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THE WRONGS OF IRELAND EXPOSED:—  
THE RIGHTS OF IRELAND ASSERTED.

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## SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY

LORD ROSSMORE,

AN IRISH RESIDENT PROTESTANT PEER,

BEFORE AN

AGGREGATE MEETING OF THE CATHOLICS OF IRELAND,  
IN DUBLIN,

AND BEFORE THE

FRIENDS OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY,

AT TULLAMORE, IN THE KING'S COUNTY.

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REPRINTED WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

BY

AN ENGLISH PROTESTANT.

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DEDICATED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

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“ Is it, sayst thou,  
Religion that's the parent of all this rapine,  
This virulence and rage? No; true religion  
Is always mild, propitious, and humane;  
Plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood,  
Nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels,  
But stoops to polish, succour, and redress,  
And builds her grandeur on the public good.

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LONDON:

JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.

1827.

## INTRODUCTION.

THE compiler of the following speeches is a warm—a devoted friend to Ireland. He has long witnessed her unhappy and almost hopeless condition, and has traced, as far as he could trace, the evils that afflict her back to their source. That source to him is clearly *unequal law*. The poison of invidious partiality has entered into every vein of the body politic, and has produced *proud flesh* in some parts, corruption in many, and decay in all.

To know the evil is half its cure—to correct it when known the other half. The former is already effected—the latter is in the course of accomplishment. A few bigots—a greater number of churchmen holding benefices, and, perhaps, a still greater number *expecting* benefices, are now the only opponents *in* Ireland to *all* Ireland; yet, from causes that it is unnecessary to explain, the opposition of these paltry and selfish parties is rendered formidable by the mistaken views of too many Englishmen and Scotchmen, who have been taught to look upon Protestantism in Ireland as they have viewed it elsewhere, and to have considered religious differences to have produced as lenient and almost innocuous consequences in the one country as they have produced in the other countries—alas! in Ireland it is a trade, not a *religion*. In these pages will be found a *Protestant* nobleman, a *resident* nobleman, a *retired* nobleman coming forward to give *his* evidence upon the subject. His religious belief is as opposed to that of the majority of his countrymen, as can be the religious belief of my Lords Eldon or Wellington; as a resident Peer he runs greater risks from, and can better understand the consequences of any changes in the laws than can my Lords Eldon or Wellington, *who are not resident Peers*; as a retired and peaceable landowner, living on his estates, he cannot be suspected of the motives that, without uncharitable feeling,

may actuate my Lords Eldon and Wellington, *who have been placemen*; hence, his evidence is important, and that evidence is submitted to the calm consideration of every honest mind.

Should danger be apprehended from granting the Catholic claims, who would be the first victims? Should a triumph be given to one religion above the other, who would be the first to be humiliated? Lord Rossmore is a *Peer*, living in the *very heart* of a Catholic district, yet Lord Rossmore is a *Protestant advocating the Catholic claims*.

Much of the accompanying speeches may not be interesting to the general reader, from the locality of the incidents; but when it is recollected that the same species of puny sophistry and selfish advocacy characterizes every county in Ireland, and that the statements and arguments so triumphantly overthrown at Tullamore, are very much of a class and calibre with the statements and arguments of the same dying faction everywhere; they may gather an interest which they do not intrinsically possess, and be read and reflected upon by many, by whom otherwise they would be passed over or forgotten.

There is little of the jingling of alliterative euphony, or the tinsel of inflated imagery in these speeches: they are evidently the productions of a warm heart and a clear head, and they come to the inquiring mind of every honest man with neither art to embellish, nor artifice to seduce. They speak the feelings of a gentleman in the language of a gentleman, and the views of a statesman without the sophistry of a placeman; they come home to every rank and every station, without courting either rank or station. They would be efficient alike before Lords or Commons—in the House of Peers, or in the Catholic Association;—they are strong, because they are true,—they are powerful, because they are natural.

Nor is this mere matter of opinion. The light that has been thrown by Lord Rossmore on the secret articles of the Union, has been borrowed, if we may use the term, by Sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Canning, Mr. Plunkett, and Mr. Brougham, who severally reflected it in the House of Commons, on the motion of the Hon.

Baronet for Westminster this Session—a circumstance that not only shows the importance which these distinguished statesmen attach to the argument, but also the attention which they are giving to whatever passes in Ireland; for it was at Tullamore, in March last, that Lord Rossmore first brought it forward. And these secret articles were made afterwards a distinct ground of motion, by the Knight of Kerry, for a reconsideration of the whole question.

It is no wonder under such circumstances that a sound northern Critic should have said, “we consider the speeches and public declarations of Lord Rossmore to be not only of the greatest possible advantage to the Catholic Question, and to the general cause of liberality, but we must also regard them as the strongest evidence against the ‘ascendancy faction’ in that unfortunate country, under whose shade he admits he was brought up, and to oppose himself to which he assigns as his reason for leaving his retirement.” Nor can his Lordship return to retirement; he has passed the Rubicon;—he stands pledged to prove from the articles of that Union, to which he was a party, that Catholic Emancipation was distinctly understood;—and his countrymen and the Ministers of the Crown are bound to call upon him for the further evidence he hints that he possesses; and to establish upon the grounds of a treaty—a *recent treaty*—that claim for its perfect fulfilment to the speedy Emancipation of Ireland, which, in the case of Portugal, his Majesty’s Government and the two Houses of the legislature, granted upon similar grounds, viz., the recognitions of a treaty, the condition of which remained in full force. If the faith of England were pledged to Portugal by ancient treaty, how much more must it be pledged to Ireland, by a modern treaty that can be proved by living contemporary witnesses?

Should Lord Rossmore be placed, where, if Mr. Canning be sincere, he must be placed, viz. in that position where he can advance his proofs before the united Legislature of the Empire, he will win the game by one bold stroke; for, in addition to the overwhelming *argument* in favour of equal laws, he will bring forward what he knows of this one simple and conclusive *fact*—“You are

bound by treaty to grant Emancipation; grant it not, and Ireland is released from all the other provisions of the Union." These speeches would be important, did they contain nothing more than even this position.

There is, however, another consideration that should add to their importance—Lord Rossmore, like Mr. Brownlow, is a convert from Orangeism to Liberalism; but, unlike that gentleman, is not a convert from sudden conviction, but from serious and progressive reflection. His principles have not been changed from public life, but from private; not from the irresistible power of argument and eloquence, but from the slow and gradual working of facts and circumstances before his eyes. He was reared in the "ascendancy faction," and brought up in the very lap of party; but as his mental strength increased, he strangled the serpents that had surrounded his cradle,—and is now a bright example of a self-emancipated mind offering its former prejudices on the altar of his country.\*

Seneca says, "the gods delight in beholding a brave man struggling with adversity;" but Christianity teaches us that "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth;" and we should imagine there is most joy of all, when that sinner atones for his involuntary errors by illumining the path in which he has walked for the benefit of all who may come after him.

AN ENGLISH PROTESTANT.

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\* Vide Sir Thomas Esmonde's Letter.

### AGGREGATE CATHOLIC MEETING, DUBLIN,

HELD IN CLARENDON CHAPEL, 19TH DECEMBER, 1826, THE  
RIGHT HON. LORD KILLEEN IN THE CHAIR.

