—Count Montalembert and Viscount De Falloux—whose services to their country and their creed have merited for them the applause of the whole world—who are as profoundly versed in the history of the Church, and the bearing of its laws and doctrines, as they are piously attached to its practices and observances. But we need not seek examples for imitation in other countries. It is sufficient for us to recall to our minds the life and the mighty achievements of our own great O'Connell. (Loud and enthusiastic cheering, which continued for several minutes.) His loss has been to us an irreparable calamity; but let us hope that whilst he is gone to the reward of his labors, and to enjoy the immortal crown that was due to his Faith and his virtues, God will infuse a portion of his spirit into the hearts of others, and enable them to fight the battles of his Faith, and to defend our religious rights. (Great cheering.) My Lords and gentlemen, I will not detain you any longer from commencing your proceedings. It is unnecessary for me, surrounded as I am by every thing that is dignified, every thing that is noble, every thing that is respectable in the Catholic body, to remind all the speakers of the solemnity of an occasion when the eyes not only of the empire, but of all Europe, are fixed on us, and to implore of them to let every word they utter be grounded upon truth and charity, and to take care that every proposition they make shall be in conformity with the laws of God and of the country, and at the same time prudent and moderate. Rash and intemperate language, imprudent propositions, vain boasting and idle menaces, would only damage and disgrace the sacred cause of truth and religion, which it is our sole object to defend—(cheers.) I trust I have expressed my sentiments with all that liberty and frankness which a Catholic Bishop should use when speaking for his religion. I will not sit down without using another privilege of my order, and praying that that God whose name is blessed from eternity and evermore, to whom belong wisdom and fortitude, who changeth times and ages, and who

taketh away kingdoms and establisheth them, giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding, the God of our fathers may send His wisdom which sitteth by His throne to be with us, and to teach us what to do—and may the most Holy Queen of Heaven, the seat of wisdom, and mother of good counsel—may our own great Saints Patrick and Malachy, and St. Laurence O'Toole bless and direct, and strengthen all our undertakings, and make them beneficial to our country and our religion. (His Grace resumed his seat amid loud and enthusiastic cheering, which continued for several minutes.)

The Lord Bishop of ELPHIN came forward to propose the next resolution, and was loudly cheered. He said that so many distinguished Prelates and members of parliament would address the meeting on the present occasion that it would be bad taste in him to detain them for any length of time. He could only say that he felt as warmly on this subject as any man living, and that he was prepared to oppose any law which would trample on civil and religious rights. (Hear, hear.) They were met to protest against an unjust law; for he maintained that any law which was contrary to morality, and infringed on the rights of conscience, they were no more bound to obey than they would a law infringing on parental rights—the tie which subsists between a parent and his child. (Cheers.) No Christian was bound to obey a law so unjust and contrary to every principle that should guide and direct them. (Applause.) His Lordship concluded by moving that J. Sadleir, M.P., Ouseley Higgins, M.P., and James Burke, Esq., be appointed secretaries to the meeting.

Mr. REYNOLDS said the motion would be seconded by Vincent Scully, Q.C., one of her Majesty's counsel, learned in the law. (Laughter.)

Mr. SCULLY said he had the honor to second the motion made by the Lord Bishop of Elphin. The first two names—John Sadleir, M.P., and Ouseley Higgins, M.P.—would be recognized as those of two honest and zealous members of parliament; and in the last name (Mr. Burke)—they would recognize the gentleman who had, up to the present, acted with such great ability and efficiency in making the preparatory arrangements for this meeting. Before coming there, he (Mr. S.) had carefully considered the Ecclesiastical Titles Act; and he had come to the conclusion on reading the act that it was, perhaps, the most atrocious invasion of their rights and privileges as Catholics, that had ever been framed since the time of Henry VIII.—(hear.) He came to that conclusion deliberately, but he would not occupy their time in explaining the reasons which had led him to arrive at it. Every person who read the act could easily satisfy himself that that conclusion was a correct one—(hear.) The act forbade, and declared to be illegal, all those Rescripts and Letters-Apostolical under which the Bishops of this country had been acting, some of them for a period of forty years, and it declared that all the acts of the Bishops of this country should in future be utterly illegal and entirely void—(hear.) Having come to the conclusion that this act was an invasion, not only of the rights of the Catholic people, but particularly of the Episcopal rights of the Bishops of the Church, he (Mr. Scully) thought it his duty to attend the meeting; and he thought that their Bishops were imperatively and peculiarly called upon to come forward on the present occasion—(loud cheers.) Although, perhaps, in former times, when laws invaded the rights of lay Catholics, and deprived them of their property and their civil rights, it was not so peculiarly the duty of the Bishops to take part in public agitation; yet it was so on the present occasion, because the act of parliament against which they had assembled to protest, was peculiarly directed to attack, invade, and abolish the spiritual jurisdiction of all their Prelates—(hear, hear.) This was the first time that those sacred rights had been assailed in this country—no invasion of them having taken place by prior act, even by the act of 29—(hear, hear.) Mr. Scully concluded by seconding the nomination of the secretaries, which was put and carried.

