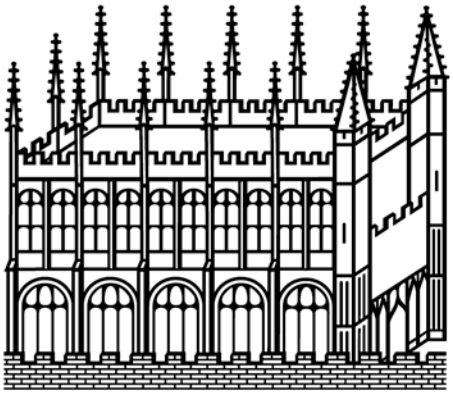

"EIGHTY" CLUB.

(6)

THE

IRISH QUESTION.

SPEECH

BY

RIGHT HON. JOHN MORLEY, M.P.

On Tuesday, June 8th, 1886,

AND LIST OF THOSE PRESENT AT THE DINNER.

MR. R. B. HALDANE, M.P.

(*VICE-PRESIDENT*)

IN THE CHAIR.

"EIGHTY" CLUB.

DINNER on TUESDAY, JUNE 8th, 1886,

At 7-45 p.m.

TO

RIGHT HON. JOHN MORLEY, M.P.

Members.

R. B. HALDANE, M.P. *Chairman*).

ACLAND, ARTHUR D., M.P.
ANDERSON, YARBOROUGH.
BICKERSTETH, JOHN.
BIRON, H. C.
BLYTH, E. K.
BOYD, HUGH.
BROWNING, OSCAR.
BRUCE, J. A. B. B. (*Hon. Sec.*)
BUTLER, SLADE.
BUXTON, GERALD.
BUXTON, SYDNEY.
BUXTON, FRANCIS W.
CARMICHAEL, T. D. GIBSON.
CLARKE, EDGAR.
COBB, H. P., M.P.
COMPTON, LORD WM., M.P.
CONYBEABE, C. A. V., M.P.
DALHOUSIE, EARL OF.
DAVIDSON, H. O. D.
DAWKINS, C. E.
DENT, FRANCIS.
FERGUSON, R. C. MUNRO.
FITZGERALD, J. D.
GELL, P. LYTTELTON.
GILMOUR, T. L.
GLAZEBROOK, M. G.
GLYN, HENRY.
GREENWOOD, G. G.
GROSVENOR, HON. R. C.
GURNEY, EDMUND.
HADDEN, REV. R. H.
HALLE, BERKELEY.
HAMILTON, W. F.
HANHAM, J. SWINBURNE.
HASLEM, J. C.

Guests.

RIGHT. HON. JOHN MORLEY, M.P.
(*Guest of the Evening.*)

ALLISON, R. A., M.P.
ALLEN, A. J.
BAKER, LAWRENCE., M.P.
BAXTER, A. L.
BENHAM, HENRY.
BENSON, G. VERE.
BRANCH, CHARLES.
BRICKDALE, C. F.
BROGDEN, T. W.
BRYANT, F. M.
BUCKLEY, A., M.P.
BUXTON, E. N., M.P.
BUXTON, C. LOUIS, J.P.
CANNEY, C. R.
CASSELLS, WALTER R.
CLARKE, STANLEY.
COMBER, J. W.
COURTNEY, W. P.
CROMBIE, J. W.
DAWKINS, J. W.
DIGBY, A.
DOGGETT, RICHARD
DONNE, WILLIAM.
DOWNES, WILLIAM.
FOX-PITT, W.
GATTY, CHARLES T.
GLYN, HON. PASCOE, M.P.
GREENWOOD, C. W.
GREY, W. HOWARD.
HAMLYN, V,
HAMMERSLEY, HUGH
HERTZ, W. D.
HINDMARSH, T. C.
HOHLER, G. F.

Members.

