

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
SIXTH NATIONAL CONGRESS  
OF THE  
FENIAN BROTHERHOOD,  
AT  
CLEVELAND, OHIO,  
SEPTEMBER, 1867.

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NEW-YORK:

J. CRAFT, STEAM BOOK & JOB PRINTER, 29 ANN STREET, COR. NASSAU.

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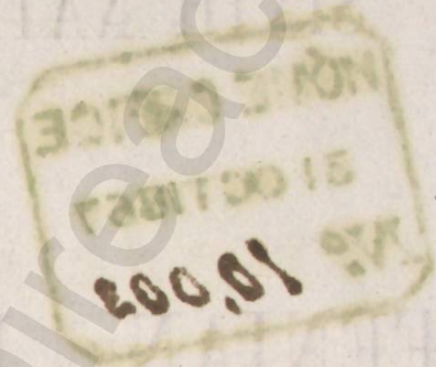
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# SIXTH NATIONAL CONGRESS, F. B.

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## PROCEEDINGS

OF

## JOINT CONVENTION

OF

## SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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The members of the Senate and House of Representatives met at Cleveland on Tuesday, September 3d, 1867, in pursuance of the following call, issued in accordance with the Constitution of the F. B. :—

HEAD QUARTERS FENIAN BROTHERHOOD, }  
New York, July 17th, 1867. }

TO THE CENTRES OF CIRCLES AND MEMBERS OF THE FENIAN BROTHERHOOD :

BROTHERS :—In compliance with Article II, Section 10, of the Constitution of the Brotherhood, providing for an annual meeting of Congress, on the first Tuesday in September ; you are hereby notified that the Senate and House of Delegates of the Fenian Brotherhood, will assemble as a General Congress of the organization, on Tuesday, September 3rd, 1867, at 12 o'clock, M., at Cleveland, in the State of Ohio.

The provisions of the Constitution for the election and apportioning of Delegates. (to which your attention is directed.) are as follows :—

“The Representatives shall be delegates chosen every year by the Brotherhood, in good standing, of the several States and Districts. Delegates shall be apportioned among the several States and Districts, which may be included within the Union and other portions of America, according to their respective number of Circles ; each Circle being entitled to one delegate for every hundred members, more or less, but not less than ten ; and one additional delegate for a fractional part of one hundred members, exceeding fifty of such Circle.”—Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution.

The Credentials of each Delegate should be duly filled up and authenticated by the signatures of the officers of his Circle, so that no difficulty may be experienced in the proper organization of the Congress.

Brothers, in issuing this call for the meeting of our Congress, I am deeply impressed with the great responsibility we have all assumed, but strengthened and consoled in reviewing the past glorious triumph of our organization in face of opposition the most difficult and dangerous that ever beset the path of men struggling to be free ;—difficulties not of our making, but the work of ages of misrule ; and in the face of all this, we have placed our country and her cause on



an eminence so lofty that we have attracted the attention of mankind. We have laid the wrongs of Ireland before the world, so that there is an Irish question to settle. We have dragged to light the hoary criminal, before the tribunal of public opinion, with the blood of our people on her head; and she must answer for her iniquity. In her desperation she bared her bloody hand to strike down our brothers; but she saw from afar the vengeful power of our organization, and became paralyzed.

Brothers, your organization is now the only voice of Ireland. Our beloved country is a land of desolation, where anarchy rules supreme. The voice of complaint is stifled by the stern mandate of the tyrant. The thoughts, feelings and aspirations of our broken-hearted people cling 'round you with all the affection of a mother's love.

The coming Congress will be to our countrymen what the Star of Bethlehem was to a benighted world; it will bring joy and hope to our people, and terror and dismay to our enemy; restoring lost confidence to the weak, and infusing renewed energy into the patient laborers in our holy cause.

Brothers, the past year has tested the stability of our organization and the sincerity of our purpose. We have passed triumphant through a fiery ordeal. Slander has been silenced by the voice of truth, and an organized fraud has passed away, to find a place only in the pages of infamy. Our baffled and betrayed countrymen at home, have found by bitter experience, that they were but the tools of an ignorant and selfish despotism, and not the soldiers of an Irish Republic; and faithful to the Irish character, they are returning to the true fold, to do battle with us for our native land. Letters from our patriotic President, Colonel Roberts, have been received. They are of the most encouraging kind; his mission has been a complete success—all that you could hope for or desire; and, with the help of God, he will be with you in your deliberations at the meeting of Congress. We have statements of affairs in Ireland, through our own delegates, men who ran all dangers and risks in the cause, all of which will be submitted to you. Thus, brothers, with the weak and the wicked cast aside, and the brave and resolute closing up our ranks, the path to freedom lies before us unobstructed; the destiny of our country is in our keeping, and on our action depends *national life* or *national death*. Hence we would impress upon you the necessity of selecting for your delegates to this Congress, the wisest and most resolute of your men. Every Circle in the organization should be there represented; it should be the largest, as it will be the most important representation of our people, ever assembled on this Continent. Never in the history of our race has a more momentous crisis been placed before it. Not only will you have to review the action of your officers for the past year, as to the manner in which they have disposed of the resources placed in their hands, but you will be called on to provide ways and means to carry to a successful termination the cause we have so much at heart, and we would not, if we could, hide from you that it is the want of resources that alone has crippled our energies and cramped our efforts in the past year, as you will find in our report.

Brothers, we caution you against croakers and the vice of despondency. The liberation of Ireland is not the work of a day: it will require patient toil and a brave and steady hand to guide the Irish bark of liberty successfully on the sea of revolution; a work not suited for the coward or the slave. Let us, then emulate the courage and the faith of our kindred, *pining their lives away in English dungeons*: they have shown how *men* can labor and suffer, and still hope for Ireland, even though the rays of the sun that slant through the bars of their dreary prison, are not the rays of light or hope, but blood-red, disclosing to them more clearly the depth of their woe and desolation.

Brothers, a cruel and relentless war is progressing in Ireland daily, and the more cruel because it is a war on the side of the oppressor. Judges, juries, landlords and all the appliances of tyranny are strengthening the hands of the enemy, with an energy that never sleeps, and a power of unlimited despotism, like a wall of fire, encircling our people, weakening their strength, and rendering them more prostrate, day by day. *And what are we doing?* Contrast the watchfulness of your enemy, his untiring zeal for your extermination, with our work. We fall far short of his example. Let us compare our labors and sacrifices with those of the men in prison, or the men who had to fly from their homes, and we will find them small indeed, in comparison.



Brothers, great changes are taking place in the world; we must prepare to be able to take the new character we are working to attain, that is the character of citizens of a free and independent Irish Nation. Let the word then be onward, strengthening the hands of the organization, uniting and cementing the hearts of our people together for this great work, trusting only in God, and the bravery of our own hearts and strong arms; and the day of deliverance cannot long be postponed.

Yours fraternally,

JAMES GIBBONS,  
Vice-President Fenian Brotherhood.

# FIRST DAY'S SESSION.—Tuesday September 3, 1867.

## MORNING.

The House of Delegates was called to order at 12 o'clock m., by E. L. Carey, District Centre of Manhattan. Hon J. W. Fitzgerald, of Cincinnati, was chosen temporary Speaker, Wm. McWilliams, Clerk, *pro tem.*, and Captain Proctor, of Cleveland, Sergeant-at-Arms, *pro tem.*

Michael Scanlan, of Chicago, from the District Centres, reported that they had examined the credentials of the Delegates from their respective Districts and presented the result to the House. On motion, the report was accepted, and the District Centres appointed a permanent Committee on Credentials.

On motion, the House took a recess till 2 o'clock, P. M.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

At 2 o'clock, P. M., the House was called to order by the Speaker.

On motion, B. Smith, Cincinnati, O.; H. T. Van Fleet, Marion, O.; Peter Cunningham, Utica, N. Y.; Col. P. O'Reilly, Danville, Ill.; and F. J. Finnerty, Indiana, were appointed a committee to wait upon the Senate and inform them that the House was organized, and ready to go into joint Congress with that body.

The committee reported that they had performed their duty, and that the Senate would immediately meet with the House.

On motion, Wm. Connolly, P. O'Neil and B. Gorham were appointed a committee to assign seats to delegates according to their districts.

On motion, a committee of one from each district was chosen on permanent organization of the House. The committee consisted of Capt. Boland, Ky.; James Carroll, Md.; J. C. Morris, Utica, N. Y.; James Cahill, Conn.; James McGonegal, Mich.; Major Wm. Clingan, Buffalo; Capt. Wm. Henry, Chicago; Col. J. O'Neil, Iowa; D. A. Meehan, Me.; Patrick Cahill, St. Louis; M. Russell, Troy; B. Smith, Cincinnati; J. Dowds, Ohio; Robert Ashe, Mass.; Wm. Connel, Pa.; John Meighan, N. J.; Thomas Finn, Philadelphia; John Crotty, Ill.; P. McSweeney, Boston; John McConnell, Mo.; John Mulroy, Nashville; James McCann, Mich. (upper), E. L. Carey, Manhattan; F. Galvin, N. Y.; F. Gargan, Tenn.; and two delegates at large.

On motion, the Organizers, F. B., were admitted to the House as Delegates at Large.



The Committee on Permanent Organization reported as permanent officers of the House—

For Speaker—Hon. J. W. Fitzgerald, Cincinnati, O.

For Clerk—Major Wm. McWilliams, Philadelphia, Pa.

Assistant Clerks—R. McCloud, Norwich, Conn., and P. N. Madigan, Dunkirk, N. Y.

Sergeant-at-Arms—Capt. T. M. Proctor, Cleveland, Ohio.

Assistants—Timothy Conroy, J. J. Devine and M. O'Malley.

The report of the Committee was accepted, and the nominations were unanimously confirmed.

A quorum of the Senate, consisting of P. J. Meehan, of New York; M. McQuirk, Norwich, Conn.; J. C. O'Brien, Rochester, N. Y.; F. B. Gallagher, Buffalo, N. Y.; John Carlton, Bordentown, N. J., and William Fleming, Troy, N. Y., then came into the House and entered into joint Congress with the House and Delegates; the Speaker of the House presiding in the absence of the Vice-President, F. B.

On motion, a committee of five was appointed, (Capt. John Mulroy, Tenn.; F. B. Gallagher, Buffalo; M. McQuirk, Conn.; A. L. Morrison, Chicago; and David Casey, Utica,) to wait upon the President F. B. and inform him that the Congress was organized and ready to receive any communication he might be pleased to lay before it.

On motion, Col. John Hoy, James McCarthy, Michael Scanlan, J. C. O'Brien, Philip O'Neil, F. B. Gallagher, W. B. Brady, Capt. Boland and Capt. Cardwell were appointed a committee on the Constitution, policy and general state of the organization.

On motion, J. C. O'Brien, John Egan and J. Lynch were appointed a committee to draft rules to govern the deliberations of the Congress.

On motion, Congress adjourned to meet at 8 o'clock A. M., September 4th.

## SECOND DAY.—Wednesday, September 4. 1867.

Congress met, pursuant to adjournment, at 8 o'clock A. M., the Speaker of the House in the chair.

The minutes of the preceding day's session were read and approved.

The Speaker announced that James Gibbons, of Philadelphia, Pa., was present, who, being President of the Senate and Vice-President of the Fenian Brotherhood, would, *ex officio*, preside over the Congress.

Vice-President Gibbons then took the chair.

On motion, several gentlemen were admitted to the privileges of the floor.

The Committee on Rules submitted a number of rules and an order of business for the government of the Congress, which were adopted.

The committee appointed to wait on the President, F. B., reported that the President was present and ready to deliver his Message to the Congress.

The President of the Fenian Brotherhood, Col. WILLIAM R. ROBERTS, then entered the hall, and was received by the members of Congress rising to their feet and cheering again and again, after which he proceeded to deliver his Message. [See page 17, and following.]

On motion, the President's Message was referred to a special committee of five, consisting of H. T. Van Fleet, A. L. Morrison, F. B. Gallagher, Michael Scanlan and Wm. Fleming.