LORD ROSSMORE *having entered the Chapel amid loud cheers, after some business had been attended to, Mr. Fitzsimon proposed a resolution of thanks to the sixty-nine Peers who had signed a Protest in favour of Catholic Emancipation at Buckingham House, and with some eulogistic observations to Lord Rossmore, as one of the number.*

*The motion passed with loud and long continued acclamation.*

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LORD ROSSMORE rose, and spoke as follows: My Lord and Gentlemen, in rising to return you my thanks for your kind reception, and the honour you have done me, permit me to establish my privilege to address you as one of the sixty-nine Peers, and also as a steady friend to your cause. Knowing well the talent that surrounds me, I feel a diffidence in entering on as wide a field as perhaps my feelings would tempt me to. I have taken a step this day that will be censured by many—I abide the event, for I know I am not addressing ungenerous minds. I wish to appear here as an evidence as to what I know, and to offer my advice. Feeling how much you have it in your power, by your future proceedings, to disprove every thing your enemies allege against you, I feel the less difficulty resting upon my mind. Having served in your cause for five-and-twenty years, it would not become me, in the evening of our march, to droop and sink under the fatigue; neither is it probably my nature. If I did not know I can render you the most important services, I would not have presented myself here before you this day. If I did not feel that my answers to the accusations made against you, coming from me as an independent

Protestant Peer, might have more weight and effect on the minds of Englishmen, than your own rebutments, I would not have given you the trouble of listening to me. And here I will add, that I am not only sustained in my opinions, but am co-operated with, at this moment, in my exertions, by many patriotic Protestant resident noblemen and gentry, and by some of the most valuable names in your city, for integrity, unbounded charity, and universal benevolence, that ever adorned its society. (*Cheers.*) Protestants they are; but not Protestants that are looking for Bishoprics or good livings—they are Protestants of affluence, independence, and humanity. (*Hear.*) We have arrived at the 19th century—the era of discovery and improvement—and God forbid the feelings of the heart of man should not keep pace with the improvement of his mind. Having for the last two or three months devoted the whole of my time to ascertain the feelings and opinions not only of many of the liberal Protestants, but also of the Catholics themselves of consideration in England and Ireland, I must now beg leave to state that the greatest exertions are making by the enemies to your claims, in consequence of the alleged intemperance of your debates; they then proceed to prove, that your whole body identify themselves with the intemperance of two or three speakers, because they do not come forward and secede publicly from the body, or enter into a strong public disapprobation of this violence and intemperance. I answer them thus: The Catholics feel they could not do so without danger to their hopes; they think they should risk no step that would lead to a division, and therefore ought not. (*Hear, hear.*) I, secondly, take it on me to say for the whole Catholic body, that they do not approve of the violence complained of. I state this publicly, after having lately conversed with and felt the feelings of the hierarchy, nobility, and respectability of the body in England and Ireland. Standing here as your evidence, and one who well knows now how far your cause has been affected by late events, I lament to state that in England it has been considerably injured, and that the general remark there is—“We feel the Catholics are right in the object they have in view, but we disapprove of the *means* adopted.” Does not that carry a body of evidence, and of wholesome advice along with it? Gentlemen, I stated I claimed a right to address you as one of the sixty-nine Peers—under that authority, if you will allow me to make use

of the expression, I have thought it expedient to lay before you what the opposers of your claims daily advance against you. I must, however, at the same time admit, that if intemperance has been manifested by you, it proceeded from the party that have been writhing under their wrongs for centuries, and therefore some excuse may be made for you; but I can offer none for *as great violence and intemperance exhibited by your opponents.* (*Loud cheers.*) Under that head I must bring before the public eye, “the feast of reason and the flow of soul” that took place at Armagh, as the most frightful evidence that I know of, as to the violence of party in this distracted land. I know not the learned gentlemen who spoke there; but I am told by those who are intimate with one of them, that he is a worthy person in his private walk in life—a most excellent *preacher* of the Gospel. The better he is, the stronger my argument respecting the state of party in this country—when a person like him, infected by the political and party mania of the day, descends from the pulpit, from whence he ought to preach the healing voice of Christian charity, throws off the cassock, and assumes the garb of a military bigot—I say it ought to afford a frightful evidence of the state of this country, and furnishes the strongest proof that it is high time the Minister should give his views of the question to the Legislature, and propose to it to interfere with its authority to settle this tremendous question, and pacify, at last, this distracted land. (*Hear, hear.*) And it can be done; and, God willing, the events of this day will prove that you are not the impracticable body you are represented to be. I have now lived amongst the peasantry of this country for five-and-twenty years—the habit of my family, whether in the County of Monaghan, or in the King’s County, has ever been, to be perfectly indifferent whether the doors and windows of my houses are locked or barred by day or by night or not. (*Cheers.*) I court inquiry on this, in order that it may reach the eye of the people of England—of that generous, of that noble people, whose hearts and stores have always been ready and open to attend to the wants and distresses of all mankind. (*Hear.*) I am giving the evidence of a Protestant resident Peer; and my feelings respecting this country are in unison with the patriotic and benevolent characters I have before alluded to. In evidence against us appear speeches at county meetings—principally from clergymen, whether they meet

at Armagh, or Omagh, or elsewhere; or from the wreck of the disappointed and local aristocracy, which you have assisted in crushing in the counties. If the Lord Lieutenant and his Majesty's Attorney-General were right in restraining arbitrary power and monopoly in the metropolis, you were right to do it in the counties. I have stated facts—I have brought before you circumstances—allow me now to appeal to your understandings. The game is in your hands, if you do not throw away the cards. But in going back to the reverend orators, I can tell those clergymen, that they are the last men in this land that *ought* to oppose the settlement of this great question. Little they know that I have documents in my possession of the most frightful nature, (but which it is not my business to produce here,) to prove that the Catholic is not the only persuasion they have to dread, and therefore I know the sooner this question is settled the better for them. (*Hear, hear.*) I repeat it, I have frightful documents in my possession. I have mentioned before a co-operation that is now on foot, in which several patriotic persons are engaged, who labour under the conviction, that this country never can be tranquillized, until the Catholic claims are fairly met and fairly adjusted. It rests with me now to assure you, that almost every thing depends upon yourselves. (*Hear.*) Recollect the important document that was issued from Buckingham-house in your favour; it recommended temperance, moderation, and firmness; as long as you act in conformity with their advice, you have a right to expect their support. (*Cheers.*) Recollect the advice of those great patriots, orators, and statesmen, now lying side by side in the dust, and who side by side advocated your cause in the senate of your country—look to those who are living, and to him, perhaps the greatest of all, who now holds the British lightning in his hand, ready to send forth its power on the world in defence of the liberty of opinion in Europe. (*Cheers.*) Wage war against measures, and not against men; and, above all, not against communities of men, and never again commit the error that your own body deplores, your Protestant friends deplore, and that I am convinced you yourselves deplore. Recollect the situation your Protestant friends are placed in. (*Hear.*) I know I am addressing generous minds—place us and yourselves and your cause in the same position we all held, when we signed the Catholic petition, dined with you at the Ro-

tunda, and did not hesitate to identify ourselves with you and your cause—I retract the expression, *your* cause—it is mine—(*Cheers*)—the Protestant cause, the cause of the United Empire. (*Hear.*) I know you are generous, and that my call will not be unavailing. I am confident I shall not be mistaken in the man whose generosity prompted him to leap upon the broken battlement, and devote himself, along with his comrades, who had cut the bridge behind him, (*cheers and laughter,*) though he might himself condemn the improvidence of the act. A great object was never yet gained but by a combined movement; independent exertion becomes criminal when the republic becomes endangered by it.