Holland, Spencer.
Lambert, Rev. Brooke.
Lane, R. O. B.
Lawrance, Hon. H. A.
Lawson, H. W. L., M.P.
Lea, John.
Leach, A. F.
Lely, J. M.
Leonard, S. H.
Lucas, C. P.
Macdonell, G. P.
Mallet, Charles E.
Maude, F. W.
McColl, Rev. Canon.
Meates, T. A.
Morley, Charles.
Morris, Spencer.
Morton, E. J. C.
Napier, Hon. M.
Parry, E. A.
Philipps, J. W.
Probyn, L.
Prosser, W. B.
Robinson, Lionel.
Rogers, C. C.
Rogers, J. D.
Roscoe, E. Stanley.
Sadler, M. E.
Sadler, T. (*Hon. Treasurer.*)
Samuelson, Godfrey.
Shee, H. G.
Sheldon, W. R.
Shuttleworth, Sir U. K., Bart., M.P.
Smith, Stewart.
Summers, Walter.
Summers, William.
Strachey, St. Loe.
Sturge, C. Y.
Synnott, N. J.
Taylor, George P.
Torr, J. F.
Verney, F.
Verney, Captain, M.P.
Welldon, Rev. J. E. C.
Whale, George.

Guests.

Holden, G. H.
Hollond, J. R.
Hume, M. A. S.
Johnson, G. W.
King, W. H.
Lambert, Allen.
Lawrence, H. W.
Lea, George H. C.
Lee, W. H.
Lilly, W. S.
Loch, C.
Lumley, Theodore.
Mackail, J. W.
Maclean, F. W., Q.C., M.P.
Mallett, Bernard.
Meates, T. W.
Minto, Professor.
Monro, R. W.
Morley, —
Murray, G. S. D.
Potter, E. P.
Rendel, J. M.
Renton, J. Hall.
Roscoe, H. W. K.
Russell, E. R., M.P.
Selby, W. S.
Sidgwick, Arthur.
Smith, R. Bosworth.
Stephen, J. K.
Swinburne, Sir J., Bart., M.P.
Tawney, Walter.
Thompson, Frederick,
Whitbread, S. H.
Whitfield, H.
White, Dr. Sidney.

The Times.
The Press Association.
The Central News.

Mr. J. D. Fitzgerald *Proposed, and* Mr. G. G. Greenwood *Seconded, a Vote of Thanks to the* Rt. Hon. John Morley, M.P., *for his Address.*

THE IRISH QUESTION.

SPEECH BY RIGHT HON. JOHN MORLEY, M.P.

THE second Dinner of the season was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on Tuesday, June 8th, 1886, and was attended by about 150 Members and friends.

The Chair was occupied by Mr. R. B. Haldane, M.P. After dinner,

The CHAIRMAN said it would be idle affectation to disguise the fact that the events of the previous night (the division on the Home Rule Bill) must make a difference to the future history of the Club, as well as in that of the entire Liberal Party. The rift which then took place was a rift which did not run exactly on the same lines as the ordinary lines of political cleavage. They would find, and he was afraid they must look upon it as inevitable, that into the future working and operations of this Club there would be introduced a certain amount of confusion. There were some of them who thought that the policy of Her Majesty's Government was a policy which was not necessary. (Cries of "No, no.") There were others of them who thought that those who entertained that view would, some

day before long, strive to falsify their own predictions. How those parties were balanced in the Club he did not know (a laugh); those were high matters which he left to the judgment of eminent experts such as Mr. Bruce and Mr. Caine, who, he believed, entertained upon this subject opinions which were diametrically opposed. When they last met it had been to listen to a speech, as eloquent as it was sincere, from a man whom they all, of whatever party, deeply respected, namely, Lord Hartington; and to-night they were met to entertain another distinguished man of a different type, who was among the foremost men of letters in Europe before he entered the Cabinet. They had to listen to him upon a subject which he had made his own by a life study of it, and upon which he entertained convictions which were not the convictions of yesterday or to-day. They were the conclusions of years of study, tested by all sorts of experience, and, though some of them might differ from him profoundly, it was impossible to do otherwise than receive the expressions of his convictions with the deepest respect. He had great pleasure in introducing Mr. Morley.

MR. MORLEY on rising was received with loud cheers. He said: Mr. Haldane and Gentlemen,—When, some weeks ago, I did myself the pleasure of accepting the invitation to dine with you here, I did not in the least expect that the date would fall upon an occasion so inauspicious for our Party as chance has brought about. The occasion is hardly, I am afraid—if you will allow me to say so—is hardly a festive one, and, indeed, one of your own members greeted me on coming into the room with the old *moriturum te salutamus.* Gentlemen, I can only tell you I do not feel in the least degree *moriturus.* (Cheers.)