On motion, H. T. Van Fleet, M. McQuirk, John Fitzgerald, Jr., Capt. M. Boland and P. J. Meehan were appointed a committee to prepare an address to President W. R. Roberts, embodying the sentiments of the Convention on his eminent services rendered to the cause of Ireland.

On motion, Congress took a recess till 2 P. M.



## AFTERNOON SESSION.

At the appointed hour the Congress was called to order, Vice-President Gibbons in the chair.

The roll of Delegates having been called, President W. R. Roberts read the report of his interviews in Paris with the Representatives of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, together with the articles of agreement entered into on behalf of the Fenian Brotherhood of America and the I. R. B.

On motion, the report was received.

On motion, it was

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Irish nationalists of America are due to President W. R. Roberts for his able and eminently patriotic services in effecting a permanent and effective union of the Irish national element at home and in America.

On motion, the report was referred to the Committee on Constitution and general policy of the organization.

The Chairman announced that the Secretary of War, General S. P. Spear was ready to submit his report.

On motion the report of the Secretary of War was received, read, and referred to the President and Senate of the F. B.

On motion, Congress took a recess till 8 P. M.

## EVENING SESSION.

The Congress was called to order at the appointed hour, the Speaker of the House in the chair.

On motion, the following preamble and resolution were adopted :

*Whereas*, On the 17th of July, 1867, the Fenian Brotherhood of the City of Buffalo, N. Y., held a pic-nic, and on that occasion a number of United States soldiers paraded in the ranks of the organization, and for such parade were court-martialed, found guilty, and sentenced to be fined : Therefore be it

*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to devise the necessary ways and means to procure the remission of said fines.

The Speaker appointed as such committee, Col. John Hoy, Major Clingan and Capt. Doyle.

On motion a committee of five were appointed to draft resolutions expressing the sentiments of the Congress on the deaths of Capt. Sullivan, Lieut. Lonergan, Sergeant Lynch and the other patriot martyrs of Ridgeway. Committee—Thomas Lavan, Ohio ; John Egan, N. J. ; Capt. M. Boland, Ky. ; Capt. Russell, Troy, N. Y., and Capt. Ritchie.

On motion, the following were appointed a committee on Military affairs :—Gen. S. P. Spear, Col. T. H. Quinn, Col. J. S. Croll, Col. J. O'Neil, Col. P. O'Reilly, Col. P. F. Walsh, Col. J. W. Byron, Major W. Clingan, Major T. O'Leary, Capt. Wm Henry ; Capt. Keegan, Capt. J. D. Campbell, Capt. Maher, Capt. Robert Cullon.

On motion, a committee of Ways and Means and Finances, consisting of one from each District was appointed. The following were nominated as such committee :—S. E. Filkins, Medina, N. Y. ; Peter Cunningham, Utica, N. Y. ; Samuel Morris, Troy, N. Y. ; Thomas Finn, Philadelphia, Pa. ; Wm. Tracy, Pittsburgh, Pa. ; John Eagan, New Jersey ; William Dolan, Illinois ; Michael Gannon, Indiana ; James McGonnigal, Michigan ; ———, foreign ; ———, foreign ; Col. John O'Neil, Northern Iowa ; E. H. Hart, Indianapolis, Ind. ; Thomas Leonard, Kentucky ; Matthew Rigney, Rochester, N. Y. ; J. Lynch, Southern Iowa ; James Cahill, Connecticut ; Robert Ashe, Massachusetts ; Felix Quinn, Maine ; ———, foreign ; Thomas Lavan, Ohio ; James



Byrne, Rhode Island ; James McDonald, Missouri ; Richard O'Malley, Chicago, Ill. ; J. Leary, Manhattan.

The Committee on Address to the President, F. B., handed in their report, which was received, read, and on motion adopted, and the committee instructed to have the address engrossed and presented to the President in the name of the Congress.

On motion, the Congress adjourned till 8 o'clock A. M. on Thursday, September 5th.

### THIRD DAY'S SESSION.—*Thursday, September 5, 1867.*

The Congress was called to order at 8 A. M., by James Gibbons, President Senate F. B.

The minutes of the previous day's proceedings were read and approved.

On motion, the following were appointed to draft resolutions on the death of General Thomas F. Meagher :—E. L. Carey, M. Scanlan, J. W. Fitzgerald, A. L. Morrison, John Carlton.

On motion, the Committee on Constitution and General Policy was directed to draw up resolutions expressive of the views of the Congress on the incarceration of American citizens in British dungeons, and that the same be laid before the Congress of the United States, and that the said body be requested to take more energetic action in their case.

On motion, the thanks of the Congress were tendered to Daniel O'Sullivan, Secretary Civil Affairs, F. B., for efficient and important services rendered.

On motion Congress took a recess till 2 o'clock P. M.

### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Congress re-assembled at the appointed hour, the Vice-President F. B. in the chair.

The following communication, enclosing a letter from John Hamill, State Centre for California, was sent to the Congress by the President :

CLEVELAND, OHIO, September 5, 1867.

*To the Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood :*

GENTLEMEN :—I have the honor to transmit to you the accompanying communication just received from John Hamill, Esq., State Center for California. Coming as it does from the banner State of our organization, and from gentlemen whose wisdom, patriotism and devotion to our cause have been so amply proved in the past, I ask for it at the hands of Congress that attention which it so justly merits. And I further recommend that the legislation asked for in relation to California be granted. It is beyond a question indispensable to the success of the organization on the shores of the Pacific.

I have the honor to be, yours, fraternally,

WILLIAM R. ROBERTS, *President F. B.*

On motion the letter of State Centre Hamill was read, and ordered on the minutes. [See page 41 and following.]

On motion, Congress took a recess till 8 P. M.

### EVENING SESSION.

The Congress re-assembled at the appointed hour, the Vice-President F. B. in the chair.

On motion, the Congress went into Committee of the Whole on the election of President.

On motion, Hon. J. W. Fitzgerald was elected chairman of the Committee of the Whole.

After the matter had been fully discussed, it was resolved that the Committee of the Whole do now arise.



On motion, the Congress went into election for President by ballot.

On motion, F. B. Gallagher, of Buffalo, N. Y., and B. Smith, of Cincinnati, O., were appointed tellers.

Col. William R. Roberts, of New York, was nominated for President.

S. E. Filkins, Medina, proposed Michael Scanlan, who immediately declined.

On motion, the nomination for President closed.

The Congress then proceeded to ballot, when the tellers announced that Col. William R. Roberts was unanimously elected as President of the Fenian Brotherhood for the ensuing year.

On motion, a committee of one from each District was appointed to wait on the President-elect and inform him of the action of the Congress. The following were nominated as such committee:—James Gibbons, E. L. Carey, P. O'Day, Wm. Fleming, John Egan, Robert Ashe, Thomas Leonard, James Carroll, A. L. Morrison, F. B. Gallagher, General S. P. Spear, C. G. Dowling, Peter Cunningham, S. E. Filkins, Felix Quinn, James Cahill, Thos. Lavan, B. Gorham, James McGonigal, Wm. O'Connell, Col. John O'Neil, Thomas Kearney, Captain John Mulroy, ———, foreign, ———, foreign, ———, foreign, John Forrestal, John Flood, James McDonald, Patrick Cahill, James Byrne.

The committee reported that they had waited on Col. W. R. Roberts, the President-elect, and that he declined the position, and would submit his views in writing next day.

On motion, Congress adjourned til 8 o'clock A. M., on Friday, Sept. 6th.

#### FOURTH DAY'S SESSION.—*Friday, Sept. 6, 1867.*

The Congress was called to order at 8 A. M., by James Gibbons, President Senate F. B.

The minutes of the previous day were read and approved.

A committee, consisting of one from each District, was appointed to draw up a declaration of principles. The committee consisted of John Egan, N. J.; Capt. R. Cullan, Cincinnati; Col. John O'Neil, Northern District of Iowa; Felix Darragh, Philadelphia; J. Fitzgerald, Jr., Eastern District of Pennsylvania; W. O'Conner, Southern District of Iowa; Wm. Connelly, Ohio; P. Sweeny, Shawmut District; P. W. O'Connor, Toledo; Daniel Taggart, Kentucky; Michael Finnegan, Lake Superior District; R. McCloud, Connecticut; D. Keenan, Chicago; Col. P. O'Riley, Ill.; J. P. Murphy, Utica; S. E. Filkins, Medina; M. J. McHugh, Amsterdam, N. Y.; James McDonald, Missouri; Capt. J. Mulroy, Tenn.; Jas. Byrne, Rhode Island; D. E. Meehan, Maine; James Carroll, Md.; Thomas Lavan, Cleveland; Capt. Cahill, St. Louis; James McGonigal, Mich.; G. P. Cashel, Western District of Pennsylvania, and three delegates at large.

A communication was received from a committee of five, Stephens' men, stating that they were the bearers of propositions to the Congress.

On motion, the Congress appointed a committee, consisting of Messrs. Scanlon, of Chicago; Fitzgerald, of Cincinnati, and O'Day, of Buffalo, to meet the parties whose names were signed to the communication, and receive from them in writing any propositions they might have to lay before Congress.

The report of the Secretary of Civil Affairs was received and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and Finances.

The following letter was presented to the Congress from Col. W. R. Roberts, giving his reasons for his declination of the office of President to which he had been elected:

CLEVELAND, SEPT. 6, 1867.

*To the Representatives of the Fenian Brotherhood in Congress assembled:*

GENTLEMEN AND BROTHERS: The Constitution of the Fenian Brotherhood, limits the term of the office which I hold to one year; or from one annual Congress to another, therefore my term ends during this session.



For two years I have held this laborious and responsible office, being three times elected to it, once by the Senate, and twice by the Representatives of the Brotherhood at large. Previous to my election by the Senate, I positively refused at Philadelphia to allow my name to be used in connection with the office, as my original and constant desire has been to remain a simple member in the ranks, doing all within my power to aid my native land; but circumstances beyond my control, and an overpowering sense of duty to my country, compelled my acceptance, under the most painful reluctance, of a position that has required from me sacrifices of all kinds, entirely beyond any advantages accruing to the cause.

At each Congress I sought to be relieved from the position, but the persuasion of friends and the critical condition of the organization, overpowered my reluctance to again accept the Presidency, and I yielded. Now, however, matters are changed—we have a compact organization, a united people at home, and public confidence in a great measure restored. It now remains with the Irish people whether our cause shall triumph or no. If they fail in their duty to their native land, it is utterly out of the power of one man to free Ireland by performing miracles. If they are self-sacrificing, devoted, and persevering, then, indeed, our cause is sure to succeed, with a patriotic and sensible man at its head. We have endeavored in the past to instil into the minds of our people that principles, not men, were our leaders, and that a great movement should not grow up around any individual; or depend upon one man for its existence. It is time that we commenced to put in practice what we have preached.

My acts while holding the office are known to you and to the world; by them I will be judged, and whatever may be the verdict, I will be content, satisfied as I am that the strictest examination of my own conscience cannot discover a thought, word, or deed, that has not been prompted by an undying love for the land that bore me; and a desire to honorably sustain the character of the Irish people.

To you, gentlemen, and to those you represent, I tender the warmest wishes of a grateful heart, for the unlimited confidence you have at all times reposed in me. That I still retain that confidence after passing through the trying ordeals of the past two years, while the characters of so many others, who bitterly assailed me and the organization have been blasted or proved infamous, is the very highest tribute I could receive at the hands of my countrymen.

Our labors, our sacrifices, and the many trials we have borne together in the cause of Ireland, shall forever bind you in my remembrance and esteem. That I may ever be similarly remembered by my Fenian Brothers is my earnest desire and prayer.

I have but one favor to ask of you, it is not for myself; it is for my country and yours. It is that you renew your efforts on her behalf, when you return to your Circles; that you will spread the principles of our organization, and increase by every means in your power its numbers and resources. You may rest assured of one thing, that, as a private member in the ranks, I will not be idle nor unmindful of the interests of the organization.

I assure you that the step which I now take is one that has caused me long and painful anxiety, and deep regret at the necessity which compels me to withdraw from an office to which your unanimous vote again elected me for the fourth time, and to tender to you, which I now do, my resignation as President of the Fenian Brotherhood. With feelings of the profoundest respect for you all, I have the honor to remain, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM R. ROBERTS.