I now conjure you to be circumspect in your future movements; you cannot be beaten but by yourselves. You have contributed to the glory of Britain by your blood and treasure, and I admit your claims have not been attended to as they ought. (*Hear, hear.*) I am not unacquainted with modern history; and I have read many Catholic speeches full of loyalty and manly and patriotic sentiment. I have observed, they have passed away like the day that gave them birth; but I have also marked, that every error of yours—(*hear, hear,*)—every *intemperate* expression, is eagerly seized upon by your enemies, and published to the world. (*Tremendous cheers.*) What conclusion do I draw from this? Why, that intemperance is calculated to injure the cause you advocate. Take the advice, then, of your friends; they have repeatedly given it; they have advised moderation, but firmness; show the British Legislature you can pursue legitimate objects with dignity and moderation, becoming the magnitude of your cause, and which ought to belong to men who aspire after freedom. Enthusiastic in your cause as I am, for it is the cause of Ireland, of the British Empire, I think I see the golden path to your success. The very war that has been touched upon, is your opportunity to establish your claim upon a pedestal which time shall not be able to shake. Prove the influence I know you possess over this distracted land; tell her people to be peaceful, and subordinate to the law (*hear*); tell them to be ready to protect her sacred shore, and let loose the legions of Britain again, to gather fresh laurels upon the plains of Spain; play a bold and a noble game, worthy of your cause, and I prophesy to you the day is not distant when we shall be all free and happy. (*Cheers.*) Then will the olive branch take root, and

becoming fixed and immovable, the branches of the tree will soon spread its shade, under which we may all recline in security and peace, and you will then have to hail the happy hour when the conflicting tides of party shall have met in one common channel, and have mingled in the general water of oblivion and of rest. My Lord and Gentlemen, I return my humble thanks for your patience in listening to me. (*Great and continued cheering.*)

#### KING'S COUNTY MEETING.

*On Tuesday, the 26th of February 1827, the friends of civil and religious liberty assembled in the magnificent church of Tullamore, the number present could not have been less than 5000. Shortly after two o'clock, LORD ROSSMORE took the Chair amid great cheering, and, as soon as silence was restored, spoke as follows:*

GENTLEMEN—I beg leave to return you thanks for the honour you have conferred on me, by calling upon me to preside at this meeting, and to express the gratification I feel in again joining so many of my old friends in a County endeared to me by earliest recollections. In attending here, I am actuated by various motives.—1st, to avail myself of this opportunity to advocate the cause of civil and religious liberty, as I am politically disabled from being in my proper place to meet arguments which I could refute, and assertions which I could overthrow. 2ndly, I wish to preserve my identity with a county from which I derive my paternal property, where I am best known, and where my political principles are best understood;—and 3dly, whilst I rejoice in having an opportunity of advocating the great cause, I wish to expose the real nature of meetings which have recently taken place in various counties. In analysing this system, I propose to prove the meeting at Birr as only a link in the chain, forming one component part of the whole, and it is peculiarly necessary, Gentlemen, that I should call your attention to these meetings, for in them, perhaps, is involved the fate of this country, inasmuch as from the promoters of them emanates the grand source of the delusion of the British

Minister. Accuse him not, Gentlemen, he is misled by the Irish Secretary, on whom he depends for accurate information. The Irish Secretary is, in his turn, deceived. By whom?—By superannuated authorities, whose day has gone by, yet whose interests remain interwoven, and whose selfish views are incorporated with the members of the ascendancy faction. It is here the spider weaves his web, and here the timid, uninformed, and credulous fall an easy prey. I repeat here, *that* which I stated in another assembly—I wish to appear as an evidence on the real state of my country—(that evidence can be supported by others)—and I hope I do not arrogate too much to myself, when I say, that the unbought, unsolicited, and free opinion of an independent Protestant Peer is entitled to attention. The real state of the country is unknown in England; and it is from *independent Protestant residents* that the best information can be acquired. In addressing you, I do not consider that I am speaking to my Roman Catholic countrymen alone, but to every man in the British empire, of every persuasion; for surely, the pacification of Ireland ought to be regarded as a common cause; I call upon every county in Ireland where Anti-Catholic resolutions have been signed, to come forward immediately and meet them with opposing authority, such as you have judiciously determined upon this day. Meetings having been convened in Cavan, Armagh, Omagh, Derry, Enniskillen, and Birr,—orators have been employed, speeches have been made, calculated to mislead and impose upon the British Parliament.—Resolutions have been entered into, signatures have been affixed to public documents, as being those of “the great landed proprietors of the counties,” although, in fact, they are the signatures (generally speaking) of a few individuals. These meetings, these destructive engines, have been set in motion, and are still in play under the “*Vieilles Peruques*” of Dublin, and are zealously worked by the ascendancy faction, who by every act, and every exertion, endeavour to depreciate the character of their opponents, in order to lessen the weight of their evidence. If such proceedings are not publicly answered—if they are not controverted by undeniable evidence, unfavourable impressions must follow;—the Legislature must remain deceived, and, acting under false impressions, must act unjustly. In taking a review of those proceedings, should I have occasion to introduce my own family and friends, who have



been involved in the common abuse levelled against the resisters of such monopoly, I hope you will bear with me, as I have no other opportunity of throwing back upon our accusers the foul reproach which they have endeavoured to heap upon us, and to fix the stain where it is merited. Allow me now, Gentlemen, to read the Birr resolutions :

1st. That grossly misrepresented as these sentiments of the Protestants of Ireland have been on the subject of Catholic Emancipation, we consider it incumbent on us at the present crisis to come forward and to unequivocally declare our conviction of the extreme danger that would result to the British Empire, from the concession of further privileges, including political power, to the Roman Catholics of this country.

This first I shall dismiss, as being merely a sweeping clause in general use on such occasions, and on the present one used by a very few individuals, which is a material fact to be impressed upon the minds of the people at large.

2d. That the evidence of passing events at home and abroad clearly shows that Popery in principle and practice is unchanged and unchangeable; and that as our ancestors excluded Roman Catholics from political power, from a conviction that there is in the Church of Rome a principle inherently and incurably hostile to the well-being of a Protestant State; so, on the same grounds, your Petitioners humbly submit to your Honourable House the necessity of continuing such exclusion.

I deny the parallel, and reject the inference. In former times restrictive laws may have been necessary, but as we live in the 19th century—as the British Constitution is not an exclusionary one—as the Legislature is invested with a power to abrogate old laws and to enact new ones, I call upon the present generation to look forward and not to trouble themselves in useless retrospections; I call upon them to avert present and impending evils, consequent on man being opposed to man in this distracted country; I call upon the Protestants and Catholics of the present day, to co-operate and to demand that their common country shall be pacified. But who are the people who exclaim so loudly against this measure, and fulminate mere speculative dangers? They are members of the ascendancy faction. Is justice, then, to be withheld from millions, nay, from one individual, because a few selfish and ignorant persons, in the imbecility of their minds, and the providence of their fears, croak out “danger”? (*Great cheers.*)

“3d. That the continued existence of the Roman Catholic Association in all its baneful influence, acting as an *Imperium in Imperio*; meeting for political discussion, levying taxes, and legislating for the country, in evasion or defiance of an Act of Parliament passed expressly for its suppression, is a subject which calls aloud for public investigation.”