Not many hours from now, seated upon a green bench not very far from here, and indulging in pensive ruminations, I saw file before me all the guests of the Eighty Club excepting one, and all going into the lobby which I may be excused for thinking the wrong one; but the fact that I, the last and the least of your guests, found myself waiting on that green bench by the side of the first and the greatest of your guests (cheers) somewhat consoled me for what would otherwise have been a very mournful spectacle.

Gentlemen, there can be no doubt that if anybody were in the humour, he could make over the "Gladstonian umbrella" the funeral oration of Mark Antony over the mantle of the great Cæsar. We too might point and say:

> "Look! in this place ran Cassius' dagger through;
> See what a rent the envious Casca made:
> Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed."

(Cheers). I beg you not to fit these antique names to modern imitators (laughter); but the case is very much as I have described it, and the umbrella is indeed sadly rent and torn. Her Majesty's Government have had to consider naturally, after such a vote as was given last night, very carefully and deliberately the position in which they stand to Parliament, the Sovereign, and the country. Gentlemen, the decision at which we have arrived is one which I am not able to state. (Laughter.) But I may say to you that the division of last night is the beginning and not the end. (Loud cheers.) Whatever else we do, and whatever other course we take, this at least I may say—that we will do nothing and we will take no course that will show a trace of doubt or a shadow of misgiving as to the policy on which we have embarked. (Cheers.) Whether in office or out of office, we are not going to let the flag go down. (Hear, hear.) Whether in office or out of office, we can

never abandon the cause which the leader of the Party has made his own, and which the great bulk of the Liberal Party have now made their own. (Cheers.)

The Chairman opened up some interesting speculations as to the relative proportion among the members of this Club of those who are in favour of the Irish policy of Her Majesty's Government, and of those who are hostile to it. The figures, I believe, vary between two-thirds and three-fourths—I mean whether two-thirds or three-fourths are in favour of the policy of Her Majesty's Government. Neither here, any more than in the House of Commons, is there, I submit, any pretence that the leader of the Party and those who went with him into the lobby last night did not represent the great majority of the Liberal Party. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I see here one or two honourable friends of mine who spoke and voted against us. Now I, for my part never, I think, used one single ill-natured word against any of those who have seen it their duty to differ from us. (Hear.) The occasion is, indeed, a momentous one, and it is an occasion on which the issues are so large that it would imply a mechanical and not a very honourable uniformity in our Party if we had all straightway and incontinently gone in the direction of the Prime Minister. One honourable member, at all events, now before me, made a very straightforward and honourable defence of his opinion ; made, indeed, as good a defence as could be made for it. If I do not think the defence was very good, it arises from the fact that I believe there is no policy open in the great national emergency in which we find ourselves excepting one of two policies—that of Lord Salisbury or that of Mr. Gladstone. (Loud cheers.)

We have had, as you may well believe, those of you who are not in the House of Commons—we have had a most

anxious, harassing, and trying time. We have had a time which has found the weak places in a man's character, a man's political convictions, and in a man's motives. (Cheers.) I hope that most members, on whichever side of the House they sit, and with whatever group they work, when they look back upon it, will feel that they have acted on perfectly straightforward grounds. I am entirely ready to believe it. There have, no doubt, been some among us—sitting on our side of the House—whose conduct and whose motives I will confess strikes me as a little inscrutable. (Cheers.) We have been defeated in advocating a policy of self-government for Ireland, strange to say, not a little through the agency of gentlemen who appeared most enthusiastic for the principle of self-government in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) But they have so disguised and so curiously directed their enthusiasm, that if it had all been the other way it could not have had a more deadly or mortal effect on the result. (Hear, hear.) They voted for the defeat of the principle of self-government, which they avowedly accepted, in order to claim a victory for the policy of coercion, which they ostentatiously condemned. ("No, no.") One of my friends says "No." You gentlemen of the Eighty Club are no strangers to dissidents; and, indeed, it has been said that until now you have invited the leading men of the Party in order that you might have the intellectual satisfaction of hearing the worst that each can say of the other. (Laughter.) You may now, at all events, have the satisfaction of knowing that all those right hon. friends of mine who came and fired cannonades into one another at your hospitable table last autumn, and at the beginning of this year, at an early hour this morning marched peaceably and unanimously into the lobby against the President of this Club. (Cheers.)