On motion, the resignation of Col. William R. Roberts, as President F. B. was accepted.

On motion, Congress took a recess till 2 o'clock P. M.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Congress re-assembled at 2 P. M., the Vice-President, F. B. in the chair. On motion, Hon. J. W. Fitzgerald, ———, foreign, David Casey, of Utica; A. L. Morrison, of Chicago; E. L. Carey, of New York; M. Scanlan, of Chicago, and one delegate at large, were appointed a committee to draw up



an address expressive of the appreciation of the Congress of the patriotic services of President Roberts.

The committee appointed to wait on the delegates from the Stephens party reported that they had met said delegates, from whom they had received a written statement, which document was laid before the Congress; whereupon the following committee was appointed to take charge of the matter and report as soon as possible:—M. Scanlan, John Egan, M. McCloud, M. Finnegan, T. G. Donovan, J. W. Fitzgerald, P. Rice, Capt Boland, P. O'Day, John Fitzgerald, Jr., James McGonigal, Jas. Byrne, M. Russell, Jas. McDonald, John Dennon, M. Gannon, C. G. Dowling, John Forrestal, P. K. Cahill, Wm. Crowe, Phillip Hussey, Lawrence Roach, W. B. Brady, John Mulroy, Col. John O'Neil, J. C. O'Brien, and five delegates at large.

The Congress then took a recess until 8 o'clock P. M.

#### EVENING SESSION.

The Congress re-assembled at 8 o'clock, the Vice-President F. B. in the chair.

On motion, the roll of delegates was ordered to be called, each delegate as his name was announced to state how much the circle he represented would pledge itself to raise towards the general fund required by the committee on ways and means. The roll was called and record made of the various amounts pledged in the names of the circles. The personal subscriptions of the delegates were also recorded.

On motion, the vote by which the resignation of President Roberts was accepted, was ordered to be reconsidered.

On motion, the vote was rescinded, and a committee of two, consisting of Thomas Lavan, of Ohio, and A. L. Morrison, of Chicago, were appointed to wait on President Roberts and notify him of the action of the Congress.

Committee returned with President Roberts, who addressed the Congress, withdrew his resignation, and accepted the office of President for the ensuing year, conditional on the fulfilment of the pledges made by the delegates in the name of the Brotherhood.

On motion, Congress adjourned till 8 o'clock A. M., Saturday, Sept. 7.

#### FIFTH DAY'S SESSION.—*Saturday, September 7, 1867.*

Congress assembled at the appointed hour, J. W. Fitzgerald, Speaker of the House, in the chair.

The reports of the Committees on Ways and Means and on Finance were received, read, and adopted.

The report of the Finance Committee stated that the committee had examined the books thoroughly and found them kept in a correct and satisfactory manner, and that the Treasurer's report corresponded with the returns, which were read in detail by States.

The chairman of the Auditing Committee stated that in examining the accounts they found that President Roberts had not received a single dollar of the funds of the organization, either for salary, traveling expenses, or any other purpose whatever.

The report of the Military Committee was received, and made the special order for Monday morning.

The Committee on the Revision of the Constitution presented two reports.

On motion, both were received, and the minority report was read.

On motion, the majority report of the Committee on Constitution was read and accepted.

On motion, the report was ordered to be taken up, section by section, for discussion and adoption.

Pending the discussion of the report, the Congress took a recess till two o'clock P. M.



## AFTERNOON SESSION.

Congress was called to order at the hour appointed, the Vice-President F. B. in the chair.

On motion, the report of the Committee on Constitution was taken up, and the proposed amendments discussed, section by section, and adopted.

On motion, the amended Constitution as a whole was adopted.

The committee to whom was referred the consideration of the communication received from the parties representing the Stephens men, presented their report, in which they recommended a basis of conference containing six articles, offering to the opposite party five seats in the Senate of the F. B., with a voice in the further proceedings of the Congress to the delegation representing them, on condition of their recognizing the Constitution, uniting with the Fenian Brotherhood, and turning over all materials in their possession to the proper officers of the organization.

On motion, the report was received, and after being fully discussed was adopted, and the committee was directed to present their proposition to the opposite party.

The committee on their return presented a communication from the parties representing the "Stephens" men, declining to accept the propositions made to them, and asking the Congress to reconsider their proceedings and actions.

On motion, the Congress approved of the propositions made by its own committee, and instructed the committee to communicate them again to the opposite party for final acceptance or rejection.

On motion, Congress took a recess till 9 o'clock P. M.

## EVENING SESSION.

The Congress was called to order at the appointed hour, the Vice-President in the chair.

On motion, the report of the Committee on Ways and Means was taken up and discussed.

On motion, the report was adopted and the committee discharged.

On motion, Congress adjourned till 8 o'clock A. M. on Monday, Sept. 9th.

SIXTH DAY'S SESSION.—*Monday, September 9, 1867.*

The Congress was called to order at 8 o'clock A. M., James Gibbons, President of the Senate, in the chair.

The minutes of Saturday's sessions were read and approved.

On motion it was resolved that the attention of Circles be called to that section of the Constitution requiring them to forward their moneys to headquarters, and in case of their non-conformity to that section that the President be directed to inform the community in that vicinity that said Circle refuses to forward such moneys as aforesaid.

On motion, Thomas Redmond, of Indiana, was censured for the non-performance of his duties as Senator of the Fenian Brotherhood.

On motion, the Military report was read.

On motion, the report of the Military Committee was referred to the President, Senate and Secretary of War, for revision and adoption.

On motion, the report of the Committee on Declaration of Principles was read, and after being fully discussed, the Declaration was adopted, and ordered to be published in the name of the Congress. (See p. 36.)

On motion, delegates were allowed to reveal to all members in good standing in their own Circles, or in neighboring Circles, not here represented, under the same obligations placed upon the members of the Congress, all of the business of the Congress, excepting the time at which we are to move against the enemy,



and the names of the parties with whom the President negotiated a union at Paris between the F. B. and the I. R. B., and also the names of the foreign delegates at this Congress, and envoys of the Fenian Brotherhood to foreign countries.

A committee of one from each State and District represented was appointed, to nominate candidates to fill the office of Senators of the Fenian Brotherhood for the ensuing term, in accordance with the Constitution.

The House then took a recess to enable the committee to deliberate.

On the Congress resuming,

On motion it was resolved, as an amendment to the Constitution, that the President and Senate of the Fenian Brotherhood have power to convene the next Congress of the General Fenian Brotherhood, either three months before, or after, the time specified in the Constitution, as circumstances may require.

On motion, the report of the Committee on Resolutions on the death of General Thomas Francis Meagher, was read.

On motion, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted :—

*Whereas*, During the past year it has pleased the Almighty to remove from the sphere of his mortal usefulness, one who, in the hour of his country's severest trial, was found faithful to his duty as an Irishman, and set to the world at large, and to his own countrymen in particular, an example of heroic patriotism and self-sacrifice, which elevates his name amongst the highest of those, who in every age and generation have merited well of the Irish people :

*Resolved*, That, while bowing with submission to the inscrutable decree of an all-wise Providence, this Congress mourns the death of General Thomas Francis Meagher as a national calamity, by which Ireland has been deprived of the services of a true son and a brave soldier, and the world has lost one of the brightest intellects produced by any struggle for freedom, to elevate, adorn and dignify humanity. And

*Whereas*, The name and genius of Thomas Francis Meagher are inseparably linked with the Irish Revolutionary movement, of which he was one of the foremost and ablest advocates ; and as the last act of his life in reference to Irish national affairs, was to place on record his sympathy with the efforts of the Fenian Brotherhood to effect the liberation of his native land, and his earnest desire to aid those efforts to the utmost of his personal influence and support :

*Resolved*, That any attempt to appropriate, as the property of any clique or section, the name and fame of Thomas Francis Meagher, which should be consecrated to Ireland and Liberty alone, is unjust to the memory of the heroic dead, and a slander upon a career to which our country hereafter will point as a bright example of what her children have done in the past, and should strive to imitate in the future.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be suitably engrossed and forwarded to the widow and child of our lamented fellow-countryman, and be inserted on the minutes.

The committee to nominate Senators reported the following names :—Thomas Lavan, Ohio ; James Gibbons, Pennsylvania ; T. J. Quinn, New York ; Miles D. Sweeney, California ; John Carlton, New Jersey ; F. B. Gallagher, New York ; P. W. Dunne, Illinois ; Edward L. Carey, New York ; Patrick J. Meehan, New Jersey ; Peter Cunningham, New York ; Michael Finnegan, Michigan ; J. C. O'Brien, New York ; William Fleming, New York ; James W. Fitzgerald, Ohio ; Gen. John O'Neill, District of Columbia. The Senators were elected by the unanimous vote of the Congress.

On motion the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

*Resolved*, That the President and Senate of the F. B. are hereby clothed with



full powers to make such arrangements as will ensure a perfect and satisfactory union of all Irish nationalists.

The following communications were presented and read :—

CLEVELAND, OHIO, September 5, 1867.

*To the Congress of the F. B. :*

GENTLEMEN :—I have the honor to enclose a despatch received by me from our District Centre in New Orleans. I have not answered it, but refer it to Congress for action thereon, and request, at your earliest convenience a reply.  
Yours, fraternally. W. R. ROBERTS.

NEW ORLEANS, September 3, 1867.

*To Col. W. R. Roberts, President F. B.*

Five thousand colored men of this city have offered to fight for Irish freedom.  
Accept. WM. CLEARY, M. D.

On motion, received.

On motion, the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

*Resolved*, That if there are five thousand colored men in New Orleans willing to fight for Irish liberty, the offer be accepted, and that in the name of the Irish people, the F. B. will accept the services of every man who truly loves liberty, and is willing to fight for Ireland, without distinction of race, color, or nationality.

On motion, the following resolutions were adopted by the Congress :

*Resolved*, That this Congress invite the friendship and countenance of the press of all shades of opinion for the cause of Irish independence : and that the F. B. will support those journals which extend a liberal and earnest advocacy to the claims of Ireland to her rightful place amongst the nations of the earth ; and which will assist—in carrying out that great object—this organization, through which alone Irish independence can be achieved. At the same time this Congress desires to place on record that the organization is not responsible for, or bound by the opinions or utterances of any journal whatever, nor for any sentiments save those set forth in the solemn Declaration of Principles, which has been given to the world in the name of the Fenian Brotherhood.

*Resolved*, That the organizers and officers of the Fenian Brotherhood are hereby forbidden to make political speeches while engaged in the discharge of their duties, or in any way to influence or prejudice the organization, for or against either of the political parties in the United States, or use their position to influence the vote of any member of the Fenian Brotherhood.

*Resolved*, That a vote of thanks be tendered to the Hon. Messrs. Seely, of Rochester ; J. H. Humphrey, of Buffalo ; Judge Campbell, of Philadelphia, and Dr. Lenderman, of Philadelphia, for their interest, evinced in assisting the Fenian Brotherhood in obtaining their arms from the government ; also to the gentlemen who signed the bonds for the release of the same.

On motion, the President and Senate were instructed to hold a grand National Fair in the city of New York within the ensuing year, for the benefit of the Fenian Brotherhood.

On motion, the central officers of the organization were instructed to issue a monthly report to the Circles, showing the financial condition of the organization, and that the names of all members expelled from the Circles be inserted each month.

On motion, it was

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this Congress that no more green flags (unless needed by military companies) ought to be purchased by the Circles, but that the



money which would be thus expended should be sent to headquarters to be applied for the purchase of rifles and the alteration of those on hand to breech loaders; also, that the large sums usually expended on what are termed "national celebrations," should be saved and applied for revolutionary purposes.

At this point of the proceedings the Vice-President administered the oath of office to the President, who, after being sworn, administered the oath to the members of the Senate.

On motion, the thanks of the Congress were tendered the officers of the Congress for the able and faithful discharge of their duties. Michael Scanlan here took the floor, and passed a high and well-merited compliment on the organizers, their labors, sacrifices, and devotion to the cause, and claiming for them at the hands of the F. B., the respect due to men of patriotism, great talents, and unchanging devotion.