I consider this resolution to be a direct and offensive attack upon the Government of Ireland. If the present Catholic Association is an illegal assembly, the Lord Lieutenant and his Majesty's Attorney-General have neglected their duty, by permitting its continuance; but I cannot easily be persuaded that such men as Lord Wellesley and Mr. Plunkett are less well informed than those who make the assertion. Respecting the rent—it is not levied “as a tax”—it is a free-will offering from five or six millions of people; and here I will avail myself of an observation made by the talented and enlightened editor of *The Patriot*, “that it behoves the Government well to consider the causes which produce, and the effects which may follow, an union of the intellectual energy and physical force of a people united in one sentiment;” and I will add, that it may be unwise any longer to trifle with a nation who voluntarily subscribe their money. I *could* go further—it is not for me to enter fully on the subject of the rent, and yet I could put a case, and a strong one too. Have we not recently heard of eight poor men who were bayoneted and shot, and yet from their poverty could not obtain justice? It is known to all how little the authorities like to interfere between Magistrates and the people; how general the answer made is, “a reference to the Courts of Justice.” How is a pauper made to avail himself of this mode? To what fund has he to apply for means to obtain redress? Should a Magistrate, a gentleman, attempt to interfere on this occasion, what has he to expect? I refer you, Gentlemen, to the evidence on record, taken from the House of Commons. To that evidence, given upon oath, I refer you, and you will learn that a gentleman, in such a case, would have to expect being called out the next morning by a brother Magistrate, if he did his duty.

“4th. That the unconstitutional conduct of the Roman Catholic priesthood, in exercising the spiritual terrors of their Church to influence and control the return of Members to your Honourable House, at the late elections in this country, their unchristian opposition to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, as a means of enlightening and civilising our benighted peasantry; the unwearied



exertions of the Roman Catholic leaders to estrange and alienate the minds and the hearts of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects from their allegiance, by every species of inflammatory misrepresentation, to the manifest endangering of the state of this realm; their libellous calumnies of the constituted authorities of the State; the heir presumptive of the throne; his Majesty's Ministers, and the prelates and clergy of the Established Church; their disloyal declarations of triumph, and rejoicing at the presumed calamities of Great Britain; their appeals to foreign states; the spirit of persecution evinced in the interdict to their bigoted Catholic countrymen to hold no commercial intercourse with their Protestant fellow-subjects; that these and similar manifestations of the sentiments and feelings of the Roman Catholics of the present day, when they are merely petitioners for political power, evince beyond a doubt what the fate of Protestants would be, if the Church of Rome, through the insidious liberality of speculative legislators, should again acquire in this realm the ascendancy to which she is ever more aspiring.

"That upon these, and similar grounds, your petitioners humbly pray that your Honourable House will be pleased to take into your immediate and serious consideration, the difficulties under which this country at present labours, and to apply such effectual remedies thereto as to your Honourable House shall seem expedient, and Petitioners will ever pray.—Dated at Parsonstown, the 2d day of January 1827."

I am not sufficiently acquainted with what occurred in other counties, in which contests took place. I must, therefore, confine myself to the county of Monaghan, in which my own family was engaged, and on that subject I am prepared to prove all I shall advance. This fourth resolution commences with an attack upon the Roman Catholic clergy, for their interference on the late elections. The unblushing acts, however of some Protestant clergymen, during the late contests in England and Ireland, which have been noticed in the public prints, seem to be forgotten. Mr. Westenra received the following answer from a Monaghan priest: "I am told there is a junction formed against you, to convert this county into a close borough—I'll oppose such a system as long as I live—I am very sorry I have no vote to give you, but perhaps I have influence, and that you shall certainly have." Was that unconstitutional? Five hundred freemen and Forty-shilling Catholic freeholders were incarcerated during the election of Monaghan in a yard within a wall eighteen feet high, under keepers, (one being a magistrate of the county, and another a person connected

with the Grand Jury,) to coerce them to vote for Colonel Leslie, contrary to their wishes, and I will add, to their consciences. If a priest got into a window which overlooked the yard, and told the prisoners to "assert their dignity as men, to join their comrades in "the cause of the freedom of the county, to burst the barrier, to give "one vote to their landlord, and the other to the man of the people"—if the gates flew off their hinges in a trice, will the public find fault with such interference? Allow me to ask you, would such incarceration be tolerated in England? No, no; in that fair land of liberty the meanest peasant would have ordered the barrier to be levelled, and every man would have obeyed the sacred call." Would such acts be tolerated in this very county? I say no. No man dare do it; and I will also add, I really do not know of any one who would attempt it. Why, then, should such an expedient be attempted in Monaghan? I will tell you. Because the minds of the peasantry were so subjugated there, that the ascendancy faction felt confident they might take any liberty with them. How came those who are capable of such acts as these to venture to arraign their opponents, and the Catholic clergy, with resorting to "disgraceful and unconstitutional proceedings?" I could state many more such facts, but I will not delay you with the detail. Much has been advanced in various counties, in speeches and in resolutions, respecting the interference of the Catholic clergy, as if such interference were without precedent. Let those who make the assertion look back to the assertions of 1613. But if the Catholic clergy interfered of late, so did the Protestant, and the authenticated charge against the former "of excommunication being held out *in terrorem*," could not have been more appalling to the impoverished forty-shilling freeholder than were the unbecoming threats denounced (by those who make this charge) of depriving them of their farms, their only means of subsistence, of prosecution for rent, and the unmanly persecution which followed, by proceedings which made me almost ashamed of being an Irishman. (*Cheers.*) But here this rent, or tax, as it is called, was resorted to, to save the noble-minded forty-shilling freeholders of Ireland. Their conduct during the late elections proves them eminently deserving of the elective franchise; and the failure of the ascendancy faction, during the late contests, is to be ascribed to the independence of their minds. May every attempt to deprive the Irish peasant

of any of his rights in the Constitution experience similar failure! (*Cheers.*) Gentlemen, I believe there is no class of men more unwarrantably aspersed than the Catholic clergy of Ireland. Respecting those in the county of Monaghan, where I reside, allow me to state, that I had the honour of meeting with them all not long ago, at a dinner they gave to a talented gentleman, whose voice was often raised in advocating their cause. I owed him much (pardon me for this digression,) I knew him well—the name of John Bric is now found missing in the roll-call of his friends—he did not move in the upper regions of society—he was not a rich man—he was better; he was an honest man. At the dinner I have mentioned, I heard the speeches of many of those gentlemen; they flowed with loyalty, were adorned with classic lore and eloquence, and teemed with Christian love and charity. The answer they gave to the charges advanced against them (in the letter of condolence to Colonel Leslie on his resigning the contest, and the Colonel's answer thereto) speaks for itself, and exemplifies strongly that the exertions of the few in Armagh, Omagh, Birr, and other counties, are completely connected with what took place at Monaghan. [The Noble Lord here read the letter of condolence to Colonel Leslie, his answer, and the reply of the Roman Catholic Clergy.] Did you ever hear, gentlemen, such harsh and unwarrantable language as that which is here used to the resisters of monopoly? I will not follow the example; I will only say, I beg leave to differ from them, and remark that, had Colonel Leslie proceeded with his petition, the charges would have recoiled upon their authors. I cannot, however, avoid observing, (because it is a point interwoven with the case of Birr,) that I am astonished how Colonel Leslie could reconcile it to himself to confer the high-sounding title of “the landed proprietors of the county of Monaghan” on a few gentlemen of scarcely any property in the county, with the exception of two or three respectable names. (The rest were composed of his own near relations, officers of his regiment, including his paymaster, his quartermaster, and his adjutant, (who has no property whatever in the county,) his own agents and receivers; the receivers he recommended to absentee proprietors and their scattered connexions, and some persons without property anywhere. Surely a public act, such as this under the authority of Colonel Leslie's name, would make an impression on

