

THE ULSTER CONVENTION.

A GRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF THE SCENE BY MAIL.

The Assemblage of Delegates Ever Seen in Ireland—An Impressive and Historical Event.

By mail we have received fuller reports of the Ulster convention than came over the cable. From the London Times we take the following summary of the proceeding and the scene: A united province has delivered itself at last in terms allowing of no misunderstanding. Its message is distinct and emphatic. "By the Throne and Crown of the United Empire will we abide, and to the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland alone shall we bow in obedience." That judgement, pronounced not hastily nor by men eager for strife, must be reckoned with.

It is hard to find a parallel in the history of political movements for the enthusiasm which characterised the proceedings in Belfast on Friday, June 17. The conference called together on the 8th of April to consider what attitude should be taken in view of the approaching climax had no sooner decided upon a provincial convention than the project was taken up heartily and earnestly throughout the length and breadth of Ulster. Men who till then had been

OPPOSITIONERS IN POLITICAL MATTERS joined hands: Presbyterians, Methodists, Unitarians, and Roman Catholics vied with each other in promoting the objects in view. The guarantee fund, which leapt into thousands of pounds almost as soon as opened, affords evidence of the interest taken in the movement by every class. Much encouragement was afforded the central committee by the eagerness with which Unionists in the remote districts of the province entered into the project, and the perseverance they showed in working out the plans suggested for securing a thoroughly representative assembly. That the Convention truly represented

THE LOYALISTS OF ULSTER

cannot be gainsaid when it is recollected that every delegate was publicly chosen by his co-electors, nor can it be contended that one party or clique predominated, for Roman Catholic, Episcopal, and every non-Episcopal denomination had an equal representation and an equal voice in the selection of the delegates. Many members of the Orange party were on the delegate's roll, and some spoke side by side with their Roman Catholic countrymen; but they did so not as Orangemen, but only as Unionists. No note of defiance or menace was sounded, but the Convention has solemnly and with determination

WARNED THE ELECTORS

of Great Britain that Ulster remains alert and on the defensive. So universal was the desire to attend the meeting that it soon became evident to the committee that Belfast possessed no building at all adequate for the purpose, and it was agreed that one should be built. The structure in which the Convention was held is the largest ever used for political purposes in the kingdom. It covers 83,000 square feet, and was built of wood, at a cost of over £3,000. Only three weeks were available for its erection, but the enthusiasm which has marked the whole of the movement roused the workmen to almost superhuman efforts, and the pavilion was voted by visitors the finest of the sort ever beheld. It was arranged to

SEAT ABOUT 13,000.

but the assemblage within its walls, including distinguished strangers and representatives of the Press, must have been close on 20,000. There were 12,000 delegates, all of whom are entered upon the Parliamentary voters' rolls. Of these upwards of 4,000 are tenant farmers, and the large majority of the remainder business men engaged in commercial pursuits. The landed estates classes formed a small portion of the body. All the delegates wore a badge supplied by the executive, which bore the arms of Ulster and Great Britain and "Ulster Unionist Convention, 1892." The building is situated on a plot of ground known as the Plains, adjacent to the Botanic Gardens, where the outdoor demonstration was held. Inside and outside it was

ELABORATELY DECORATED with flags, shields, and mottoes, and over the platform, on which were seated 400 representative leading Unionists, were emblazoned the arms of Great Britain, surmounted with a panel bearing the Laureate's words— One with Britain heart and soul, One life, one flag, one fleet, one throne. The fronts of the balcony were draped with crimson. On it were affixed in large white letters the names of "Bea-

consfield," "Bright," "Salisbury," "Devonshire," "Balfour," and "Chamberlain." Around the walls and on the supporting pillars were numerous shields bearing the arms of the province and

APPROPRIATE MOTTOES

which included the following, taken from one of Mr. Gladstone's speeches:—"I have looked in vain for the setting forth of any practical scheme of (Irish) policy which the Imperial Parliament is not able to deal with." One from Earl Spencer:—"We feel like the Americans when the integrity of their country was threatened, and if necessary we must shed blood to maintain the strength and salvation of this country." And one from Lord Salisbury:—"Parliament has a right to govern the people of Ulster; it has no right to sell them into slavery. The pavilion was arranged in sections, so that each body of delegates for the various Parliamentary divisions were enabled to sit together.