On motion, it was resolved, that the thanks of this Congress be tendered to the Organizers for their able and eminently patriotic services during the past year.

On motion, a vote of thanks was passed to the Irish Nationalists of Cleveland.

On motion, the Congress adjourned *sine die*.



# MESSAGE

OF

PRESIDENT WILLIAM R. ROBERTS.

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*To the Senators and Representatives of the Fenian Brotherhood  
in Congress assembled :*

BROTHERS :—Again we meet, for the third time in the history of our reformed organization ; and if the signs of the times, and our present condition augur anything, it is that Heaven smiles its blessings on our just and righteous efforts. The clouds which so long hid our labors, our sacrifices, and our devotion from our brothers in the old land, have at last been dispelled, and the true and earnest hearts of our race are now beating with a common impulse, in unity and fraternity. Efforts, weak through division, can now be made powerful and effective by matured and skillful action ; passion had its day, but reason reigns at last ; pretense and falsehood rioted in their temporary success, but honesty, patriotism and truth, have finally come out triumphant.

Though consoling and encouraging to see great principles victorious, and to know that Ireland has sons, in this age of selfish trimmers, who could so unflinchingly fight for her cause, and the honor of their race,—even though the men they sought to save discountenanced their efforts for a time,—we cannot feel any personal exultation in our triumph over the guilty few, when we remember that they are the dishonored dregs of our own race, and that the land we love so dearly, and for whose redemption we have toiled and worked so hard, suffers all the horrors of a crucifixion, without the faintest hope of receiving relief or justice from those who, for seven hundred years have practiced one unvarying rule of oppression and plunder ; a systematic tyranny which has made Ireland in this, the nineteenth century, the most deplorable spectacle that could be gazed upon by Christian nations. Not even the gallant and immortal heroes of Crete, whose struggles are sublime, and whose patriotic virtues are godlike,—not even they, under the dominion of the infidel, suffer the degradation or grievances which the Irish people have to endure or fly from.



Oh ! what a boon it would be, could the people of Ireland, even for a time, change masters, and be ruled by the Crescent instead of the bloody cross of St. George ! Who can doubt that their condition would be improved, and their slavery less galling. There would then be some reason to hope for better days for Ireland.

But as it is, and has been, the whole social, monetary, political and military power of England is put forth to keep Ireland in *slavery*, and to rob and exterminate her people. When she attempts to exercise the very slightest prerogatives of nationality, extra fetters are forged for her sons ; for justice she receives a dose of British law, administered by perjured judges, the immorality of whom would dishonor a tribe of Cannibals, whose natures and instincts they so largely share. For the blessed boon of liberty, she is given the prison and the lunatic asylum ; when her loyal sons ask for that which belongs to Cæsar, they are told that Cæsar's effects belong to Cæsar's murderers ; and when they insist upon the application of the divine commandment to their liberties, they are threatened with death here, and damnation hereafter. Poor robbed and suffering country ! your friends are the poor whose eyes drink in the beauty of your scenery, and the fertility of your soil. Not an insult offered you that does not add to their humiliation. Not a rattle of the foeman's chain that does not send the warm blood leaping through their veins. Not an outrage inflicted that does not add to their long accumulating store of vengeance.

What a sad, sad fate is hers ! A foreign oligarchy, few in numbers but powerful in possessions, owning the soil, and hating the people whom they have robbed ; a population decreased, through bad government, nearly fifty per cent. in twenty years, while taxation has been doubled in the same period ; thousands upon thousands flying from chains and slavery ; three suspensions of the *habeas corpus* in two years, though it was never more than a mockery in Ireland ; the spy, the traitor, the apostate Judge, and all the political maggots, reveling in the infamy of a government that finds their aid indispensable to its own maintenance !

Who, with a heart to feel for a fellow creature's suffering, can look on unmoved or unconcerned, while such things happen under his very eyes ? Can morality justify them ? Can Christianity sanction them ? Can any but fiends defend them ? Can any but base cowards refuse to aid those who would remove them ?

To those who are weak of faith it would seem as though God's justice did not extend to Ireland, and that the powers of good and evil had formed an unholy alliance against the happiness and liberties of the Irish people, for the destruction,



finally and forever, of that spirit of Irish nationality, that has lived for so many ages in the true hearts of the Irish race, growing strong, like the faith of the Irish martyr, in persecution and oppression. That divine spirit of patriotism, implanted in the heart of man for a wise, and noble, and useful purpose, has undergone centuries of persecution in Ireland ; and yet, like the martyr's faith, it lives. At times it appeared quenched in blood ; it has often shone in the blaze of the peasant's cabin, or sank beneath the ruins of the church. The altars of our sires at times preserved it, and the words of our orators fanned it into a blaze. Its rays shoot out to-day from dungeon graves on both sides of the Atlantic, and it gallantly and triumphantly bore the flag of Ireland on the battle-fields of the Canadas. It whispers in our ears to-day the talismanic words, "Vengeance on the tyrant ! Remember the torch, the sword, the prison, the poor-house, and the emigrant ship !" It breathes into our hearts the dear memories of the far-off land of suffering, of beauty, and of love. It ennobles our natures, exalts our minds, and purifies our hearts. It is the test of our manhood, our honor, and our love. It speaks bold, defiant truths from the dock, cheers the captive in his lonely cell, and crowns with fame immortal the patriot on the scaffold. It clothes our thoughts in words of beauty, gilds the eloquence of the orator, and makes his words as fire to the hearts of the multitude. It comforts the exile in his wanderings ; and it has caused you, the representatives of our scattered race, to meet here to-day, in one of the Western cities of America, to see if, by your deeds, you can reanimate that spirit with a national independence, which shall last until thrones crumble, and empires are no more. The right to that national independence is inherent in the Irish race. It is as much theirs as the air they breathe. The pursuit of life, liberty and happiness belongs to all of God's creatures, made after his own image, and endowed with reasoning powers, so as to discriminate between what is good and what is evil. That right has never been signed, sealed, or delivered over to any power, prince, or potentate on earth, by them. They never, willingly, became slaves, or surrendered into the keeping of a foreign tyranny, alien in blood, aspirations and sympathies, the despotic exercise of the powers of government.

When and where did the Irish people surrender these God-given rights, the ownership of their soil, and the abandonment of their nationality ; or freely and tamely submit to the destruction of their commerce, their manufactures and their liberties ? No, my friends, the Irish race never willingly became helots. We protest, as our fathers did, against the destruction of their rights as freemen. We have never ceased to struggle and pro-



test ; and we declare to-day that the oppressor is as brutal in his policy, as alien in his laws, as foreign in his principles, and as destructive to the happiness of the people of Ireland, as when Elizabeth's torch and Cromwell's sword were the emblems of the foeman's vengeance ; and our accusations against England, our impeachment of her asserted prerogatives in Ireland, our arraignment of her crimes against humanity, before the bar of mankind, have been responded to by every civilized people on earth with an unanimous verdict of guilty. And though our efforts and sacrifices have not borne the ripe fruit our sanguine and impatient natures led us to expect and hope for, there is this consolation and encouragement, that, we have covered England with reproaches, tasked her resources, weighed like a night-mare upon her guilty conscience, humbled her at the feet of our adopted country, and compelled her statesmen to stultify themselves and humbly ask for a settlement of the Alabama claims, which claims they even refused to discuss a short time previously ; and for every dollar this movement has cost the Irish race, it has cost England thousands, kept her in a state of *quasi* war, and practically excluded her from a voice in the councils of Europe.

It is the knowledge of these facts which has given venom to the tongues of her partisans, and urged on our enemies to increased exertions against our cause ; and it is not alone from open and avowed foes we have received the greatest opposition, but from men of our own race, who profess friendship for their native land with an "if," that potent and insurmountable "if," that stands to-day, as it has ever stood, blocking up the pathway to Irish freedom. These "ifs" are of every thought and form, such as "if I thought this," or "if I thought that," if you could only be advised by fools, and still act wisely, or if you had only an image of brass, or clay, for a figure-head, as though the Irish race were so barren of intellect and patriotism, that they were all carried in the heads and hearts of a few.

Others there are, and not a few, who have been equally injurious to the cause of Ireland. They are to a certain extent the representatives of the people who deal in "ifs." They would see the Irish race exterminated rather than risk their popularity with their worshipers by an honest word, or a bold act ; trim their sails so as to catch every shade of opinion, and steer by a dangerous point with a "perhaps," or "who knows," or "it was not to be." Some act from a constitutional weakness, or what is vulgarly called, want of back-bone. Others are influenced solely by personal and selfish considerations ; and others from downright incapacity to realize the situation and its necessities. One of the most popular cries with some of them for years, is, "Wait : it is no use doing anything until your



enemy is in trouble." O'Connell's maxim is their favorite one: "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity;" but they will do nothing to create that difficulty; and should it come, they would be unprepared to meet it. They overlook or ignore the fact, that the foe is always preparing, and that, to meet him with any hope of success, or to take advantage of his difficulty, it takes days, weeks, and years, of patient, tireless work. They forget, or ignore the fact, the glaring and shameful fact, that every opportunity of Ireland's, and every difficulty of England's, found the Irish people wholly and totally unprepared, even in the first great requisite—organization. Look at the '48 movement of the Irish masses; a people without a leader; a struggle without a blow; a fizzle without a shot. Compare Ballin-garry to Ridgeway, Fort Erie, or even Freleighsburch, where thirteen Irish soldiers routed ninety-nine British cavalry, and you will at once realize the difference between a disciplined organization, and a shouting, undisciplined multitude. You will see that crowds, enthusiasm, and even eloquence, so valuable in its place, are as naught, towards gaining a nation's freedom, to discipline, muskets and bullets. Eighteen hundred and forty-eight should be a perpetual warning to the Irish people to prepare for, with all its eloquence, backed up by the approval of nine millions of people, it could not place in the field a single company armed and equipped; while the President of the Fenian Brotherhood can, by the issue of a single order, call forth, armed, equipped and uniformed, an army of disciplined soldiers, such as the flag of Ireland has not floated over since Grattan and his compatriots gained their short-lived independence in 1782—an army that, to-morrow, without a question, would march, if ordered, with joyous cheers and dauntless hearts, against the foe—an army that, to-day, if it were not for obstacles, some of which I have named, would be celebrating victories over British foes, on British or Irish soil. As it is, however, the inestimable value of an organization such as ours has been well proved. It is no longer an experiment; it is a tried and well proved power,—the discipline, morale, and resources of which have never been so great as at present; the growth of countless hours of labor, with its system, discipline and ramifications extending throughout every portion of these United States, the Canadas, England, Ireland and Scotland, and with facilities for its extension into every spot on earth where Irishmen are to be found. You can build up a powerful organization in Australia, and you can, if you think proper, apply the torch to the combustible materials of which British power is composed in India. To compare this vast and compact power with any Irish revolutionary one since '82, would be ridiculous; and yet the history of the world can-



not show where so much has been done with so small an expenditure of money, or so little loss even to the patriotic portion of our countrymen at large.

See what a contrast this will present in comparison with the Repeal agitation, with its immense receipts, its unanimity, its state pageantry, embellished with the mitre of the Bishop, and propagated by the eloquence of the pulpit. And yet, on O'Connell's demise, its assets consisted of a few offices held by miserable tuft-hunters, a bankrupt treasury, and a thoroughly demoralized people,—a political faith that taught cowardice to be a virtue, and buncombe to be sublime, and the attainment of office under the piratical government of England as the greatest glory that ambition could attain. This code of political morals produced an abundant harvest of sycophants, demagogues and misery, and its votaries looked on with a stolid baseness unparalleled, while England was exterminating five millions of their fellow-countrymen.

