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[SIXPENCE.]

OFFICE, 198, STRAND.

THE LORDS ON IRELAND.

On Tuesday last, upon the occasion of the presentation of a petition by Lord Roden on the subject of processions in Ireland, a debate ensued in the House of Lords which presented many remarkable features, and which now invites us to bring the question of existing Irish disturbance once again under the consideration of our readers.

The public who have patronised this journal cannot have forgotten that the tone adopted by us upon the vitally important subject of home legislation for Ireland—we mean legislation by Great Britain, of which Ireland is, under our common constitution, so fair and beautiful a part—has been marked strongly by an absence of party feeling—by strict impartiality of purpose—by freedom from prejudice—by anxiety for justice—and an ardent aspiration after truth. We freely declared, in the outset of that frank companionship with our readers which grows dearer to us the longer it endures, our keen appreciation of the wrongs and evils which have marred the prosperity of the sister isle. We admitted the sin of long misgovernment in Ireland—we deprecated the great social miseries which for generations have been suffered to grow into monstrosity upon her soil. We did not deny a sort of mis-appreciation of the spirit of her people by those intrusted with their rule; nor did we shrink from the responsibility of declaring our conviction that the best energies of British statesmen, and the best sympathies of the English of every degree, were fairly due to Ireland, to alleviate her sorrows, to raise her prospects, to promote her happiness, and to improve her soil. We spoke out boldly in favour of particular reforms, and, although we knew and felt that much had been granted, we urged further concession with a free and honest voice. We spoke of the social grievance of absenteeism as one that we would gladly attack with energy until something like a natural and filial sympathy should be engendered among the richer children of their mother-land; we upheld the great *rezata questio* which has so long raged between landlord and tenant as a very signpost to legislation; cautious, but immediate—careful, but without delay—we implied a belief that even religious concessions might be advantageously

blended with civil benefits; and we struck at the hateful Poor-law with all the humble power of our pen, aided by the force of our heartfelt convictions that it was wretchedly, radically bad. And in doing all this we believed, and believe still, that we were only plunging into the tide of purely English feeling, and going with the common stream. We know that the condition of Ireland is sympathetically regarded all England through; we know that English generosity admits, feels for, and is ready, so far as the general people are concerned, to remedy all her wrongs; we know that, to accuse them of callousness to the welfare of the sister-land, is to libel them most falsely; and we know also, that all the precedents of modern history are before us to tell what the English have done for the Irish in every great movement for improved, or supposed improved, legislation, and to make the past a criterion for present and future goodwill. We are sure that the English are the natural friends of Ireland, and that with an honesty of purpose which it would be ungrateful to deny.

Assured of this, and assured also of our own sincerity in advocating the welfare of the sister isle, we had the less hesitation in giving our unqualified opposition to the insanity for repeal—in repudiating the diatribes of O'Connell against the Sassenach and the Saxon—in declaiming the fierce agitation of the distracted kingdom to be the curse which delayed legislation and frightened capital from its shores—in urging blended energy and conciliation upon the Executive—and in appealing to the voice of reason and religion to lead our Irish fellow-countrymen into the paths of peace. We were glad to find that the temper with which we bound up our principles with the real good of both countries and the general integrity of the empire, was acknowledged and applauded by all the thinking classes in Ireland, and that the article in which we most loudly protested the inviolability of the Union, was that which found most general circulation through the Irish press.

We now earnestly repeat our previously declared opinions, and shall seek to support them by directing strong attention to the debate of Tuesday evening in the Lords. We shall not go into the question of processions, which was the peg of the discussion; nor revert to Lord Roden's picture of the condition of Ireland, because the party bias of years is so strong in the mind of that nobleman as to make his statements not exactly *couleur de rose*—but Orange colour, to say the least. His motive was to stop

all other processions as Orange processions had been stopped, or else to permit Orange processions with the rest, a question of local expediency which we shall not take upon ourselves to moot. But we turn to the speeches of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Brougham, and these are pregnant with meaning and good sense: that of the soldier-Minister giving us more confidence in the passive conduct of the Government than we could ever bring ourselves to feel before; while the beautiful oration of the noble lawyer abounds in practical wisdom, and combines the power of eloquence with the value of truth and common sense. First, however, let us assure public feeling, and quell a fast-growing alarm upon the subject of the repeal agitations by an extract from the Duke of Wellington's speech:—

I say, as I said before, that I am willing to admit the truth of my noble friend's description of the state to which these agitations, these criminal agitations I would call them (loud cheers), have brought the sister country—the extreme injury which they are doing to that part of the empire, and most anxiously desirous I am to see an end put to them. (Cheers.) My lords, I am also aware that the Government are responsible for every act they do, and for all the omissions to which the noble earl has referred. I will not go into a detail of these circumstances, because I am not, on this occasion, able to state what the intentions of Government are on this subject. My lords, I do not think it desirable that they should be stated; but what I do say is this—that I, whose duty it is to superintend one of those offices on which the execution of the measures of the Government depends—I feel confident that everything that could be done has been done, in order to enable the Government to preserve the peace of the country (cheers), and to meet all misfortunes and consequences which may result from the violence of the passions of those men who unfortunately guide the multitude in Ireland. (Cheers.) My lords, I do not dispute the extent of the conspiracy, I do not dispute the dangers resulting from organization in that country—I have stated it publicly on more than one occasion—I do not deny—it is notorious, it is avowed, it is published in every newspaper all over the world. I do not deny the assistance received from foreigners—not from foreign Governments—I have no right to say so—but from foreigners of nearly all nations; for there are disturbed and disturbing spirits everywhere (a laugh), who are anxious to have an opportunity of injuring and deteriorating the great prosperity of this country. (Cheers.) I don't deny all this; but still I say, I feel confident that the measures adopted by the Government have been such, as that they will be enabled to resist all, and ultimately to preserve the peace of the country. (Loud cheers.) And if it should turn out that that is the case, I believe it is best that we should persevere in the course in which we are proceeding, and not attempt to adopt other measures until it becomes absolutely necessary to adopt them. (Cheers.)

From any other Minister of the Crown, or person associated with the Government, this declaration might be treated as the ex-



OPENING OF THE OYSTER MARKET, BILLINGSGATE.—See next page.