THE SCENE

presented when the vast assemblage was seated almost baffles description. On the same bench sat Conservatives and Liberals, Protestants and Roman Catholics. Throughout the whole Convention, which lasted about three hours, not one discordant note was heard; unanimity and <sup>sm</sup> reigned supreme, and when the Duke of Abercorn, with upraised arm, asserted, "We will not have Home Rule," the whole audience sprang to their feet and cheered for several minutes. There was no apathy about that demonstration nor about any which followed.

Sir William Ewart moved the assemblage to another outburst when he stated that at the present time there were only four persons in Ireland in prison under any law but the ordinary law of the kingdom. This utterance, made to show the rapidity of the Nationalist cry that Mr. Balfour's reign had been a failure, will require much dexterous manipulation before it can be answered. Again, enthusiasm knew no bounds when Mr. Sinclair, a local merchant, having scouted the so-called justice of Catholic ascendancy and shown its evils, said, "Ulster makes no demands for Protestant ascendancy, and we are determined that, come what may, this hateful ascendancy shall never be set over us." But it was only when Mr. Andrews, in trumpet tones, asserted, "As

A LAST RESOURCE

we will be prepared to defend ourselves," that the feelings of the spectators appeared to lose all control and found vent in cheers which lasted several minutes.

The speeches were all moderate, all able, and all sincere, nothing flippant was said from first to last, every speaker realized to the full his individual responsibility, and no one who heard or reads the addresses can say that any element of fanaticism or bigotry existed.

This also holds good of the utterances at

THE OUTDOOR MEETING

which was attended by 300,000 men. No one in Belfast remembers such a gathering in the city. It is worthy of note that in connexion with all the proceedings not a single breach of the peace occurred. Three platforms were erected in the gardens, and round each was congregated a vast and moving crowd, who listened with anxious looks and stern attention to all that was said.

What the city itself looked like it is impossible to describe adequately. From an early hour it was literally *en fete*. Flags and banners floated from every point of vantage, and the leading thoroughfares were alive with colors. Many thousands of delegates and visitors

FROM ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND

had arrived. Hotel accommodation became so soon and so completely exhausted that the central committee was obliged to arrange a list of suitable lodgings, and in addition to this private hospitality was largely extended. Tens of thousands more arrived from all parts of Ulster.

The Duke of Abercorn, having taken the chair, called upon

THE LORD PRIMATE OF ALL IRELAND to read prayer. The Lord Primate said:—"Brethren, with one heart and one soul let us ask God's blessings on this our undertaking. His Grace then read the following prayer:—

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who keepeth covenant and promise for ever, the life of th se who flee to Thee, the hope of those who put their trust in Thee, mercifully regard the prayers of Thy servants now taking council in Thy name. Shed abroad upon us Thy Holy Spirit to guide our deliberations for the advancement of Thy glory, the safety of the Throne, and the integrity of the Em-

pire. Give us firm resolve and power, and strength and fortitude to bring them to a successful issue, not, O God, in our own strength, but under Thy guidance, that we, being armed with Thy defence, may preserve, secure from all peril, our civil and religious liberty. Unite us together in the bonds of mutual love in the face of a common danger. Let truth and justice, brotherly kindness and charity, devotion and piety dwell amongst us, that the course of this world and the prosperity of this country may be so peacefully ordered by Thy governance that we may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The President then called upon the Rev. Dr. Brown, ex-Moderator of the General Assembly, to read a portion of Scripture. The Rev. Dr. Brown said that as loyal and God-fearing men they wished to acknowledge God in all their ways, and asked that he might direct their steps. They would now sing

THE 40TH PSALM.