I think, gentlemen, that on a review of the past, we have nothing to fear by comparison with the Irish political organizations of the last century, while there is much, very much to be proud of and encourage. The Fenianism of to-day is not the undisciplined thing it was three years ago, without plans, policy or ability to direct it. Its roots then, as now, were deep in the Irish heart ; but it was never intended by its chiefs to be other than a swindling second edition of the Repeal Association, with two *farcical copies* of the great Agitator for Repeal as the leaders, and just enough of mystery to hide their crimes and incapacity. In New York, everything that was calculated to create a sensation was heralded to the public, so as to catch the ears of the people, and build up a false fame for a brace of unmitigated charlatans ; even the whole plan of the second organization was given to the press of New York by the Head Center in the Spring of 1865 : But there were men in the organization who were there to benefit their native land ; who had sacrificed much to that end ; and who were not going to carry false gods upon their shoulders, or be parties to a national imposition. They did not stand aloof like your *model* conservative patriot, under the specious covering of neutrality ; and they would not permit those who trusted in them to be robbed. The people's interests were watched, and investigation quietly and silently pursued inside. Laws were enacted by the representatives of the Brotherhood so as to make knavery impossible without detection ; and the proper machinery set in motion to advance our organization and prepare for a struggle with the enemy. Knavery, imbecility and presumption, however, could not bear investigation or brook control. The game being played would not permit of it, and the inevitable result followed. Laws were spurned, oaths



broken, the people openly insulted, the cause injured, and the country disgraced. A struggle ensued, with all the advantages which money and machinery could purchase on the side of knavery; while we had nought save the rectitude of our cause and motives to sustain us, and a determination that though all the powers of hell should side with these allies of England, we would fight them to the last. The result the world knows. One brazen idol after another tumbled from its pedestal, and was trampled in the mire, beneath the feet of a trusting and betrayed people. From the day that saw our banner of unpopular truth unfurled, our cause has advanced and our power increased a thousand fold. While satisfying the reasonable demands of the public for information concerning us, we have been careful to keep all vital matters locked in the breasts of the responsible heads of the organization. We have not told, and will not tell our foe, from public platforms, the day or the hour when he may expect our blows to fall. And, in future, I am opposed even to tell the place we mean to strike him. There is no good reason why we should do so, and it was one of the unavoidable evils of the past, forced upon us by the circumstances I have detailed, that we had to openly declare our resolve where we should commence the attack.

The Fenian Brotherhood is no longer without a policy, feasible plans, and responsible officers. The laws of the Brotherhood are respected, and enforced on all alike, from the humblest member in the ranks to the highest official, without partiality or bias.

The financial affairs of the Brotherhood are conducted with as much method and strictness as are those of any commercial establishment. Not a dollar comes into your treasury but is recorded; not a dollar goes out that is not accounted for; and as all books and vouchers are submitted to the representatives of the Brotherhood at each annual Congress, they can ascertain whether or not their officials have been faithful to the trust reposed in them. Although I have no financial responsibility as President, merely exercising a partial supervision of the outlays, and to see that bills are properly audited, I give it as my deliberate opinion that there is not a political organization, power or government on earth that can show so clear a financial record as the Fenian Brotherhood since the Troy Congress. And if a conviction of this fact would make friends for our cause of any of our libelers, I will promise that they have full permission to examine for themselves, on giving satisfactory evidence that they shall not use their information to betray the cause of Ireland. I wish them to take advantage of this offer, or forever cease their vile calumnies against honest men, and their cowardly stabs at a just and righteous cause. I now challenge



the libellers to the proof, and offer our books in evidence. And I challenge them further, that I will prove to the satisfaction of a committee, or jury, of honest men, that the leaders, not one, but several, in this organization have made greater voluntary personal sacrifices for the cause of Ireland, both in money and time, than any similar body of men in America since the Revolution of 1776. And this, too, when they had nothing to gain, save the priceless glory of helping to free the land which they left as slaves, to become freemen.

It is due to the organization that they should know, as they will by an examination of the books, that not a single dollar has ever been drawn from your treasury, either as traveling expenses, salary, or under any pretext, by me, since I joined the Fenian Brotherhood. My time, thoughts, heart and soul, have been unremittingly devoted to the cause of Ireland, from the hour that an unfortunate train of circumstances compelled my unwilling acceptance of the Presidency; and there are others just as self-sacrificing and as devoted. I mention these matters with regret, because we have only done our duty to our native land; but the persistent and unchristian calumnies of many who assume to be Christians, but whose conduct savors more of Paganism than of Christianity, demand, in the interest of the organization, and in justice to the cause of Ireland that the truth should be known, and good men undeceived who withhold their support from a cause they love, through the audacious lying of wicked tongues. As for myself, conscious of my rectitude of conduct and purpose, I regard the calumnies and calumniators, with the most unmeasured scorn and contempt.

There is another charge which our foes bring against us, and were it true we would richly deserve not only their censures, but to lose the confidence and support of a Christian people. It is the charge of infidelity, and of a settled purpose on the part of the organization to weaken or destroy the faith of the people in God's revealed religion. But, my friends, you know as well as I do, that this is false,—wholly and totally false. Our first duty is due to our God, our next to our country, when that country represents the cause of human happiness. These duties cannot, under such circumstances, conflict: those who assert the contrary, preach false and pernicious doctrines; doctrines, which, if successful, would reduce human nature to the standard of pagan times, when the gratification of the vilest passions was inculcated as the highest virtue. The Roman Amphitheatre stands, even in its ruins, a worthy monument of pagan Rome. But the fact that sixty thousand Jewish slaves raised its massive walls, and the blood of thousands stained its arena, while beasts devoured their quivering flesh, proves pagan-



ism, as a human institution, even in its most Republican representatives, to be the perfection of intolerance and despotism.

Love of country and kindred are not inconsistent with religious faith. God never intended that the pure and just should permit the vilest of mankind to turn the blessings of this earth into curses. The Fenianism of to-day is not the Fenianism of three years ago. The name is the same, and the patriotic motives of the great mass of its supporters are similar to what they were then; but in all things else it is different—and I trust will ever remain so—as the Republican government of America is from the infidel despotism of the Grand Turk. Fenianism is now the embodiment of the chivalric, patriotic manhood of the Irish race at home and abroad. There are, undoubtedly, good men outside our ranks who share in our aspirations; but they should join with us and share in our councils if they would give their native land the benefit of their good wishes. Our ranks are open to them and our hands are ever ready to grasp theirs in fraternity. For my part, though I shall never while I live take the hand of one of those who robbed the Irish people, I am willing to forgive my bitterest enemy for the sake of my country, and I am certain that every true man in our ranks is ready to do the same.

Many of our foes sneer at Fenianism, as though it was something monstrous in organization, or unnatural in purpose; whereas it is nothing but a distinctive name given to a most valorous body of Irishmen in ancient times, and is now used to designate a patriotic body of men as an organization, similar in formation to thousands of others. In substance it is the embodied protest of right against wrong, of liberty against oppression, of an exiled race, on behalf of their enslaved kindred who are deprived of the means of protecting their own rights, and preventing their extermination.

Fenianism as upheld centuries ago by its founders, and by its well settled principles of to-day, will occupy some of the brightest pages in the history of Ireland. And I do not think we need fear comparison with any of the patriotic organizations immediately preceding us.

Ossian, the heroic, the son of Finn, thus expounded their purpose: "Would you know," said he, "our determined resolution. It was to make cowards fly before us." Wherein did their resolve differ from ours, and their deeds from those of the Fenians of Ridgeway, Fort Erie and Freleighsburgh? And surely, the brave Ossian himself would not have blushed had he seen four hundred of his sons drive sixteen hundred of their foes at Ridgeway, or the gallant thirteen put to rout ninety-nine at Freleighsburgh. It was but the other day in Venice, the beauteous Queen of the Adriatic, whose massive piles re-



flect the halo of a new-born freedom in the placid waters from whence they rise, I visited the ancient palace of one of the noblest families of the Venetian Republic. It was the Palazzo Finne, still grand and massive, but those who built and honored it have all departed to another land, where I trust the music of the gondolier's oars is forgotten in the glorious strains of seraphs. I could not help but think, there must have been some closer bond of relationship than the mere name between the chivalric Venetians and the Finns, the Ossians and Oscars of the noble Fians of Ireland. As in the early days of the Fians, we accept all good and true men of Ireland who choose to join our ranks, never asking what tribe, section or creed they belong to. Fac-tions we abhor, sectionalism we scorn, and religion we leave between a man's conscience and his Maker. Our creed is the right of the people of Ireland to govern themselves ; our faith is in God's justice, slow at times, but always sure ; and our only hope is the rifle and the sword in the hands of devoted and fearless sons of " the noble Fians of Ireland."

When the last Congress was held in Troy, you know in what a lethargic condition the Brotherhood was. It had passed through all the trials and vicissitudes caused by treachery and division, and the bitter and relentless hostility of the man who said he came to heal, but in reality to rob and ruin us at the very crisis of our fate, the inauguration of our armed struggle with the enemy. Then came our short but glorious campaign, our defeat at the hands of the American government, our mortification at the duplicity practiced upon us by political demagogues, who used every means both legal and illegal to crush us in our infant struggle for Irish freedom,—our soldiers stopped, the telegraph, railways and our war material seized, the food even taken from our men, and our leaders in prison. All these things happened in the short space of six months from the first inauguration of our reform in the ranks of the Fenian Brotherhood. And still we met in council, with diminished numbers, it is true, but with spirits, and resolves unsubdued. " Would you know," said Ossian, " our determined resolution ? It was to make cowards fly before us." And this was ours, whether they were within or without our ranks. Soon after our Congress came the cry, " Fight in Ireland this year, between the 13th and the 31st of December;" then demands for the resources we had accumulated in the very teeth of the most bitter opposition of those who sought to get them, and who spent four times the amount we received in trying to ruin and demoralize the Irish people, *never having purchased a musket in America*. Some of our honest, but weak people, were led away by the excitement which we knew could never be developed into a rebellion that would have the slightest hope of success. The



men in Ireland and England were brave even to rashness and folly ; but they were driven to madness by the man who so infamously betrayed their confidence ; and this feeling was taken advantage of by the Masseys, Corydons and a few others, whose names I do not wish to give now, to urge a rising, which they knew would end, as it did, in disaster and misery, but, thank Heaven ! without a single stain of dishonor attaching to the great majority of the men engaged. Indeed, the dark spots in the whole affair are mainly attributable to men sent from America. Acting on the theory that "distance lends enchantment," the slightest excitement in Ireland—a dozen men hiding in the mountains of Kerry—would cause the bankrupts to rush to us for help and arms, which they could not use if they got them. In fact, I offered to put a portion of our war material on board the first vessel they would send, at the time of the excitement early in March last ; but then they were to send one that same week or not at all. I waited patiently until all was over in Ireland, but no vessel was sent, and no ammunition called for. In fact, they knew very well that, under even far more favorable circumstances, the "rising" would be put down before aid could *leave* an American port.

In all this was a deep-laid plot to destroy our organization, and all hopes of achieving the independence of Ireland, for at least a century to come. We saw England's hand plainly urging on the rising, for by it *she* had everything to gain and nothing at all to lose ; she would draw attention from her weak point, destroy the only body she had any reason to fear in America, bankrupt and dishearten our organization, and, after exciting the hopes of the people by an outbreak which she encouraged through her agents, blast them by her summary suppression of it. We know very well that the people of Ireland had no resources which would enable them to hold their ground, even for a single day—that they must be crushed, even with all the aid that could then be furnished them by the organization in America ; that, to excite false hopes, or make foolish attempts, would be to cause useless shedding of blood ; and that it was sheer madness to hope for success under the circumstances. Had there existed the slightest grounds for hope, we would be willing, nay anxious, to cast our fortunes and our lives into the struggle of our brothers in Ireland. The officers of the Fenian Brotherhood, of course, as in duty bound, were better acquainted with affairs, than the members could be ; and yet, notwithstanding, a few—a very few—thought that, on the slightest excitement or pretext, we should pitch all our property, which cost so much time and labor to collect, overboard, in the hope that something would turn up, that deceptive and alluring *something* upon which Irishmen have built so many beautiful "air-castles."



I noticed, however, that these few were in no way reckless about throwing away *their own* property; and their investments in the funds of the Fenian Brotherhood were of the most limited proportions.