There are two questions I put to these friends of mine

and yours, who, though enthusiastic for self-government for Ireland, felt it their duty to reject our plan. There are two questions. First of all, How are we to govern Ireland? and secondly, Who is to govern England? Is Ireland to be governed by a method of which they entirely disapprove, and is England to be governed by a party whose principles and maxims they cordially repudiate? (Hear, hear.) They ardently sympathize with our aims, but they are not quite satisfied with every small and particular detail of our plan, and so they frustrate our aims, and they do the best they can to eject us from office and power, in order to open a way for a plan which they hate as much as they hate ours, and for statesmen whose principles they repudiate as vehemently as they profess to embrace ours. Oh, strange logic! Oh, wondrous policy! Oh, most mysterious and inscrutable statesmanship! (Laughter.) Of these friends of ours, headed by those to whom we had looked to be the leaders of the Radical wing of the Party, of these gentlemen I will say no more at this moment. A day may come when they will again find their place with the Party as a whole. (Hear, hear.) But at present it is they who have to justify their attitude and their conduct during the last three or four weeks, and above all the very memorable vote which they gave last night. (Cheers.) I am now speaking of one section of our own Party who voted against our measure. I am not speaking of Lord Hartington. And I say that that section will find it very difficult to persuade our honest homely plain-minded countrymen that while they accepted the principle they rejected the method or plan. (Hear, hear.)

As to Lord Hartington, Mr. Haldane has not used one single word in his honour which would not be reciprocated, I believe, by every single gentleman who sits on the Treasury bench. (Hear, hear.) There is not one of us

who does not see the honesty and straightforwardness of his motives, who does not feel the perfect consistency of everything he has said and done in this very painful controversy (hear, hear)—the perfect consistency and the perfect public spirit with which he has taken his position and has defended it. (Hear, hear.) Whether, upon examination and after further experience has enlightened our ways, that policy is found to be a useful, a tenable, and a workable policy, you will allow me to say that I very much doubt. (Hear, hear.) Dogged helplessness is not a very promising attitude. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I ventured the other night in the House of Commons to point out some of the conditions which have entirely changed within the last 10 or 20 years—yes, entirely changed—the conditions of the Irish problem; and though I was followed very shortly afterwards by one of the most powerful political dialecticians in this country, who was one of your guests not long ago, he (Mr. Goschen) did not traverse one single point of my contention that the condition of Ireland and the Irish problem has entirely changed within the last 20 years. (Hear, hear.)

When I enumerate the enormous transfer of political power, the break down of the old organizing force of the landlords, the march of the Catholic Church straight over into the Nationalist camp, the enormous acquisition of moral power and self-confidence—and of material resources—I can only repeat my own words, which the growth of Ireland for years not only in America and elsewhere, has created, I say you have a state of things to deal with which needs the most careful consideration, and renewed consideration, and again consideration. (Hear, hear.)

When people talk, and say that Lord Grey, and Macaulay, and other great statesmen of a past era, would have done this or that, I reply—though no man is

second to me in respect for the wisdom of wise men who have gone before us—I say, as the wisest of them, Mr. Burke, said—"Prudence does not commend you in new cases to draw lessons from retrospect." (Hear, hear.) I submit to you that a new case—an entirely new case—has arisen, and that you have a completely new set of conditions to deal with. Well, I am told, when I enumerate these conditions, that this is political fatalism. Gentlemen, the Whigs, headed by Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen, remind me of the old proverbial figure of the expectant rustic. They sit by the running stream waiting till all the waters shall have flowed by. But the waters are not likely to flow by. The more you look round to all the tributaries which swell the great stream of movement in Ireland, the more obvious it is that you are not likely to see the end of it until you bridge the torrent (hear, hear) that is in front of you. When we point out that there are new tributaries pouring into the stream, that they are coursing with a greater volume and a greater velocity than ever, then is it not childish for the expectant rustic to cry to me, that I am a political fatalist? (Hear, hear.)