society, and I maintain that the publications alluded to are eminently calculated to mislead the Legislature, to which body Col. Leslie is well known. He represented the county for twenty-five years, (yet was his father the first of his name who arrived to that distinguished honour;) he is the Colonel of the county regiment; he is cousin to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and to his Grace the Duke of Wellington. Such authority must have weight if not opposed. As the Governor and Custos Rotulorum of the county of Monaghan, whose ancestors have represented that county through various generations for 140 years, having had the honour of representing it, and being the father of Mr. Westenra, who was lately returned by the *vox populi*, (a far prouder title than he could claim from his ancestors,) I feel called upon to state, that amongst the names affixed to the letter of condolence addressed to Colonel Leslie are not to be found those of the Marquis of Bath, of the Lords of Clonmel, Blayney, Middleton, and Cremorne; the Cairnes, or Monaghan interest; Sir Thomas Lennard, Sir Thomas Forster, Sir Hugh Crofton, the immortal name of Grattan; Lucas and liberty; the Jacksons, and the great overwhelming independent interest—Rowley, Scott, the Hamiltons, Gore, Phibbs, Cole, Coke, Preston, *cum multis aliis*. Those gentlemen are the people who compose the great landed interest of the county of Monaghan. Balance such names as these with those signed to the letter of condolence! I will not follow the party to Omagh and Enniskillen. I hold in my hand a letter sent to me by an enlightened magistrate of the county of Tyrone—hear what it states respecting what took place at Omagh. [Here the letter was read, by which it appeared that not one-twelfth of the property of the county was represented at this meeting, not a Peer, or the representative of a Peer's property attended, about a sixth part of the magistracy, a twentieth of the clergy, (not one dissenter,) and about a fortieth of the unoccupied gentry, although a fortnight previous to this meeting two Peers, the son of a Peer, and forty magistrates had assembled in the town to discuss matters connected with the police.] And now, gentlemen, aware that you admire eloquence, if you will attend me to Enniskillen, I will introduce you to the master. The Sheriff of Fermanagh, Mr. John Mayne, opens the proceedings, by proposing that “Lord Enniskillen should report to his Majesty the dreadful state his Protestant subjects in Ireland are placed in.” To this I

offer an amendment, that for the words "the dreadful state," &c., should be substituted "the dreadful state in which his Majesty's loyal subjects in Ireland are *likely* to be placed, in consequence of a few of the Established Clergy, the Sheriff of Fermanagh, Colonel Leslie, with divers other persons too numerous and too noisy here to notice, disturbing the air with their unwarrantable speeches and offensive language." (*Great laughing.*) The Sheriff proceeds to inform the public that Colonel Leslie is his intimate friend, and very gravely asserts that "he has become eloquent on the occasion." He arraigns the Colonel's opponents; he tells us that *he* refused an offer of support from a tenantry which proposed to vote for him against their landlord's wishes; he says the gallant Colonel "magnanimously refused the offer," in terms of reprobation of his opponents; and he states himself to be the medium through whom the offer was made. To this statement of the eloquent Sheriff, I answer, that perhaps a few persons residing on the well-known estate he alluded to, may have done so, but I require strong evidence before I admit that there were more than a *very* limited number, and (as the Sheriff in the torrent of his eloquence points at my family and friends) I cannot avoid reminding him that on one occasion I can prove Colonel Leslie's having told the proprietor of that very estate, "that he did not value his interest, for that he could (or would) poll his tenantry against him." In taking leave of the Sheriff, he must permit me to tell him that he greatly overrates his own influence in the county of Monaghan; that the independent interest in that county does not require *his* support, and that it defies *his* opposition. The next item in the 4th Birr resolution, and the last, relates to the Roman Catholic leaders. You will readily admit, gentlemen, that they are not only able, but willing, to defend themselves; they require not my assistance; but the language made use of on this subject is of so unwarrantable a nature, I cannot in fair play consent to pass it over. They are accused of "endeavouring to estrange and alienate his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects from their allegiance." How can this charge be reconciled with the fact of Mr. O'Connell having on many occasions, and very lately too, in a speech which is before the public, "warned the people against illegal meetings," with his having declared "that those who attend such meetings, and who are not subordinate to the laws, will prove themselves the enemies

of the cause of civil and religious liberty, and of Ireland?" (*Cheers.*) In the name of God, what more could any man say! I therefore dismiss the charge as the offspring of intemperance. Permit me to return to the subject of the Northern meetings. Suppose we call the members of them henceforth the "Northern Rangers"—(*great laughing*)—no imputation on my friends in Louth. Many of their orators possess not an acre in the counties they endeavoured to agitate—yes, agitate. The term is appropriate, for they travelled from county to county without any ostensible business. In perusing their speeches, I really became tired of

"Reading o'er and o'er

The same sad nonsense they had preach'd before."

The most conspicuous champions on these occasions have been clergymen of the Established Church, and Messrs. Edgar and Hogg, of the Presbyterian community; (can any proof be more powerful of the agitated state of this country?) If I am not misinformed, the members of their own persuasion have disclaimed all participation in the political opinions advanced by the two latter. Of Dr. Robinson, I shall say but little; the sentiments he delivered have already arrested the attention of the public. I wish he had never presented himself at the "Feast of Reason" at Armagh. The crimson stream he anticipated would cover the green fields which gave him birth, will never flow; but the stain will remain upon her cathedral, for on its wall it is indelibly marked for ever. With the utmost diffidence I must now approach the Rev. Dr. Millar, though, on recollection, as he has not hesitated to throw down the gauntlet for Mr. Plunkett, a man as much *his* superior in legislative knowledge, as *I* may be inferior to the learned Doctor, in historic lore, I hope I may be pardoned for venturing on so high a flight, more particularly, considering the aberration of intellect under which I am by him supposed to labour, (*great laughing.*) and I confide in one so well versed in Christian love and charity, to extend the hand of pity, and to bring me into safety, should I venture beyond my depth. I am one of those sixty-nine Peers proclaimed to the empire, by the Doctor, as bereft of their understanding. On such evidence, I must stand acquitted in all I may utter. It is the peculiar good fortune of Dr. Millar to have discovered a new mode of disputation; but in this age, so fruitful in invention, where will improvement stop? *This* new and edifying