Had we been forced into a virtual destruction of the property of the Brotherhood, I would not hold myself responsible, and the blame would have to lie at the doors of those whose want of judgment and information caused the loss. This, however, would be poor consolation to those who suffered and sacrificed, and saw their hopes, labors, and Ireland's opportunity, pass away, like the "baseless fabric of a vision."

In April I came to an understanding with numerous Irish refugees, to place this organization in communication with the organization at home; and I took immediate steps—with the consent of the Senate—to carry out the understanding. I had also received intimations from several parties who had arrived in New York after the rising, that the people of Ireland were thoroughly convinced of the baseness of the men who so cruelly deceived them, and were anxious to see if we and they could not come to an understanding looking to co-operation and union. Accordingly, I left New York on the first of June, for Europe, and met, in the capital of France, the delegates from Ireland, England and Scotland. After long and serious deliberations, they resolved unanimously on a thorough and complete union of the F. B. and the I. R. B., with a basis and plans for extending the organizations in those countries where it has been so fearfully shattered, through treachery and other crimes. These documents I now submit to you for your approval. I have done what I conceived to be for the best interests of the Irish people; and I trust it will meet your approbation.

Knowing the great, the inestimable value of union, the injury to our cause of spasmodic and ill-prepared outbreaks.—the distraction they cause our people, and the fruitless misery they entail on good men,—I have never ceased to seek for union with honest, patriotic men. My endeavors in this respect have often been construed as a sign of weakness, and sometimes as an abandonment of principle; but there could have been no greater error. I never sought, nor would I accept, a union with men who were tried, and found so shamefully wanting in all the attributes of manhood,—not because, personally, I despised and abhorred them—but because I knew that, from such a union we could reap but one harvest,—shame, disappointment, and ruin. Through the purest motives, I aided,—unsuspectingly aided,—those men, at one time, in deceiving our people; but no power on earth could ever induce me to do so again, or try the experiment a second time, when I know in advance what the result would be. A union with the honest people, I was



always anxious for. I was even willing to gratify the cowardly and senseless clamor of having good, true, and brave men resign, merely because they did their duty fearlessly and conscientiously—not that these men would not have been happy to surrender offices, whose only emoluments were incessant labor, care, responsibility, and vituperation—but that their resignations, under such circumstances, would be a premium to rascality. At last, however, our patriotism and perseverance have been rewarded; and we have the satisfaction of seeing the honest and patriotic people united in the great and holy work, of gaining for the Irish people their freedom, and the right to self-government. I hope and trust, sincerely, that, if there be any patriotic men still adhering to those who are powerless for good or evil, they will see the road that duty and honor call on them to follow, and at once place themselves under the legitimate laws of the organization, made at Philadelphia by the united voice of the Fenian Brotherhood. We, I am certain, desire to forget the past for Ireland's sake, and will exclude no man whose hands are unstained with dishonesty.

It was my intention, in the early part of the past year, to assemble State Conventions, and lay before them the necessities of the organization and the work they would have to perform ere an army could be ready for the field. I had time to call only two, when the circumstances which I have enumerated occurred. At these two, however, I found great unanimity of feeling, and the propositions submitted to them met with their ready acquiescence; but, not desiring to throw a burden on one section not shared by all alike, I refrained from calling on them; and it remains now for you to take the necessary and effective steps towards accomplishing the object for which we are organized. Your responsibilities, now that the F. B. and the I. R. B. are united, are vastly greater; but the fact of union will make it a labor of love, and enable you to turn all your energies against the government of England. Though, nominally, there are two organizations, there is in reality but one—one in aims, interests, and unity of action; and the faith pledged between the two, I am certain, will never be broken by the men in whose names I pledged it; and of this fact the great majority of the men at home are perfectly satisfied, so strongly has our past fearless and patriotic course impressed them.

Notwithstanding all the drawbacks and obstacles with which we have had to contend during the past year, the organization has made rapid advances, but is yet, I am satisfied, only in its infancy. There are few men, now, who in their hearts desire to see Ireland free, who do not believe in our honesty and the correctness of our principles. Among these, there is not a man who is willing to make a sacrifice for Ireland who will not aid



us. So that the Fenian Brotherhood, to-day, is not only a more powerful organization than it has ever been, but a feeling has gained ground that its existence is a political necessity to the Irish people at home and abroad. In fact, its abandonment would be the greatest calamity which befel them since the passage of the Act of Union with England. But there would be a greater calamity still than either of these, and that would be to see it used like the defunct organization which, through its leaders, brought so much disgrace and misery on the Irish people. For my part, I much prefer solid, silent work, to fuss and fury. The one trains and strengthens for the day of trial, the other intoxicates for a time, and perhaps imparts some extra strength ; but when its effects are over, relaxation and despondency set in, followed by indifference, neglect and final abandonment. Men whose hearts are not filled with the sacredness of a mighty purpose, and who require narcotics and dainty bills of fare, constantly served, to sustain their sensitive patriotism, may be made useful ; but they can never be relied upon in a great undertaking. One thousand resolute men, with convictions, are worth a million of well-meaning, purposeless patriots. The former invariably succeed, the latter—never.

The same may be said of the military organization as of the civil. At the last Congress we had none : now we have the nucleus of what can be made in a very short space of time, a great army. After the last Congress, I had mustered out of the service all officers commissioned by the previous Secretary of War. This was indispensable, in order to lay the foundation of a new organization. I think the one we have now is as perfect as could be adopted. Its relation to the civil body has not been fully decided on by regular orders, though I have frequently given my views, in writing and orally, where circumstances required it. For a statistical report of that department I refer you to the report of the officer in charge of it. The general information in relation to the alteration of our arms, and the property held by the American Government, I will furnish myself.

Brothers, in the ranks of the Fenian Brotherhood are men of various nationalities, many of whom, neither by the ties of blood nor education, have the slightest affinity with the Irish people. They may differ in matters of religion, politics, and even in social feelings ; but there is one common bond of union, broad, deep and strong. It is *Liberty*, priceless Liberty. Many of these are Germans, honest, generous, big-hearted Germans, who in their love for Fatherland can fully appreciate our passion for the land of our birth ; but the greater number of those who are not of Irish birth are Americans—the sons of liberty-loving sires, themselves the heirs to freedom. They re-



member, when their fathers struggled against the foreign foe—who was and is, our foe also—that the voices of the Irish statesmen, Burke, Barre, Sheridan and Grattan, were heard in the very halls of the oppressor, under the frowns of the tyrant, demanding justice for the American Colonies. They remember, if they know the history of their country's glorious struggle for independence, that it was the sword of a Celtic nation, France, that helped to decide the contest in favor of liberty; that such Irish officers as Montgomery, Wayne, Moylan, Sullivan, Barry, Butler, Reed, McCleary, Thompson, Stewart, the Clintons, Hand, (who was twice appointed Adjutant General of the American Colonies on General Washington's recommendation,) and Fitzgerald (who was on his staff,) did brave and good service in the War of Independence; that the Pennsylvania Irish settlers did as gallant deeds as their native American brothers; that when the American army were on the point of disbanding, in 1780, for lack of food and clothing, twenty Irish merchants of Philadelphia subscribed half a million of dollars for establishing a bank to supply these necessities, and to restore the credit of the Colonies. So marked, indeed, were the services and sympathies of the Irish people in America, and in Ireland, that, in 1775, an address was voted by the American Congress to the Irish nation, drawing a distinction between the Irish and English Parliaments, stating that the Irish Parliament did them no wrong, and hoping that the example of their resistance would prevent England from pursuing a similar course of oppression towards Ireland. This same Irish Parliament refused to vote subsidies to be used against the American Colonies; and one of the toasts drank during the Revolution, at a soldiers' banquet, was one that we should have no hesitation in toasting to-day: "May the Kingdom of Ireland merit a stripe in the American Standard." In the war of 1812-14, we know how bravely Irishmen and their descendants fought. It was the son of an Irishman, McDonough, who annihilated the British on Lake Champlain. It was the son of Irish parents, Jackson, who, with six thousand men, saved New Orleans from Pakenham's fourteen thousand British cut-throats, whose cry was "Beauty and booty." And, coming down to the last great struggle for the preservation of that priceless Union, under whose blessed and beauteous flag we claim and exercise the prerogatives of freemen, what precious streams of native Irish blood were freely and bravely poured out in its defence. In every fight, on every field, from the first shot at Lexington in 1775, to the last in 1865, the citizens of Irish birth gave the noblest proofs of their devotion to America and her institutions. While the foes and oppressors of Ireland have never ceased to use their influence against the liberties and union of the Amer-



ican people, the friends of Irish independence have never ceased to fight for their preservation. And, yet, these hereditary foes of Irish and American liberty have the audacity—the characteristic infamy—to appeal to the nation we love, and to the people with whom our fortunes are cast and closely interwoven, to do what the Irish parliament refused,—to aid tyranny in fettering the limbs of a nation, and to denounce, as a vice in us, that which made the names of Washington and his associates honored even beyond the bounds of civilization. In fact the vile and scurrilous slanders hurled by the paid minions of England against our organization to-day, are the echoes of those used by them during the American Revolution, such as that Washington was nothing but “a poor, crazy, ignorant, ambitious, lying, unprincipled adventurer,” while his associates were “poor lousy cobblers, tailors, shoemakers and parsons.” England’s treachery during the late war, and her cowardly self-debasement since its successful termination, are, perhaps, without a parallel in history; and America may rely upon it, that what she did before, she will do again, whenever the opportunity offers. The adopted citizens of Irish birth may be divided, as other citizens are, on political questions; it is impossible that it could be otherwise; and it is the prerogative of a citizen to think and judge for himself. To be the blind followers of a mere political party, is to surrender their reason and their rights into the keeping of others. But no man, who is not either a fool or a knave, will affirm that the great mass of the citizens of Irish birth have not been loyal, to the heart’s core, to the Constitution and independence of these United States. To argue that, because we owe the mother that bore us, we cannot adore the bride of our choice, would be as illogical and untrue as to assert that, because we endeavor to be worthy the freedom we enjoy, by extending it to others, or to make our native land a source of pride, and glory, instead of sorrow, misery and mortification, we are not in harmony with the spirit of free institutions, or conscientiously true to our oath of citizenship. Had a selfish policy been pursued by other nations, from 1775 to 1781, where, to-day, would be American liberty? Where Ireland is, beneath the feet of a British oligarchy; and America would be told, as Ireland was, a few days ago, by “the lineal descendant of the impenitent thief,” that she had no grievances to complain of; and the vile insults of 1776 hurled at their heads, as they are now at the heads of those who love and labor for Ireland. No, brothers, the Republic has nothing to fear from her Fenian citizens, who hope to establish a similar government on Irish soil. But, on the contrary, there is much to encourage and rejoice at. Loving freedom, can we be false to it? Hating slavery, can we wed, or seek to perpetuate its



power? Cherishing this Union, aiding in its establishment, as Irishmen have, and considering no sacrifice too great to maintain it, could we be guilty of a single act of disloyalty to it as an organization? The thought is monstrous, and the charge untrue. Under different circumstances, and in a different sphere, we but follow the example of the illustrious men I have cited, whose deeds have done honor to humanity, and whose example has become the heritage of mankind. President Monroe declared that "America owed the world a great example, and the cause of liberty a generous support;" and the American people of to-day should not forget the deeds of Lafayette, Montgomery, Wayne, Kosciusko, and Steuben. If they do not desire to be allies of freedom, they owe it to their own traditions, to their honor and their reputation as freemen, that they shall not become allies of despotism.

I will not discuss the advantages which America and American institutions would receive from the establishing of a Republican government on the soil of Ireland—one similar in every respect to that under which we have now the great happiness to live; one that would acknowledge the divinity within the man, and his right to own no master but his country's laws and his God.