The following was then sung by the immense assemblage, led by a male choir, the effect being very fine:—

God is our refuge and our strength, In straits a present aid; Therefore although the earth remove We will not be afraid. The Lord of hosts is on our side, Our safety to maintain, The God of Jacob doth for us A refuge high remain.

Mr. R. H. Orr, one of the hon. secretaries of the Convention, then intimated that communications of sympathy had been received from all parts of the country, and even from America. These numbered up to the present 110. The Duke of Devonshire telegraphed as follows:—"Desire to express warmest sympathy with Ulster Unionists in timely and vigorous protest which they are making."

One thousand Oxford students also sent a telegram of sympathy.

RESOLUTIONS.

Several resolutions were adopted of which the following was the first and principal: "That this Convention, consisting of 11,879 delegates, representing the Unionists of every creed, class and party throughout Ulster, appointed at public meetings held in every electoral division of the province, hereby solemnly resolves and declares:—That we express the devoted loyalty of Ulster Unionists to the Crown and Constitution of the United Kingdom; that we avow our fixed resolve to retain unchanged our present position as an integral portion of the United Kingdom, and protest in the most unequivocal manner against the passage of any measure that would rob us of our inheritance in the Imperial Parliament, under the protection of which our capital has been invested and our homes and rights safeguarded; that we record our determination to have nothing to do with a Parliament certain to be controlled by men responsible for the crime and outrages of the Land League, the dishonesty of the Plan of Campaign, and the cruelties of boycotting, many of whom have shown themselves the ready instruments of clerical domination; that we declare to the people of Great Britain our conviction that the attempt to set up such a Parliament in Ireland will inevitably result in disorder, violence and bloodshed such as have not been experienced in this century, and announce our resolve to take no part in the election or proceedings of such a Parliament, the authority of which, should it ever be constituted, we shall be forced to repudiate; that we protest against this great question, which involves our lives, property, and civil rights, being treated as a mere side issue in the impending electoral struggle; that we appeal to those of our fellow countrymen who have hitherto been in favor of a separate Parliament to abandon a demand which hopelessly divides Irishmen, and to unite with us under the Imperial Legislature in developing the resources and furthering the best interests of our common country."

The other resolutions were subsidiary to the above and local in character.

The Behring Sea Arbitrators.

The formal appointment of Lord Hannen and Sir John Thompson as British arbitrators on the Behring Sea Fisheries Arbitration, Commission completes the British side of the tribunal, which now stands thus:—

GREAT BRITAIN.

Arbitrator—Lord Hannen. Sir John Thompson.

Agent—Hon. C. H. Tupper. Counsel—Sir Richard Webster. Mr. C. Robinson. Hon. W. H. Cross.

UNITED STATES.

Justice John M. Harlan. Senator John P. Morgan. Ex-Minister John Foster. Ex-Minister Phelps. Mr. James S. Carter. Judge H. B. W. Blodgett.

Mr. Tupper has been engaged each day at the Foreign Office in the preparation of the British case. There are no direct precedents to go upon, and the arbitration may therefore be expected to settle a highly important precedent in future international disputes affecting the rights of deep sea fishing.

PAGES OF BRITISH HISTORY.

Historical Battles—Noteworthy Events in the Story of the Creation of the British Empire.

(Continued from our last.) CHAPTER III.

DAMME—BOUVINES—DOVER, 1214—1217

It is somewhat remarkable that it is in the time of King John, whom an English historian has justly characterized as "a mean coward, a shameless liar, the most profligate of a profligate age, and the most faithless of a faithless race," that we find those two great historical facts, the assertion of English supremacy over the sea, and the first great naval engagement between the French and English—a brilliant spot in the gloomy history of his time, and from which may be traced that series of bright naval exploits which have been our boast for ages, and, let us hope, may long continue to be so, after the "wooden walls" have passed away, or given place to those of iron.