system consists in—proving everything he endeavours to disprove, thus relieving an adversary from the trouble of a reply. One example may suffice, though many present themselves, in his letter to Mr. Plunkett; in his remarks on the divided allegiance, he states, that “*in all ages, and on all occasions, the Catholic Hierarchy have uniformly rejected papal interference in temporal concerns.*” (*Cheering, and “Bravo, bravo.”*) The Doctor’s well known historic knowledge renders his evidence supreme on this head; and it is fully supported in the Treatise lately written by Counsellor Charles Butler, one of the most able, concise, and undeniable specimens of argument that has arrested my humble judgment, and from which the objection to the divided allegiance must sink into oblivion. From the opinions he has fulminated, Dr. Millar would necessarily bring his readers to the conclusion that the penal code must be re-enacted. Gentlemen, *that* cannot be effected. Against such a measure, he would find resistance in the Protestants of Ireland, who would extend the shield of protection to their Catholic countrymen. Whatever the Doctor may know of the ancients, he is unacquainted with the moderns. He tells us in his famous speech at Armagh, that not being able to satisfy himself on the controversial points, he had recourse to his study and to the page of history! And is the Doctor serious? or does he, in his turn, labour under a similar misfortune to that he laments having befallen the 69 Peers? (*Laughing and applause.*) Who is to follow him into his study and assist in brushing the cobwebs from his musty volumes, to learn expedients applicable to the present day? He, however, undertook the task; and even here I will venture to meet him—and I will tell him that had he turned over a few more pages, he *would* have found in the history of the mighty Justinian, a parallel to the present day; he would have read that in the zenith of his power, with the great Belisarius to lead his armies, the wise Papinian to direct his councils, (wise, let me call him, for he assisted his master in compiling the famous pandects, on which many of the present laws of Europe are founded,) two parties, two colours, the blue and the green, waged interminable war in the Hippodrome, until his throne was shaken to its base! Has the Doctor not heard of the orange and the green? And is he ignorant of the danger attending the encouragement of party spirit? That re-action will ensue? Does he know that the Catholics are arming—(I know

that they are in the North; and it is the insults and outrages of the Orange faction last July which have been the means of instigating them to that step)—that the re-action has commenced, and that the Catholic is not the only persuasion the Established Church has to dread? She is more interested than the rest of Ireland in settling this vital question for the pacification of the country. As Dr. Millar has turned legislator, (second Lycurgus,) I would recommend him, before he sends another letter to Mr. Plunkett, to study the advice of a heathen, but of a heathen who understood the art of government applicable to the present day. It cannot surely have escaped the legislative eye of the Doctor, and therefore I must arraign him of being an uncandid historian. Allow me to read it to you, gentlemen; believe me, our rulers in Ireland would profit by the instruction it conveys. It is the famous letter of Pliny the younger, to his friend, Maximus, the Governor of Achaia. (Here his Lordship read the letter, vide L. viii., E. p. 24.)\* The

\* *C. Pliny to his friend Maximus.*—(l. viii. e. p. 24.)

“My affection for you compels me, not to offer you instruction (for you have no need of an instructor), but to exhort you to hold fast and to follow the knowledge you have gained, or to improve it. Reflect, that you are now sent into the Province of Achaia, that true and genuine Greece, in which civilization, letters, and even the use of corn, are believed to have been first discovered: that you are sent to administer the Government of Free States, that is, that you are sent to men who are eminently men, to free-men who are eminently free-men; who have maintained the right bestowed on them by nature, with virtue, with meritorious actions, with friendship; finally, with the faith of treaties, and with the scruple of religion. Revere the Gods who were their founders; revere the very names of those Gods. Revere the ancient glory of the country; and that very agedness, which is venerable even in a man, but which is sacred in cities. Hold in honour their antiquity, their magnificent works, even their national tales; diminish nothing of the dignity, the freedom, or even the boasting of any one of them. Let it always be present to your thoughts, that this is the land which imparted to us political rights; which gave us laws when we sued them, not received them from us as a conquered country: that it is Athens, at which you reside; that it is Lacedaemon which you are governing; to wrest from which the remaining shadow and surviving name of freedom would be cruel, savage, and barbarous. You see, that although there is no difference between slaves and free-men in sickness, yet free-men are tended more

rulers of Ireland have not, by the wisdom of that government, followed the wise example of those who formerly held the world in awe. The Romans granted the rank of citizens of Rome, and all immunities, and privileges derivable therefrom, to those auxiliaries who had shed their blood in the service of the state—a proper and an honourable recompence for the soldier. Why does not England

tenderly and gently by physicians. Remember what each city has been, that you may not despise it because it has ceased to be the same. Let pride and harshness find no place with you. And do not apprehend contempt; is he ever contemned who possesses power, and the ensigns of power, unless he is mean and base, and first contemns himself? Authority ill tries its power, by offending the feelings of others; reverence is ill acquired, by means of terror; and, affection is more efficacious for obtaining what you wish, than fear: for, when you go away, fear departs also, but affection remains; and, as the former is changed to hatred, so is the latter to veneration.

“It behoves you, therefore (for I will repeat what I have said), to call to your mind, over and over again, the style of your appointment; and to interpret it to yourself such as if it were, ‘*to administer the Government of Free States.*’ For, what is more civilised than administration? What more valuable than freedom? How disgraceful, then, if administration is turned to subversion, and freedom to slavery.

“Besides this, you have a competition with yourself. You are already burthened with that most honourable reputation which you brought back with you from Bithynia; with the testimony borne to it by the Emperor; with your tribuneship, your prætorship, and now with this very lieutenancy, which is conferred upon you as a reward. So that it is the more incumbent on you to strive, that you may not appear to have been more humane, upright, and skilful, in a distant province, than in one, as it were, under our very walls; among slaves, than among free-men; when you were sent by lot, than when you are appointed by choice; when you were inexperienced and unknown, than now that you have been tried and approved: since, as you have often heard and often read, it is much more disgraceful to lose a reputation once acquired, than not to acquire one.

“I wish you to believe (as I said at the beginning), that I have written this as a counsellor, not as a teacher; and yet as a teacher also; since I am not afraid of transgressing bounds in affection. Neither is there any danger of that being too much, which ought to be as much as is possible. Farewell!”

award the same to her Irish warriors? If she did, her poet might have said of her as was said of Rome—

“Learning and Rome alike in Empire grew,  
And arts still flourished where the eagles flew.”