Brothers, the grave has again closed above the remains of as gallant a heart as ever throbbed in the breast of an Irish patriot. When last we met, twelve months ago, Sergeant John Lynch was in high hopes of an early recovery. "I want to be well," said he to me, "so as to have another shot at my country's foes." But it was otherwise decreed. To-day he sleeps near the scene of his gallant exploits, but *far, far* from the dear land he loved so truly, and for whose welfare he joyously laid down his young and chivalrous life. Perhaps it is best that the dust of so true a lover of freedom, should mingle with its soil, where the thunders of Niagara chant the requiem of nature's God above his grave, and symbolize, in irresistible and majestic power, the spirit of that liberty for which he suffered and died. Glorious Lynch! soldier of liberty! how gallantly you fought, how nobly you fell, and how like a Christian hero you bore your sufferings, your faith, to the last, as unshaken in the resurrection of your dear native land as in that of your own body when the last trump shall sound the "final call." Few brave men who do not envy you in your grave to-day, within the shadow of that of your gallant comrade, Lonergan. Three thousand miles of ocean roll between all that is mortal of you and of the other gallant Christian soldier, Peter Crowley. He sleeps the calm sleep of the just in his mother earth, consecrated by his love, and honored by his heroism. The shamrock and the daisy will bloom above his grave. Nurtured with the



blessings of the widowed, the orphaned, and the true, its verdure will brighten with the pitying dews from heaven, and loving tears from the heart's deepest recess. Though sleeping beneath the blighting curse of slavery, his body is free in the fond embrace of his native soil, and his brave spirit, triumphing over tyranny and death, has soared aloft to Heaven and freedom. Who can doubt, but that spirits so congenial and so true on earth, are united in closer bonds in another and a better world? And when a free and grateful nation enrolls the names and the deeds of her hero-martyrs in the golden book of honor, few, if any, will be encircled with a more glorious halo than those of Lonergan, Crowley and Lynch.

In view of the increased responsibilities assumed by our organization, in the union with the men at home, I think it will be necessary for you to make some changes in your constitution, so as to have an Executive power of sufficient magnitude to bear the great burden devolving upon it. In place of a single Executive, such as President, I would advise the election of an Executive Council of three, with powers similar to those of our present Executive,—the Chairman of this Council to be the acting representative of said Council, whose orders and commands are to be those of the Executive, and who will be styled "President of the Executive Council of the Fenian Brotherhood." Two of said council should hold no other office in the Brotherhood. Next, I would recommend that, in place of the Senate, you have a body of fifteen, to be called "the Grand Council of the Fenian Brotherhood," with powers similar to those of the present Senate,—the Chairman of which shall be known as "Chairman of the Grand Council."

In conclusion, brothers, I exhort you to unity, fraternity and fidelity to the cause of your country and your God. There is a terrible responsibility resting on you, and a tremendous work before you, if you would accomplish the freedom of your native land. Enthusiasm is good; but do not be led away by it. Passion is well in its place, but let it not blind you, as it too often does. See that, in endeavoring to overcome one obstacle, you do not create others a hundred-fold greater than the one you seek to surmount. Do not be led away by glittering theories, into blunders, which in our cause would be crimes. Weigh well the materials at your disposal and the source from which you draw your supplies. Do not sacrifice principle for expediency, nor bury that principle beneath a load of issues which are foreign to the one for which we are organized. Be just to all men; but remember that the heart-hopes of a suffering nation are, to-day, in your keeping. See to it that you are not unjust to them. We can, as an organization, afford to be generous in our sympathies; but, until we have a free nation to sustain



us, we cannot become crusaders in any other cause than our own; and in doing this, in our present condition, we are performing as much as any nation on earth, all of whom use their resources on themselves, and then give their sympathies to others—some not even that much. Few nations who are not Ireland's debtors; and, save America, the land of our adoption, which of them has cancelled the debt? Notwithstanding, we are ever, as a people, looking here, and hoping there, and always groping after shadows, instead of trusting to the power within ourselves, and marching in serried ranks, shoulder to shoulder, and heart to heart, cool, patient and resolved, turning neither to the right nor to the left, to take up the quarrels of others; or to create new ones for ourselves, but avoiding the rocks and shoals upon which the hopes of the Irish people have so often been wrecked, carrying down with them, the bravest and most devoted of our race.

In all these suggestions, thrown out for wise men to weigh, I have endeavored to turn your thoughts to your duties, and the dangers of a false step. Your enemies are watching you keenly, in hopes of finding some flaw, into which they will remorselessly thrust their weapons. During the past two years they have watched in vain; they were therefore compelled to attack us in impregnable positions, while we kept on, consolidating and spreading, disregarding their blows, and despising their malice. Your friends are also looking at you and watching your deliberations, anxiously and hopefully. The result of your action may be the independence of the Irish nation, or may add another chapter to the long catalogue of follies which has made our want of practical judgment as a people, in Irish politics, proverbial. You have full power here in this Congress to resolve whatever you please; but if your laws and resolutions are not adapted to those who sent you here, and to the people, on whose aid you rely, your resolutions will be waste paper, and your laws forgotten or despised. You have a right, individually or collectively, to make Fenianism represent any cause or none; but you have no right to trifle with the reputation of a whole people, or to hold out hopes to them, if you are not willing to make the sacrifices necessary for their realization. There are two courses for you now to follow, and one of these you must decide upon ere you return to your homes. One is to enter upon a course of intellectual and moral training, educating the Irish people up to the standard you consider it indispensable they should reach, before an attempt is made with the sword. The other is, to take them as we find them, mould them into civil and military organizations, and put muskets in their hands, and bullets in their cartridge-boxes; teach them as we go along, taking care, at the same time, not to give them stronger food



than their stomachs can carry ; and then, as soon as ready, take advantage of the first opportunity, or *make* one of our own, to solve the problem on the battle-field, whether Irishmen can or cannot free their native land. Now, these are two separate and distinct plans ; and if you confound them, one with the other, ruin is certain to follow. Each plan will require a different line of action, plainly and clearly marked out, and you will have to make few or many sacrifices according to the one you adopt. Then your officers, whoever they may be, will know what their duties are, and what is expected of them. They will also know what to expect from you, and you will know what you have to perform. But whatever plans you adopt, remember that if you would succeed, there must be perfect unity of thought and action throughout every portion of your organization ; the laws you make must be religiously binding on the humblest member in your ranks, as well as the highest official ; the officers you elect to carry out those laws, must be obeyed as strictly as if they had the whole power of a nation at their command to enforce them. These officers are your representatives, endowed with your authority : to refuse obedience to either is to repudiate your own acts, and bring ruin upon all. Discipline, rigid discipline, is the first great essential, without which your efforts will certainly fail. Even in the very hour of your triumph, when victory seems within your grasp, defeat and ruin await you if you are not thoroughly imbued with the spirit of obedience to your laws, and to the orders of those who administer them.

WM. R. ROBERTS,

PRESIDENT,

*Fenian Brotherhood.*



## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES,

*By the Representatives of the Fenian Brotherhood, in Congress Assembled.*

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Sept. 7, 1867.

The national character of every people, and the principles which govern their actions, become of vital import when the community is placed, as it were, on trial before the world. The kindly sympathies which attach man to his fellow man, and which, developing the highest instincts of his nature, constitute a bond of humanity stronger and more durable than the selfish considerations of interest, should always be directed in favor of right and justice, and against wrong and iniquity in every form. Hence, when an oppressed nationality endeavor by revolution to assert their claims to the God-given boon of liberty, it is both expedient and in entire accordance with the usages of society, that they should place on record the reasons that impel them to resort to such means, the objects in view, and the principles on which they rely to demonstrate the justice of their cause.

It has been the misfortune of the people of Ireland that their oppressors have transmitted to the world nearly all that it has received concerning our history and character. The victims of a relentless and long continued persecution, we have been represented by our tyrants in the light best calculated to subserve their own interests, and to screen the illegality of their usurped authority over a people who, though cut down by armed force, and for seven hundred years trodden under foot by an unscrupulous power, have never ceased to struggle for their rights, have never for an instant surrendered their claim to that independence which is the true life of a nation, as slavery, whether voluntary or accepted, is its virtual death. Our history has been falsified, our acts have been misconstrued, our motives and sentiments have been misrepresented by the agents of the power which has profited by our misery and enslavement; until a large proportion of our fellow-men, viewing us through this distorted medium, have come to regard us, as a race, as not only incapable of self-government, but actually unfit to be entrusted with the management of our own affairs. To remove an idea so erroneous, and to correct an impression so unjust to a people



who have long and generously sacrificed in the cause of liberty, the Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood, who in this generation represent the nationalists of Ireland, and embody their aspirations for the freedom of their native land, make this declaration of the principles by which our organization is actuated and guided ; and we ask our fellow-men at large, and particularly the friends of freedom, everywhere, to respect our honor as truthful and liberty-loving men, and to judge us, not by the misrepresentations of our enemies, but by the principles we profess and the acts by which we prove our adherence to them.

We believe and declare that freedom—the right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”—is inherent in every creature made in the image and likeness of God, and that, however individuals, by crime or violation of the laws passed for the maintenance and well-being of society, may forfeit any portion of those rights, the enslavement of a homogeneous people, either by foreign power or domestic tyranny, cannot, under any circumstances, be justified. The God of nature, in placing between the English and Irish nations not only the distinctions marked by differences of national character, but, also, natural barriers, which,—in spite of special legislation, designed to obliterate the nationality of Ireland, have kept them separate and distinct as peoples,—has written on imperishable record the claims of our country to independent national existence, and made earth and sea the witnesses to the inviolability of our charter of freedom. Even had any generation of our race proved recreant, and voluntarily agreed to surrender their rights as men, the limits fixed to human existence, and the utter inability of man to legislate for anything appertaining to himself beyond this mortal sphere, are the seal and testimony set by the Almighty Creator on each of His creatures, to teach them, through all time, that the inalienable and indefeasible rights imparted with their being must come down to them undiminished and unimpaired by the follies or the crimes of their predecessors. But the title of our people upon this point is clear and unimpeachable. Through over twenty successive generations, they have never ceased to protest and struggle against the plunder of their national rights. From age to age the legacy of patriotic effort has been transmitted from sire to son ; and the dungeon, the scaffold and the battle-field have proved the fidelity with which the sacred trust has been discharged. The Irish people of to-day are still the custodians of that great trust ; and, in their name, the Fenian Brotherhood has been organized to demand, and with the blessing of Heaven, to achieve, what so many of our race have attempted before—the liberation of our country from the domination of England. We demand it in the name of every man of Irish blood throughout the whole



earth ; and we desire to accomplish it solely for the benefit of every Irishman, without distinction of creed, or class, or political idea. We claim the land of our fathers for the benefit of the people whose birth-right it is, who love it with a filial affection, and who, by the eternal decree of their Maker, have earned, in the sweat of their brows, the right to live upon, to possess and to enjoy it. We seek injury to no man ; our quarrel is not with any class, but with the government which has robbed and murdered our people, and with those who sustain it in its tyranny and usurpation. If in our onward march to liberty any such oppose us, arrayed under the flag of the oppressor,—which has been the symbol of slavery in Ireland, and is the ensign of the enemy of liberty everywhere,—on their heads, not ours, be the consequences. We ask only justice for ourselves and our kindred ; and the vindication of that principle requires that an alien power shall no longer be permitted, undisturbed, to devour our substance, while those who produce it by their toil, wither and pine in bondage which at once destroys their bodies and debases their souls. Our motto is, “Ireland—Free and Independent,” for her own people first ; and, then, when her free will and action are untrammelled and unquestioned, for the freedom, the elevation, and the happiness of humanity, the world over. No narrow or restricted views confine our action. In the language of our Executive, “Faction we abhor ; sectionalism we scorn.” We seek all the rights that, as men, belong to us ; and we seek them for the whole of our people ; we make no reservation, we tolerate no distinction that would divide the true children of Ireland.

We have been accused of irreligion, and of seeking to undermine those great moral principles which, reminding men that their first duty is to their Creator, underlie and preserve the whole framework of society. The accusation is untrue and unjust. The genius of the Irish people is essentially religious ; their history is a record of enduring faith ; of constancy under persecution ; of the noblest sacrifices cheerfully made in the sustainment of religion and morality ; of tolerance and charity in the hour of triumph ; and the whole course of our organization proves that, in this respect, too, it truly represents and accords with the character of our race. Religion—the pure and reverential homage which man offers to his Maker—we regard as a sentiment too sacred to be mixed up with the strife of earthly interests ; and we leave it, untouched, between the conscience of the individual and Him to whom the tribute is due. Content with the discharge of the second great duty that devolves on man, we do not ask of our brother at what altar he worships, satisfied when he honestly serves his country, and



leaving to his own sense of right the obligations which he alone can discharge.

