

was for the interest of the Empire at large, for what was best for the colonies was best for the nation. (Cheers.) The interests of all were involved in this matter, and it was not to be said that Englishmen who had spent time abroad lost their right to be Englishmen (cheers), and he could say that among all classes of colonists the great feeling was as strong for British interests as it was among the people of the mother country. The colonists were not in antagonism to the British Empire, of whose subjects they were proud to form a part. He then called attention to a series of resolutions which had been prepared by Mr. Westgarth.

The Chairman read these resolutions, which were as follows:—

"1. That the colonies are the source of great commercial and social advantage to the parent country, and largely contribute to the influence and greatness of the Empire. 2. That, on the other hand, the rights of Imperial citizenship, Imperial supervision, influence, and example, and Imperial commerce and resources promote all the best interests of the colonies; and that they, on their part, are not wanting in a loyal appreciation of their beneficial relationship. 3. That the practical independence of a representative and a responsible local government, latterly conceded to each of the principal colonies, alike at their own instance, and with the ready concurrence of the Imperial authorities was most certainly never intended to weaken the connexion with the parent State, but, on the contrary, to strengthen it by the increased loyalty and contentment arising from a more suitable political condition; and that in this respect this judicious policy has been attended with complete success. 4. That under this new system it is only equitable that these so self-governed colonies should defray entirely their own respective charges, provided always that claims and responsibilities, if any, attaching to the preceding regime, be first satisfactorily disposed of; and that this financial independence has been, in fact, with a very few exemptions, which it may be hoped are only temporarily such, either already completely attained or is just on the eve of attainment. 5. That New Zealand is one of these exceptional cases, the preceding regime having bequeathed to it a heritage of costly difficulties with the native question in the Northern Island; and that the indiscriminate and immediate application of the new policy to that colony's special case is a proceeding at once impolitic and unjust as towards a portion of the common empire, and that threatens, if persisted in, to involve its limited resources in most serious financial difficulties. 6. That the late correspondence of Her Majesty's Colonial Secretary on the New Zealand question is most unsatisfactory, not only by a refusal in terms of unwonted discourtesy of the aid of the general Government, in no matter what circumstances applied for, to restore the Queen's authority in the colony, but by the strange doctrine left to be inferred—that rebellion and massacre in one part of the Queen's dominions are no concern of the central power, but only of those of the Queen's subjects who are upon the spot, and who, whether willing or unwilling, able or unable, are thus left to an enforced discretion in the case. 7. That the Colonial Office is not now in consonance with our institutions generally, some reconstruction having become necessary in the direction of increased publicity and responsibility. As that office now stands, with a vast and diversified correspondence, not systematically published, but only occasionally or partially so, or long after publicity is of much, if any, value, the colonial questions that arise from time to time are practically controlled by the permanent under-secretariat—a body wholly unrepresentative, irresponsible, and, in an official capacity, as before the public, unknown, and, however unexceptionable in a private and individual capacity, liable to the official

bias and prejudice of all long-continued unchecked authority. 8. That, in the interests alike of this country and the colonies, the cause of emigration is one of primary importance, that, although the control and management of the vast crown domain of the colonial waste lands has, for the convenience and advantage of both parties, been made over to the respective colonies, these lands are still under the Queen's Government and are practically as much as ever open to our emigrating countrymen, and that it would well become the Government of the country to consider the means of a more active intervention in the great national concern of emigration."