Mr. SADLEIR, M.P., then came forward, and was received with loud cheers. He said that it now became his duty, as one of the honorary secretaries, to read the requisition convening the meeting. Having read the requisition, the hon. gentlemen read letters received from the Archbishop of Westminster, and several other gentlemen, giving in their adhesion to the Association.

The Lord Archbishop of CASHEL came forward to propose the first resolution, and was received with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of applause. When the cheering had subsided his Grace said—Were I to consult my present state I would not appear at your crowded meeting; but I would consider it a dereliction of duty, if on such an occasion, I were to absent myself—(cheers.) You will indulge me, then, and will permit me to conclude by simply reading for you the resolution which I have been appointed to propose; it is as follows:—

"That we declare an act lately passed by the imperial parliament, commonly called the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, to be a violation of the compact contained in the Catholic Relief Act of 1829, and subversive of the great principle of religious liberty as established in this empire."

This resolution is, in fact, a truism—(hear, hear)—and I beg to propose it for your adoption. (Loud and protracted cheering, amid which the venerable Archbishop resumed his seat.)

Sir PIERS MOSTYN, Bart., came forward to second the resolution, and was most warmly received. He said—I rise to second the resolution which the Lord Archbishop of Cashel has just proposed to you. (Cheers.) I had little expected to be placed in this prominent and conspicuous position; and, I can assure you, I am but little prepared for it; but, however, I shall trust to your kind indulgence (hear, hear.) I may be asked why I have come here to-day—why I, a perfect stranger amongst you, should come here, and presume to say a few words to you? I will tell you, gentlemen, why I have come—I have come in answer to your call—I have come in answer to the general invitation which you sent to all Catholics of the United Kingdom—(hear, hear)—that we should join in one voice in protesting against a retrograde policy—(hear, hear)—and in protesting, above all, against the conduct of a Whig Prime Minister—(groans)—who, deserting the standard of religious liberty which he had always previously fought for to the best of his ability in his political character, has, unfortunately, evoked by that too-celebrated letter of his, a spirit of fierce intolerance and religious fanaticism, which has spread through the length and breadth of the land, and which we had hoped had slumbered too long to be woken, but which, unfortunately, having been once awoken, will not, I fear, be so soon allayed (cheers.)

I think you should return no other members except those who should represent your Catholic country—(cheers)—and should defend them in the manner which a few alone had been found to do—those who have lately defended your rights and liberties in an English parliament—(cheers.) Gentlemen let us be united. Union is strength; and let us, by a united pressure, which cannot be long withstood, compel the ministry to grant us, and secure for ourselves, that equality of religious rights and liberties which our Protestant fellow-countrymen enjoy. (The speaker concluded amid prolonged and enthusiastic cheers from the entire meeting.)

The LORD PRIMATE then put the resolution which was unanimously adopted.

His Grace the Lord Archbishop of TUAM was then introduced to the meeting, and was received with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of applause, which were again and again repeated, amid waving of hats and handkerchiefs, the entire meeting standing, and exhibiting every mark of veneration and respect.—When the cheering ceased, his Grace said—My Lord Primate, my Lords, and gentlemen, a resolution has been handed me, which I beg respectfully to propose for the adoption of this assembly. His Grace then read the following resolution:—

"That we unhesitatingly declare that the present ministers have betrayed the cause of civil and religious freedom, and forfeited the confidence of the Catholics of the United Kingdom."