Representing the power which fifteen millions of the Irish people, scattered between the old world and the new, must necessarily exercise, if they be true to their country—we have adopted the alternative of revolution, because the slavery to which our kindred are subjected has become too galling for human endurance, too degrading to be submitted to unresistingly by beings endowed with the attributes of men. Our rights, the possession of our native soil, are kept from us by force, by the power which grasped both with armed hands. By force and arms alone can they be restored to us in their original integrity; and by force and strength of our own arms we propose to win them back. The task of their recovery belongs to us in the first place; and by our efforts to consolidate and organize our people, we but record our acceptance of the duty, and our determination to acquit ourselves of it like true men and faithful children of our country.

Our cause is a just and holy one; it is the struggle of right against wrong, of freedom against oppression. It is not alone the cause of a nation striving for its own independence: it is the effort of enslaved humanity to emancipate itself from the thralldom and debasement of feudal tyranny.

The elevation of a down-trodden people is a benefit conferred upon the whole family of nations; and of none might this be said more truly than of Ireland, which, from her position and resources, is capable, if once free, not alone of rendering her own population happy and prosperous, but of diffusing, by example and influence, the spirit of independence throughout the world, wherever her scattered children are to be found.

As a people, we have ever loved liberty, and struggled for its attainment; as a people, we are in favor of liberty to-day, not in the ungenerous sense of those who would monopolize its blessings, to the exclusion of their fellow-men—but liberty as universal as the beneficence of the Deity, of which it is the emanation; as impartial as His justice, which commands that we shall do unto others as we would be done by. Save this, we desire nothing for our race or our country. And, as we have commenced this struggle, determined to persevere in it until Heaven and the power of our own right arms shall have crowned our efforts with success, we ask the lovers of liberty everywhere to extend to our cause the aid and sympathy which it should receive from those who profess to be the friends of human freedom. We ask them to regard us fairly, and to judge us not by the standard of opinion of any individual, but by our own conduct, and the official acts and policy of our own elected representatives, who are the only legitimate exponents of our



sentiments and principles. And, when the hour to strike shall have arrived, and we set our faces once more towards the foe,—determined to do or die in the final effort,—in the name of the God of Justice, whose inspiration and blessing we invoke for our cause ; for the sake of our common humanity, the advancement of which we seek ; and by the memory of our martyred dead, who perished that others might live as freemen, we ask that the good wishes of all liberty-loving men, and especially the aid and influence of the great American nation, shall be cast on the side of Liberty and Ireland, in the struggle to which we now commit ourselves, “our lives, our fortunes, and sacred honor.”



LETTER  
OF  
THE STATE CENTRE OF CALIFORNIA.

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FENIAN BROTHERHOOD OFFICE, 315 Montgomery St. }  
SAN FRANCISCO, August 5th, 1867. }

WM. R. ROBERTS, President F. B.

*Dear Sir and Brother:*

I am directed by the State Central Council of the F. B. of California, to lay before you, and through you, before the Congress of the organization to be held at Cleveland on the 3d of next month, the views of our brothers here on the present requirements of our National organization. We await with much anxiety the result of your deliberations, as we think we see, very clearly, that upon the decisions of that Congress, and on its clearly expressed and wisely defined policy, depends the future of our Society—in a word, we are of opinion, that on the representatives of our people who assemble there, will devolve the responsibility of deciding for the present generation of Irishmen the fate of our national movement, its renewed life, with increased vigor and power, or its speedy dissolution. That you and the wise, gallant and true men associated with you, will be found equal to the emergency is our hope, rising to the height of conviction.

We believe that the recent deplorable events which have occurred in Ireland have demonstrated to all men, not alone the folly but also the crime of endeavoring to fight in Ireland with the means obtainable in that country, and any means the American branch of the Fenian organization could send there at present. Whatever apology men may have had for doubting this in the past, there is no excuse for doing so in the light of recent events;—hence we hope to see our people at home act wisely their part in the great scheme for their own enfranchisement, the glory of the entire race, and the freedom of our native land.

The patriotism of the men in Ireland commands our unbounded admiration, their devotion to the country, our increased respect,  
THEIR WANT OF WISDOM OUR DEEP REGRET. We sin-



cerely hope that the great teacher, adversity, has enabled our organized brothers in Ireland to see the wisdom and patriotism of their exiled countrymen, who would, whilst hewing through the red ranks of the enemy the road to Irish liberty, spare the unshielded hearts of our people from the bayonets of a ruffian soldiery, and the unprotected homes of our people from the desolation attendant on deeper slavery entailed by unsuccessful insurrection. The cries of those rendered fatherless, as well as the sufferings of the brave doomed ones, admonish us that to succeed we must be as wise, as patriotic, and as prudent as persistent. The men who, on the battle-fields of this republic, have learned the "soldier's glorious trade," must initiate the struggle for Irish independence, and lead the van of Ireland's avengers. Their potent and well-directed efforts will secure hostages for the endungeoned ones, and secure their restoration to friends, home, and a redeemed country. To enable them to succeed, our brothers in Ireland, England and Scotland must keep up a firm front, and thus, without striking a blow, make it impossible for the enemy to withdraw any of her troops until we are fairly in the field. We believe the co-operation of all is necessary to success, and without it any movement will be rendered desperate. When the entire unselfishness of our views and labors is taken into consideration, I believe we have a right to demand of our brothers at home that they no longer persist in a course of conduct (*i. e.* fruitless riots in Ireland), that brings but little credit to the Irish people, and repels the thinking portion of our race, gives to the venal and cowardly an excuse for the non-performance of their duty to their country, and covers with ridicule those who disinterestedly labor in that Country's cause, thus trebling our labors here, and sinking our people at home beneath a load of contempt. For, mark the result; now, when all our energies should be directed to the equipment of our troops for the field, we have had to turn aside from our legitimate labors to organize relief committees, and thus assuage the sufferings entailed by the criminal folly of those on whose heads rest the blood of Crowley and the sufferings of so many gallant-hearted and true men.

I have succeeded in organizing a Committee here for the purpose of collecting funds for the relief of prisoners' families in Ireland. That Committee have collected four thousand dollars, and will, I have no doubt, send to Ireland ten thousand dollars, one-half of which sum will be obtained through the medium of our organization. While we have acted so in this matter, let no man misun-



derstand us as thereby evincing any sympathy with the promoters of such stupendous crimes on the Irish people, and such disgrace on the cause, as was their unprepared outburst. It is well to speak plainly, as we believe some representatives of the people in Ireland may be at your Congress; and tell them from us, that as sure as a just God liveth, if they allow themselves to be again deceived into the perpetration of such follies as those of the recent past, that never will California again be made a catspaw of for their advantage. In that event, we will turn our backs on them, and consult our own interests by attending to our own affairs; and though they may, by their folly, deprive us of the anticipated gratification of striking a blow for Irish liberty, we shall, for our own satisfaction, and to put them to shame, strike a blow for vengeance, though fruitless, in an Irish national point of view, that blow may be. That you, Mr. President, and your associates will spare us the necessity of isolated action is our assured conviction; and if on the termination of Congress you are enabled to present us a sound and well-defined policy, and the evidences of effective Military organization, then you can calculate on the earnest and unhesitating support of California.

California expects that Congress will give evidence of its care for the welfare of the organization by the re-election of W. R. Roberts as President. We also desire that our plan of local organization be investigated; and we cite as evidence of its necessity and usefulness, Col. P. F. Walsh. If, upon examination, it be found in the opinion of Congress (or of the Committee on Constitution) beneficial, and its workings satisfactory, then we ask the insertion of a clause in the Constitution recognizing, and thoroughly enabling us to continue as part of the Fenian organization of the United States. Should Congress fail to insert such clause, then the State Centre and the Central Council will construe such omission as a condemnation of our local organization, and will proceed at once to destroy it, transmitting the address of each Circle to Headquarters, N. Y., and holding the officers there responsible for the future guidance of the organization here. California strongly recommends the passing of a resolution by Congress declaring the organization not accountable for the American political teachings of public journalists, though such journalists may be active and even distinguished members of the organization. We can see no more reason for aggressions on the American political opinions of men, than on their religious opinions. Non-interference in American



politics ought to be, in our opinion, the policy of the organization, and we hope the expression of Congress on this matter will be clear and explicit.

In making this suggestion, we do not wish to be understood as desiring in any manner to interfere with the liberty of the press, or to assert a right to prescribe the American political teachings or leanings of any journal, whose conductors may be members of the Fenian Brotherhood. If any such attempt were made we would be among the first to resist it. What we desire is to keep the organization free from the responsibilities attending the political mistakes of newspaper men. Perfect freedom, both for the press and our organization—non-responsibility of either one for the other.

We presume it just possible that some of our professional "Agitators" may take advantage of the late disaster to sing the syren song of Parliamentary Reform, and invite you to abandon your "wild and visionary schemes," as they will term your efforts to create an army, and join hands with them in the holy and laudable undertaking of blarneying John Bull into a fit of justice-loving, in which mood it would be possible to have our Parliament restored without one drop of human blood being spilled, &c. &c., *ad infinitum*. In support of their views, they will quote Bright, Mill, and others. Now no matter how respectable the source such suggestions may come from, treat them with the contempt they merit. Men who will make such suggestions must be stone blind to the sights of the present, and adder-deaf to the voice of the past. They must forget that, when the protomartyr of '98, Orr was being executed, leading Englishmen, even in greater numbers than those to-day, were denouncing the injustice of which Ireland was the victim; and we all know the sequel. Our country's rights remain unsecured, and her wrongs unavenged. To Bright, and the English Reform party, let us give as much as they will give us, that is to say, kind words and good wishes; but there let it end; for we know, as we feel, that the work of spoliation, commenced far back in the centuries, continued by a Strafford and a Cromwell, and last, feloniously consummated by a Castlereagh,—that such spoliations can be undone, and only undone, by Irish hearts fired by the accumulated wrongs of their country—hearts whose vengeful pulsations shall nerve and strengthen Irish arms. Thus, and thus alone, do we hope to achieve the redemption of our Country. So let us in God's holy name press forward in the only path that can



bring either honor or success, viz.: effective army organization and unceasing preparation.

While we hope and pray and struggle for Union, let not our Representatives, for any patch work peace, or temporary and hollow truce, swerve one hair-breadth from the path of duty. The cause baptized in the blood of Orr, and consecrated in that of Emmet, must not be permitted to sink into the earth, crushed beneath the faults or follies of patriotic but foolish men. Stand firm, brothers all, in the path of rectitude, wisdom and truth; and though it may, for a season, be up-hill work, we see the summit whereon the eye of a pure faith may observe bright "Victory, in her robes of glory dressed," smiling on our ascent, and awaiting our coming to vivify our Flag with the glow of a reconquered Freedom. Be conciliating to all worthy men of our race; but to the factious and turbulent, be as immovable as the granite cliffs of our native land, that stand unmoved amid the warring elements, and from their base throw back the surging billows that fret and fume around them. Let the tears of the widows and the cries of the orphaned ones steel your hearts and nerve you to renewed efforts! Let not the prisoner in his dungeon droop with a heavier weight around his heart than the chain that encompasses his limbs, as he despairingly hears of the abandonment of the cause for which he has sacrificed *his all*. Oh, let not this happen; but with locked shields and welded ranks, press forward in the fulfillment of our duties and never-ceasing preparations, until, when next we strike, the uplifted arm of Ireland may grasp in her hand the entire resources of our people, and in her arm be concentrated the aggregated might of our race, that our blows may be to the enemy crushing and destructive, shattering the prison bars of our compatriots, giving national life to our country, and freedom to our people.

I have the honor to be,

Faithfully and fraternally yours,

JOHN HAMILL, STATE CENTER, F. B.,

California.







## **IMPORTANT.**

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