Sir George Grey, who was received with cheers, said he had not been at all concerned with the drawing up of these resolutions, and he had not seen them until that moment. He considered it necessary to say this as his name had been mentioned. With the greater part of these resolutions he could not help agreeing, though they hardly met his views as to what should be the preliminary object of a number of colonists meeting together as to points to be decided. What he considered should be decided was, whether it was in the power of any one Minister of the Crown first of all to lay such onerous conditions on a British colony that the inhabitants must have been driven to a state of despair, then actually to tell gentlemen when sitting quietly in his room at the Colonial Office that if the colonists wished to leave or break off with the mother country they might do so. (Hear, hear.) The mere doing of this was sufficient to raise parties in the colony and to divide opinions, to raise up a class of men who desired to take the Minister at his word; and for himself he could not see that it was the part of a Minister to encourage colonists in New Zealand or anywhere else to say, "We will break off with the empire of which we are a part," and for another Minister to say to Ireland, "We shall retain you against your will." These were all integral parts of the British Empire, and he held that no one Minister was entitled to deal with the being of the Empire—that there could be no severance of any part of this nation without the concurrence of Parliament and the will of the British people. (Cheers.) A Government had once acted as if they were convinced that they could sever a colony from the country, for a South African colony had been so severed without the Parliament being questioned on the matter, and that colony was cut off against the will of the inhabitants, and against the intelligence and wealth of the time. No Parliamentary sanction was obtained for that act, an act of one subject in the Cabinet of the time severing his brother subjects from the Empire of which they were proud to form a part. He could bear testimony to the high regard felt for Great Britain in the most distant portions of the British colonies, and he well knew the reverence felt for the Queen, and the love for all classes of the English people. These colonists held in the highest esteem the wisdom and learning of the upper classes, loved the energy and industry of the working classes, for they knew that these had made the English name what it was, and to be severed from this Crown and this people would strike concern and sorrow into their hearts. (Hear, hear.) These colonists he knew had a most intense love for the British people (cheers), and they would not be willing, he well knew, to be separated from this at present great Empire. These people were as much subjects of the Queen as the Ministers in the Cabinet, and as regarded the interests of those people and of the vast colonies which were now held in the English name, he held that an authoritative statement should be obtained from the Government as to the points of the policy to be pursued by the Colonial Office. It was necessary to learn if it was the intention of the Government to get rid of the colonies one by one, whether it was intended to keep the colonies at

their present condition of greatness, or press the empire to a far higher position than it had hitherto achieved. (Cheers.) It was said that the colonists who gathered there last week did not know what they wanted. It might be so, and indeed it would have been wonderful if the colonists who gathered there last week, at a short notice, knew how to express their wants. He, for his part, was perfectly astonished with that gathering and its results. (Hear.) There were men from all parts of the earth, and with them they brought groans from all parts of the earth as to the grievances of the colonial government of the kingdom. (Hear.) It was all the same tale.—Newfoundland, Jamaica, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Africa, all the same tale. Of course they knew what they wanted, they had been led to the conclusion that they must know what the Government intended to do, and it was his belief that if the colonists found it was the desire of England to cast them off, they would not go one by one, they would not allow one to be oppressed internally or externally, or taken by some other Power; but they would all use their power and energy to found among themselves a great empire. (Cheers.) He believed, however, that if the people of this country were informed that the policy of the Government was to cut off the colonies, that people would rise as a man and insist upon the right of their fellow-subjects in the colonies to remain part of the Empire. (Hear.)

Mr. Briggs (of Manchester) urged that the resolutions should be referred to a special committee.

Mr. Bowden (of Victoria) supported Sir George Grey's view, that no Government could cut off a colony from his birthright of being a British subject.

Mr. Labilliere urged that all the resolutions should be adjourned, in order that the views of the Colonial Office might be obtained.

On the motion of Mr. Edward Wilson, it was eventually resolved that the committee of the Colonial Society should be requested to urge on a proposed interview with Lord Granville, and that certain gentlemen should have their names added to the committee with the committee's assent.

It was also agreed, on the motion of Captain Goodliff, that the resolutions should be discussed *seriatim*. The first was accordingly moved by Mr. Westgarth *pro forma*, and the meeting then adjourned, after giving a vote of thanks to the chairman.

## THE COLONIAL QUESTION.

### MEETING OF COLONISTS IN LONDON.

On Nov. 24 an influential meeting was held at the Cannon-street Terminus Hotel, in London, to consider the relations existing between England and the English dependencies. There was a large number of colonists representing the interests of the Australian colonies, the North American colonies, Jamaica, Tasmania, Newfoundland, the Cape of Good Hope, and other places, and among the company were Sir Geo. Grey, Mr. Wilson, of Melbourne, and Mr. Geo. Thornton, of Sydney. Mr. Youle was elected as Chairman to preside.

Mr. Wilson, after explaining the purpose of the gathering, concluded his address by moving a resolution to the effect that in the "present most unsatisfactory relations existing between Great Britain and the colonies," it was necessary that meetings of colonists and gentlemen interested in the colonies should be held once a week at the Cannon-street station.

Mr. G. Thornton, of Sydney, seconded the motion.

Mr. Bowden, formerly of Melbourne, expressed an opinion, which was warmly supported, that Lord Granville's policy was a policy of separating the colonies from the nation. He had watched the course of the Colonial Office for years, and he considered that the policy adopted by Lord Granville should be at once brought before the people of this country. He thought the first resolution passed at this meeting should be a protest against Lord Granville's policy. He begged to move a resolution deprecating the tone adopted by Lord Granville toward New Zealand, with an expression of opinion that a