(*Cheering and applause.*) Here end my remarks on the fourth resolution, and I take my leave of Dr. Millar and the Northern Rangers. In the early part of this address, I stated that it was more advisable to look forward than to trouble ourselves with useless retrospections. I partly coincide with the view taken by a Noble Lord a few days ago in the House of Lords; of the Catholic petition, he said, “he would not argue about claims, but regard the question only as one *connected with* the interest of the Empire.” An impression has been made upon the credulous and the timid, that if the Roman Catholic obtained power, he would use it to recover the lands forfeited by his ancestors, and exercise it to extinguish the Protestant Establishment. These are the assertions which I know to be most influential, at least they are the most insisted on; but the argument rests on assertion alone; and it appears to me that such assertions can be easily refuted. The Roman Catholic of the present day, the affluent, and the enlightened Roman Catholic of the nineteenth century, would not embrue his hands in the blood of his nearest and dearest relatives. The two persuasions in Ireland are interwoven by blood and marriage—by the ties of friendship—by mutual good offices; they are associated in trade, and their properties are involved in one common fate. The entire of the Catholic landed property of Ireland arises out of confiscated lands, which they have purchased from Protestants, under the grants of Cromwell and King William. Most of the Catholics of property are descendants of the English settlers. who, I ask, could, at this distant period, prove his descent from the Aborigines? —Or what could induce the present Catholic proprietor to resign his possessions to an imaginary descendant? Property would, therefore, invariably remain as it is. The upper orders of the two persuasions, whose security and interest would become amalgamated, would co-operate to rally round the constitution in which they had an equal share, to guard the public peace, essential to the preservation of the property of all. (*Applause.*) In vain, then, might any modern Gracchus endeavour to disunite society in this country, now rent asunder by

contending parties and conflicting passions; the violence of those who at last feel obliged to raise their voice against their wrongs, would no longer be heard. "Those may laugh at scars who never felt a wound." The Catholic interest never was attended to when they were peaceable and submissive. I remember well myself when that body was so totally disregarded, so completely thrown aside, so avowedly placed at the very tail of society, that they might as well have been outside its pale, so much so, that I have positively observed some of them almost ashamed of being thought Catholics. From this feeling our warriors forsook their country, and, in the ranks of France, meeting the British legion hand to hand, won the field of Fontenay. Those may find fault with whom treaties have never been infringed, no compacts broken, no promises forgotten, towards whom no cold, ungrateful, and short sighted-policy has been observed, whose course in the career of competition in an honourable profession has not been impeded, whose prospects in life have not been overcast. But.....Turn to those who can discern before their aching eyes but one cheerless, dreary waste, arising from a conviction that they have arrived at their *ne plus ultra* in the Constitution—who have to dread that no further concession is to be granted—that in the race of ambition, natural to the patriotic and manly breast, the talents which the God of Nature has bestowed upon him in an eminent degree, can never be employed in the Senate of his country, where he feels his honest exertions might be employed in her service! Their hopes are crushed by the conviction, that opportunities have been suffered to pass which never will again return, when an alteration might have been easily effected—the 1st, when the rebellion in Wexford was put down, at which period a wise and generous Government might have for ever set the question at rest: 2dly, on the Union, or shortly after when the Catholic would have received concession as a boon and a blessing: 3dly, when Pius the 7th was Pontiff with his Minister Gonsalvi, who were both prepared, from gratitude, to grant more to the King of England than any other Pope ever would or ever will again; and, 4thly, in 1825, when the inquiry took place at the Bar of the House of Commons, when the Catholics were pledged to terms, that it would have been wise in the Government to have granted. Are not these strong presumptive proofs, that the Minister of 1825 was the same as the

Minister of 1798 and 1800? Is not this a proof as strong as that of Holy Writ, that the same inexorable spirit which dictated the Statute of Kilkenny, is still in existence? Is Ireland to be for ever regarded as a conquered country? Are the ears of its rulers to be for ever closed to the appeals of its people? Are we for ever to be abandoned to a state of division, and is distraction to be the everlasting consequence of our Union with England? Is the ban for a legitimate, natural, ardent, and pure connexion to be for ever forbidden? Is the offspring of such connexion, the regeneration and consolidation of the British Empire, to become her curse and her bane, and to be abandoned as an outcast?—I do not hesitate to say, that the Minister who is the cause of this state of things takes great responsibility on himself. Had the opportunities which presented themselves been attended to, peace and prosperity would have been our lot, and the gratitude of the Empire his reward.—Most of those who were concerned in the negotiations which terminated in the Union, are now laid in the dust. We appeal to the parties to that bond and compact who still live; to them we look for the benefits which were to accrue to Ireland by that measure, and to prevent our feeling that the promises of such advantages were but hollow words.—(*Great cheers.*) Although further concessions to the Catholics were not positively specified in the body of the bond between the two countries on the ratification of the Treaty of the Union, yet it was virtually held out by the one, and understood by the other, otherwise the Catholic would never have been silent on that important event. I will not, on the part of my Catholic countrymen, found their claims on the infringement of the articles of Limerick, so ably proved by Mr. O'Connell (whose historic knowledge and whose reasoning powers were equally manifest on that subject), but I found their claims on the promises held out at the period of the Union, and I call upon the British Minister to fulfil the compact. (*Applause.*) You espoused us at the common altar of our country. On the solemnization of these holy rites, you took us for better for worse; you knew our faults; you took us to your arms to reclaim us from our follies; you invited us to the temple of peace by the path which led to industry and commerce. *We took you at your word; we believed the flattering tale you told; we gave you our all; we gave you our country.* (*Hear, hear, and cheering.*) And what is entailed



upon us by the connexion? Distraction, discord, and ruin! I ask any man in Ireland, is she worth living in? I have seen her in the zenith of her prosperity; I have lived to see her reduced to the lowest ebb of misery; her Nobles have fled her land; her Senate has disappeared; her halls are now silent; her harp is mute. (*Hear, hear, and loud cheering.*) Can such a state of things exist any longer? Nothing now remains but to change the system. The Minister is now reduced to that alternative. Gentleman, I have done. I thank you for the patience with which you have heard me. I have now only to request that in whatever speeches you may this day make, or resolutions you may enter into, that you will not, on any account, imitate the coarse language of those who have, by unbecoming expressions, insulted the friends of civil and religious liberty. Be moderate—be temperate—be firm. Express yourselves in words becoming of men who aspire to freedom, and show yourselves worthy of it. Never call in personality to the aid of the sacred cause of liberty. Her bold anthem is grateful to the ears of a Briton. She should never descend from her own lofty and majestic tone. 'Tis her's to soar above, and from her proud pre-eminence to issue her mandate and expect to be obeyed. (*The Noble Lord sat down amidst the loudest acclamations and cheering, which continued for some time.*)

*In consequence of the foregoing Speeches, and the great exertions made by LORD ROSSMORE, at a separate Meeting of Catholics held at the Corn Exchange, this 5th day of March 1827, Sir THOMAS ESMONDE, Bart., in the Chair, it was moved by Mr. Lawless, and seconded by Mr. Hugh O'Connor, that the following letter be transmitted by the Chairman to LORD ROSSMORE.*

MY LORD,—The bold, manly, and unequivocal part which your Lordship is now taking in the struggle of your Catholic countrymen, for the restoration of their rights, had made such impression on our minds, that we feel it an act of policy, as of justice, to convey to your Lordship the strongest sentiments of our respect, and the warmest expressions of our gratitude. To see one of the Protestant Peers of Ireland, the proprietor of large extensive properties, the head of one of our oldest and respected families, whose fortune it has been to be a perpetual resident in his native land; to see such a nobleman coming forward to refute the slanders of our calum-

niators, to defend the secret character of our clergy, and to vindicate our claims to freedom, is a subject of congratulation to every friend of the peace, happiness, and harmony of Ireland. It is a great source of consolation to that portion of the community whose lot it is to be slandered by those who plunder them of their rights and who are obliged to contribute their blood and their treasure to a system which deprives them and their children of the protection which equal laws and equal constitutions would naturally afford them.