The leading causes of the first great naval battle were as follows:—John having divorced Joanna, married Isabella of Angouleme. This, with the murder of Arthur, roused his enemies against him, and they speedily stripped him of Normandy, and all that the Plantagenet kings once held in France. His quarrel with the Pope drew upon England the spiritual terrors of an interdict, and for six years there was no religious service in the land; the churches were closed, the unused bells hung rusting in their spires; the statues of the saints were draped in black, and the dead were interred without prayer or ceremony, while the living were under a curse. This state of matters caused Philip Augustus of France, a wily and ambitious sovereign, to conceive the idea of invading England, and annexing it as a fief to his crown. That which William of Normandy had done before, might it not be done again? The opportunity was most favorable, and accordingly he made such great preparations for the complete conquest of England, at the call of the Pope too, that John, hitherto unmoved, yielded; and sensible that of the 60,000 soldiers whom he called his, not one was to be trusted, he took a new oath of fealty to the pontiff, and agreed to pay into his coffers 1,000 marks yearly rent for his kingdom of England and Lordship of Ireland.

This was in 1213, and now he took vigorous measures for rallying round him a large body of his subjects, and by the middle of April he had a great fleet as well as a large army assembled at Dover. The French monarch had determined to chastise Ferrand, Count of Flanders, for refusing to join with him in this expedition against England, and forming a secret treaty with John, who sent him armed aid. For this purpose he marched into the Low Countries, while his fleet sailed from the Seine to Damme, an old town five miles from Bruges, on a canal of the same name, which extends from the latter city to Moerkerke.

The fleet is said to have numbered 1,700 sail; and to anticipate and destroy all attempt at invasion, that of the English, consisting of only 500 sail, put to sea under Henry II.'s son by the fair Rosamond Clifford, William, with the Long Sword, Earl of Salisbury; John's brother, the Duke of Holland; and the Count de Boulogne. The vessels of those days were but small. Their masts were usually made in one piece; the sails were large and square; the tops were large round turrets, where archers and crossbow-men lurked; the sides were always furnished with iron grapples; the poops and prows were high; and the knights on board were wont to hang their shields around the gunwale before assuming them for battle. Long sweeps at times aided the sails, and around the masts were usually raked the axes and pikes and other arms of the crew.

According to De Mezeray, when Salisbury with his fleet appeared off Damme, he found a great many of Philip's vessels lying at anchor, with most of their crews ashore. Others were moored inside the harbor. He ordered an immediate attack on the former, and in a very short time the English captured 300 sail—100 more of a small size were lying high and dry upon the banks. These were pillaged of all they contained and all that could be carried off, and, this work having been thoroughly accomplished, were then set on flames. In their boats the English seamen next assailed the vessels lying within the harbor; "and those Frenchmen," says old Holinshed, "that were gone into the country, perceiving that their enemies were come by the running away of the mariners, returned with all speed to their ships to aid their

fellows, and so made valiant resistance for a time, till the Englishmen, getting on land and ranging themselves on either side of the haven, beat the Frenchmen on both sides; and the ships being grappled together in front, they fought on the decks as it had been in a pitched field, till that finally the French men were not able to sustain the force of the Englishmen, but were constrained, after long fighting and great slaughter, to yield themselves prisoners."

There was a considerable number of ships in a dock higher up the harbor, and for the purpose of attacking these the English, now flushed with triumph, made an assault upon the town of Bruges, but were repulsed after a sharp engagement, and had to retreat to their ships with the loss of 2,000 men. Such was the effect of this engagement, in which so many vessels were taken, sunk, or burned, and the city of Damme given to the flames, that Philip, in a gust of fury, burned the remainder of his fleet and quitted Flanders.

Such was the result of the first engagement between the fleets of France and England; and thus, under Lord Salisbury, was inaugurated a long series of naval glories.

(To be continued.)

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