Gentlemen, it has been my duty to beg the public not to forget that there are dark forces at work, and that the rejection of the Bill is a triumph for the violent wing of the Nationalist party. For this I have been told that I am guilty of trying to terrorize the House of Commons and Parliament and the country. Suppose one of you had the misfortune to have to consult a physician, and that he warned you that if you pursued a certain course of life and indulged in a certain diet you would certainly suffer indigestion or gout or some other ill. Would you say, "You are terrorizing me, your predictions are in the way of threat, but I defy you and your prescriptions"? (Laughter.) Such

conduct would be foolish and unwise (hear, hear), and it is foolish and unwise to say to us, when we honestly come to Parliament and the country, and insist on telling them the whole truth and setting out to them the consequences of their own action—I say it is unwise to say we are terrorizing or menacing them. (Hear, hear.) On the contrary, it is our duty to tell the whole truth and let the country know the whole conditions of the problem with which we have to deal. (Cheers.)

I do not believe that the Liberals who are so extremely enthusiastic for Home Rule, but who voted against the only Home Rule Bill ever produced in the House of Commons (laughter and cheers), I do not believe—I say it with all respect to their experience, sagacity, and intellectual power—I do not believe that Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen have found the key. (Hear, hear.) I am not at all sure that Lord Salisbury has found the key. Lord Salisbury last Friday complained to the House of Lords that I had been guilty of a misquotation and misrepresentation of what he had said, and quoted some words of mine in which I said that the policy which Lord Salisbury advocated was a policy of 20 years of coercion. (Hear, hear.) I should be exceedingly sorry to misrepresent in the least degree anything Lord Salisbury says; but I do not plead guilty to one jot or tittle of misrepresentation of Lord Salisbury. He says: "I have not said I was in favour of 20 years of coercion, and I never spoke in that sense." What did Lord Salisbury say? He said in St. James's Hall, "The alternative policy is that Parliament should enable the Government of England to govern Ireland. Apply that recipe honestly, consistently and resolutely for 20 years, and at the end of that time you will find Ireland will be fit to accept any gifts in the way of local self-government or repeal"—of what? why, to be sure, of

"coercion laws." (Cheers.) Coercion laws! That was Lord Salisbury's own phrase for his own policy; it was not mine.

Well, but if Lord Salisbury never spoke in the sense of coercion, what do these words mean? How can you repeal coercion laws that have never been passed? What is the meaning of the passage? I ask you in perfect candour, what is the meaning of the passage if these coercive laws were not part of that process of honest and resolute government which Lord Salisbury recommended? But that is not all. We are told that if we want to know what his policy is, there is the declaration of the 26th of January, and on the 26th of January Lord Salisbury's Government came to the House of Commons and gave notice of a Bill for suppressing the Land League, for putting down intimidation, and for introducing a more extensive land purchase than that which they had introduced in the previous year. This, by the way, is rather an interesting reminiscence of a Party who are now abusing us, and trying to catch votes because we have felt it to be our duty to introduce a Land Purchase Bill. They were themselves prepared to bring in a Land Purchase Bill on the 26th of January last, quite as wide a Bill as the Bill which we have felt it our duty to introduce. Nor is it only the Tories who are now piping a new tune about the Land. I would like to refer anybody who has a file of the *Fortnightly Review* to an article that appeared in the February number, and which was signed "A Radical." I have always understood that that article was written by a very prominent, powerful, and conspicuous opponent of our present policy; I have always understood that that article was written by my friend Mr. Chamberlain, and at the end of that article you will find that Mr. Chamberlain declared in favour of an immense transaction—I think that is the very word—in the way of land purchase. Therefore,

gentlemen, of those who went into the lobby last night against us, the Radical wing and the Tory wing, those who detached votes from us on the strength of our land policy, had each of them within a month of 1st of February, one side or the other, declared in favour of a great transaction and an immense operation of land purchase. This is by the way.