You have, my Lord, given an example to the Protestant Peers of Ireland, which, if followed, would at least keep alive that hope which perpetual disappointment has almost extinguished; it would show the legislature that the Protestant landed proprietor was as anxious for the emancipation of the Catholic, as the Catholic himself. It would bind both Catholic and Protestant by links of gratitude which could not be dissolved; it would form a public mind in Ireland, in favour of civil and religious freedom, which could not long be resisted.

Your Lordship has pleaded our cause in terms which demonstrate our security. You have described the privations the Catholics of Ireland continue to suffer, in language which appeals to the heart as the head. From the unprivileged the same appeal would have some weight with a fair and equitable tribunal; but it acquires new force coming from a Protestant resident nobleman, who looks down from his high station in society upon the sufferings of his Catholic countrymen with a kind and generous sympathy; who goes to the bar of the Imperial Parliament with his personal testimony in support of their fair and just claims to equal and impartial laws.

Accept, therefore, my Lord, our sincere and hearty thanks for your able, manly, and splendid advocacy of our claims; an advocacy which will insure your Lordship and your family the support of every independent mind in Ireland, and the respect and admiration of every true friend to the British laws and constitution.

THOMAS ESMONDE, Chairman.

J. O'GORMAN MAHON, Secretary.

The following letter from Sir Thomas Esmonde to Lord Rossmore, enclosing the address voted to him at the Separate Meeting, together with his Lordship's reply, was read by the Secretary:

MY LORD,

Great Dominick-street, 7th March, 1827.

I HAVE sincere pleasure, as Chairman of the Catholic Meeting



held at the Corn Exchange, on Monday last, to transmit to your Lordship an address, passed unanimously by that meeting, expressive of gratitude for your Lordship's late invaluable advocacy of our just claims.

Permit me, my Lord, to take this opportunity of expressing my own strong sense of the value of your support, and my deep conviction of the peculiar efficacy of such generous and talented declarations of opinion from an independent and resident Protestant Peer.

It is true, my Lord, when properly considered, Catholic Emancipation would be as useful to Protestants as to Catholics. But still, when I know that honours and power have hitherto been the almost exclusive reward of those who oppress and revile us—when I reflect upon the influence of early prepossessions, of family connections, and the calumny with which every Protestant is assailed who extends the hand of friendship to us, I cannot, in common with my fellow Catholics, abstain from expressing my sense of your services, and the sentiments of peculiar gratitude which such services so eminently entitle you to.

Gratitude is all we have to give—and such a mind as your Lordship's will not be insensible even to this tribute from an injured and warm-hearted people. But you have, my Lord, a higher reward in the consolation of an approving conscience. While other noblemen are calumniating our body—casting the brand of civil hatred among a mercurial people; it is yours to do justice to the calumniated, to vindicate the oppressed, to mitigate Catholic exasperation by Protestant sympathy, to impress wiser maxims upon the Legislature, and diffuse more Christian charity among the people.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

T. ESMONDE.

To Lord Rossmore, &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR,

42, Lower Sackville-street, 7th March, 1827.

I HAVE this moment had the honour of receiving your very kind letter, accompanying the address to me. In receiving the approbation of those whom I am bound to consider the organs of six millions of my countrymen, I feel myself in a proud situation indeed, and this flattering mark of distinction is by me more highly prized than any which could be bestowed upon me by the greatest potentate on the earth. If I shall have rendered any service to your cause, should my opinions arrest public notice in England,

attribute it to such opinions having proceeded from a Protestant resident Peer, who is known to be unconnected with, and independent of, any party in the land. *My country is my party*; in endeavouring to serve her, I serve you; and you may rest assured, I shall never compromise your interests, by descending from a situation, by which alone my evidence is rendered free from suspicion, and is therefore worthy of attention. The limits prescribed for me in the answer to the address with which I am honoured, debar me from taking a range authorised in debate, otherwise I would answer the mis-statements reported to have been lately made in England, and to prove, by undeniable evidence, *who* are the 'proscribed people' in Ireland. Whilst I feel and acknowledge *your* wrongs, however, I cannot admit that the complaint should be exclusively Catholic. As long as Ireland remains distracted, every Protestant has a right to be dissatisfied; and until the blessings promised by the Union shall have shed their influence on this country, discord will continue, and their hopes remain blighted. Equitable, necessary, and liberal emancipation, *must be carried* into effect, or the Union will in the end be repealed. No sting can be left behind; no ember unquenched, to furnish material for future flame. The terms of mutual interest should be fully understood at this awful and eventful moment. The strife between two conflicting persuasions should subside into mutual confidence without reference to the creed of either. I know that obtruding myself before the public at this moment creates surprise to many; but though hitherto silent, I have not been unobservant during my continued residence in this country, and the calamities to which I now find her exposed, the awful and appalling crisis to which she has now arrived, have forced me from my retirement, to declare the nature of her grievances, and to oppose *my evidence* to that of the intolerant ascendancy faction. Unequivocally, then, and openly have I come forward, in the only manner in my power, debarred as I am from a place in the Senate of my country, where, before the Union, my family represented four voices. But even this personal advantage I would cheerfully remain deprived of, if it produced that tranquillization, which its authors promised—in the present state, however, we have all the evils without the benefits of the Union. Long since, and often, have I pointed at the secret agency of the old authorities in Dublin; the result is now before Parliament in the form of a petition, with its boasted numerous signa-

tures. I have marked its progress; its mission failed in Sligo; but how have these signatures been obtained? Not openly: not at public meetings. No—private agency, secret influence, every possible exertion has been set in motion, until the names of 27 Irish Peers are stated to appear in the list. Our cause, however, is not lost as long as the resolutions openly entered into, and signed by 69 Peers remain on record, to be opposed to this document. Let the self-interested disturbers of the public peace work in the dark, and smuggle their baneful resolutions into the House by stealth; *our* cause is too great, too glorious, to require the aid of intrigue; *we* will work openly; *we* will advance no *local* circumstances to prove our wrongs; we unequivocally declare our country is in a state of distraction, and we call upon England to remedy the evil, by dispensing justice at last. The resources of the Catholic body, in population, in union of sentiment, in wealth, in talent, and in the justness of its cause, are irresistible, if well directed, but they have been frittered away by independent movements which confess disorganization. Let a system be established. Let every Roman Catholic appear publicly at his post. Let the Protestant auxiliaries be ascertained. The moment is arrived for combined and general exertion. For, as the philosopher says, “when bad men conspire, good men should unite.” Never did I feel so deeply my own limited powers; never had I so much cause to lament my not being in my proper place, where I could declare, before my country and in the presence of my God, that I have witnessed the oppression of the Roman Catholics; that I have witnessed insults offered to them, which reflect disgrace on the oppressors, and must call forth the exercise of every generous feeling in favour of the oppressed.

Sir Thomas Esmonde—Permit me now to return you my sincere thanks for the kind terms in which you have expressed yourself towards me personally, and the just and powerful remarks with which you have accompanied the address. I feel particularly the force and justice of your observation, that “Emancipation would be as useful to Protestants as Catholics.” I, as a Protestant, feel I am aggrieved by your exclusion; if you are excluded from the privilege of being returned for the Senate, I am excluded from the privilege of returning you, and your legislative ineligibility is, therefore, a violation of my elective right.

I have the honour to remain,

Your sincere and faithful servant,

ROSSMORE.