His Grace then continued—I do not anticipate, my Lord Archbishop and gentlemen, any discrepancy of opinion regarding the adoption of this resolution; though at the same time I am free to confess that there may be some who may indulge in the private opinion that the ministers have not betrayed the cause of civil and religious freedom—because they were never trusted—(laughter)—that they never forfeited the confidence of the Catholics of the United Kingdom, because they never deserved nor possessed it (renewed laughter). Suffice it to say, that whether they did or no, it is confessed on all hands that the confidence of Catholics has been betrayed (hear.) And, my Lord Archbishop, although it may be full of real or constructive guilt to assume the Ecclesiastical titles, and though there may be a deplorable bad taste in the contumacy by which they are asserted, fortunately there is no real nor constructive guilt in bestowing on the persons to whom they belong their legitimate titles. This distinction may, by some, be ascribed to the wise discrimination of the legislature—by others it may be traced to that overruling Providence which sways the deliberations of legislators themselves. It was a prudent provision coming in aid of human infirmity, engaging the zeal and courage of a faithful people in defence of those sacred titles, which fear of a false humility might tempt any of their occupants to forego, reminding them that in the original instruments of the Apostolical patent on which our spiritual titles are inscribed—(hear, hear)—they are carefully distinguished from those baronial baubles, as transient as they are dazzling, which may minister only to the vanity of the wearer, thus continually teaching them to behold in the chartered rights of their Bishops the precious counterpart of their own rights, which it would be treason in the one to surrender, because they were given in trust for the spiritual benefit of the others, and round which the latter shall never cease to range themselves, since they are the title deeds of their own and their children's most valuable inheritance (cries of hear, hear, and cheers.) Little did the minister understand this simple and familiar doctrine of the reciprocal ties that essentially bind together the Pastors and the people—little did he understand the links that connect the laity and Priesthood, when in the language of Scripture, he attempted to sever what God had bound together—(cheers)—little did he understand the deep-seated reverence of the Faithful for their Hierarchy, when he foretold, in his capacity of a deluded seer, that the people would witness without emotion the operation of this bill of divorce which attempted to separate the Bishops from their wedded sees, leaving those sees in a state of spiritual widowhood, and their flocks in a state of spiritual orphanage, and the Bishops themselves despoiled of the prescriptive honor of eighteen centuries, doomed to go on a roving commission for the discovery of new settlements—(laughter)—the companions of the countless thousands of their exiled countrymen whom his cruel policy has expatriated far beyond the pale of his delegated power (hear, hear.) If he anticipated such a result, the fact of this most numerous and important meeting must henceforward correct such strange anticipations. Were some of those who recently labored with such zeal to clear the land of the territorial Hierarchy, as it is called here, they would undoubtedly be astonished at the suddenness of its resurrection (hear, hear.) Twenty years ago their titles were ignored, again their legal destruction has been repeated. If those, then, who twice slew the slain were to be present in this assembly, they would not fail, like the persecutors of the martyr Vemantius, so often supposed to be dead, to ascribe the miracle of such vitality to magic, whilst the pious Catholic could not fail to ascribe it to the influence with which its Divine Founder has promised to sustain the Church, of which our own Church is so conspicuous a portion, so often doomed to die, yet destined to be immortal (cries of hear, hear, and cheering.) And hence had we not been pressed—nay, adjured, by your pious impetuosity to come forward, we should rather have stayed aloof, shrouded in the holy recesses of the sanctuary, lest the nerves or the loyalty of any spectator should be shaken, by beholding in any living assembly, so many forbidden apparitions. (Laughter and cheers.) Had Ireland and its inhabitants not been long in an anomalous position, and particularly its Hierarchy strangers to those laws and influences by which society is ordinarily governed, the Catholic Bishops might be allowed to express astonishment at the strange manner in which their disinterested services to the commonwealth have been recently required. After passing through as severe a crisis as ever tested the patience and the fidelity of the pastors of the Catholic Church—witnessing the diminution of their flocks (hear, hear) and the desolation of their country (hear, hear)—amidst scenes of suffering which few pastors were ever doomed to contemplate, and but few flocks to endure (hear, hear), after having exhorted their devoted people to a respect for property to an extent which a conscientious casuist might fear to interfere with the first principles of self-preservation, and seeing their precepts exemplified in prodigies of patience such as Spartan virtue never exhibited—nay, such as the sainted heroism of the martyrs never surpassed (loud cheers)—who could imagine that those who were instrumental in soothing the public discontent, and pre-