I was justifying myself for imputing a policy of coercion to Lord Salisbury, and I say I have from his own words, and from the act of his own Government on the 26th of January, amply justified the charge; and those of my hon. friends who were present in the House of Commons on the night of the 26th of January will not soon forget that the very Party who now interrupt and laugh at those on our bench, who impute to them a policy of twenty years of coercion, that those very men made the House of Commons ring with their cheers of glee and delight when their own Government announced a policy of coercion on the 26th of January. (Hear, hear.) And take a nearer date than that. Last Tuesday night in the House of Lords they had a field night. (Laughter.) Some question was raised as to the state of law and order in Ireland. And I am told that their ardour for coercion, their instancy, their urgency for coercion, was a thing the like of which was never seen before in the House of Lords. They were like hounds in full cry. (Cheers and laughter.) In the House of Lords, I am sorry to say, with some conspicuous exceptions (cheers), and very noble exceptions to whom we must all pay special respect (renewed cheers), there are very few Radicals. It is very easy to be a Radical in the House of Commons, but it is less easy to be a Radical and to support Mr. Gladstone's policy in the House of Lords. And there were, in fact, men who had been Mr. Gladstone's colleagues, men supposed to have a judicial mind, who made the rafters ring with their hysterical cries

for a policy of stringent and drastic coercion. Therefore, make up your minds; if we resign or are put out—I am not able to tell you which—or whatever may happen to us, remember, whether we are put out by the House of Commons or the country, the only alternative is not the milk-and-water Whig policy, it is the policy of Lord Salisbury. That, gentlemen, is perfectly clear, and if the time should come—Mr. Gladstone has said that elections do come, like Christmas (laughter)—if the time should come when an appeal is to be made to the constituencies, I do not believe that they will long hesitate or doubt as to repudiating a recourse to those old paths which have landed us in the miserable and the impracticable pass in which we now find ourselves. (Cheers.)

A great deal of use was made last night in the debate in the House of Commons of the barbarous and detestable crime which has recently been committed in the county of Kerry, and it was supposed that crimes of this kind, which may be repeated, that crimes of this kind and the disorder and the lawlessness which undoubtedly prevail, not all over Ireland, but in certain very small and specified districts—that that is a proof that our policy is a mistake. No, gentlemen, the more you prove to me there is disorder and lawlessness in Ireland, the better evidence there is that you need our policy,—the better evidence there is that you cannot revert to the policy which has produced that barbarous state of mind, temper, and habit which leads to these detestable crimes. (Cheers).

Nobody knows better than I do that Ireland needs, and urgently needs, to be governed by a strong hand. Nobody more frankly admits it than I do; but if you wish to restrain those barbarous forces, if you wish to lead that portion of the Irish nation which indulges in those practices, if you wish to lead them to a better mind, depend upon it, gentle-

men, it will have to be done by Irish leaders. We cannot—it is impossible that we should, in the light of all our past experience, expect to—do what for 80 years our forefathers and contemporaries have failed to do. They have not succeeded in extinguishing this detestable spirit. They have not succeeded in laying the foundation of social order. And is not that the best possible reason for a change of method, for trying a new approach, for trying new influences?

You will not—any of you who were either present last night or who read the report of speeches in the newspapers—you will not have missed the very remarkable and very memorable speech of Mr. Parnell. (Prolonged cheering.) Mr. Gladstone has before now pointed out that nobody in the House of Commons is a more perfect master of accurate and careful language in describing exactly what he wishes and desires to say and impress upon his auditors than Mr. Parnell. Now Mr. Parnell said, in the most emphatic, clear, unmistakable, and for ever undeniable words, that the Irish nation, in every section of it, both in Ireland and in the United States, and wherever Irishmen are found—that every section of the Irish people has accepted our plan. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, that was a very serious announcement. It commits Mr. Parnell and his friends. They applauded his statement. It commits them to an endeavour—which I am thoroughly certain they have no intention of shirking or avoiding—to an endeavour to make our plan work and to make this settlement what they call it, a real, a sincere, and a final settlement. (Cheers.)

There was great courage in that statement. It is not a little for a leader of the forward party, the Nationalist party in Ireland, to say that, with reservation as to the details, he accepts the settlement, and that he and his friends will do their best to make it work. I do not wish to dwell upon this point, but I can assure you that Mr. Parnell

exposes his influence to a severe test by such statements as he made last night. By running risks to his influence which such an announcement undoubtedly entails, I say Mr. Parnell gives us the very best and strongest pledge that a man can, that he is thoroughly sincere, and that he means what he says. We have never before seen an Irish Nationalist leader with Mr. Parnell's power, and we have never before had from an Irish Nationalist leader such a pledge and so strong a guarantee, the penalties on the failure of which will be so grave.

I am not going to detain you much longer, but I do call your attention to the point at which we stand in relation to Ireland, and I appeal to you whether there has ever been a moment since the Union—I do not know if there was ever a moment before the Union—when we stood so auspiciously and were so favourably placed in respect to the Irish people. (Hear, hear.)

I am not one of those who believe that sentiment, imagination, and feeling are decisive factors in these great emergencies. I believe that in the long run—you will pardon a philosophic proposition—that in the long run the masses of men are guided very much by their interests. But all depends upon the point of view from which they are taught to look at their interests, and I say by our policy, by the approach that has been made by the English people, we have done something to lead their sentiment, their imagination, and their feeling in such a direction that they will view their own interests aright. If they have made mistakes—I think the Irish people have made mistakes in interpreting their own interests—that is partly because their sentiment, their imagination, and their feelings have been distorted. Our policy has been, is, and will be, to give that sentiment a right direction, and I think the response that has been made to our efforts is one which

gives us the best reason to hope that they will now view propositions that come from England—whether they come from an Executive Government, whether they come from Parliament, whether from English statesmen, or whether from English newspapers—they will view them with a certain friendliness of vision which Ireland has never before given to propositions coming from this side of St. George's Channel. (Cheers.)

I know what Lord Salisbury says, that the Irish gentlemen in the House of Commons will say anything. I do not believe it. I do not believe, if Lord Salisbury had heard the language and the tone in which some of those who a year ago were most exasperated against English rule, now accept this settlement—I do not believe he could have mistaken the accent in which they spoke, or that he could believe these men will desert their own word, their own engagement, their own obligations. (Hear, hear.) It is said that they have behind them—that is, the National party have behind them, darker forces and more extreme men. It may be so; but all I say is, while we are responsible for the government of Ireland, would you rather have these men on your side against those darker forces and more extreme men or not? (Cheers.) I for my part declare with all my might that I would, and that it will make all the difference in the world whether we have them on our side or not. (Cheers.)

You have three policies before you. You will by-and-by, sooner or later, whether we are in office or whether we are out of office—you will have to go to the country and defend whichever of these three policies may appear to you to be most likely to be successful, wise, and just. The first policy is that of a resolute government of Ireland for twenty years, a gagged Press, muzzled public meetings, suspended members of Parliament (hear, hear), large emigration. You will have the policy of manacles and

Manitoba. (Laughter and cheers.) Next, you will have the policy of those who are eager for any plan of Home Rule except the one proposed. You will have those who are for autonomy of gas and sewage (laughter), who wish to give Ireland something which she does not want, which her leaders will never consent to work (hear, hear), and which will give them a leverage for further onslaughts upon the position in which gentlemen of this school would leave us. And thirdly, you have our policy, which is to offer, not coercion, not something which the Irish leaders and the Irish people refuse, but something which is a constitutional settlement, that, though constitutional, shall give to Ireland and to the Irish leaders real responsibility and real power. (Cheers.)

We do not believe in setting up a weak, sham, imperfect government in Ireland. We want to impose upon the leaders of the Irish people the burden of a real responsibility. (Hear, hear.) We believe that all the mischief in Ireland—the economic, the political, the social, and moral mischief—has come from this, that the men who have had the confidence of the Irish people have had no responsibility. (Hear, hear.) We insist upon giving them that; and we will be no parties to giving them anything short of that.

I wonder whether any single Liberal member who voted against the policy of coercion on the 26th of January, would not rather have things as they now are, with all their anxieties, with all their embarrassments, with all the great obscurities that lie before us in the future—whether he would not rather have these conditions than he would have the condition of things that would have been in existence at this moment if we had accepted the coercion policy of the 26th of January. How much further advanced on the road to a settlement of the Irish difficulty should we have

been at this moment, and how much further advanced will you be twelve months hence, if you turn us out of office, and resort, as you inevitably must do, to a policy of coercion? Will you have advanced one single step on the road to an enduring settlement? Not one step. Mr. Parnell never said a more wise word—and he has said many—than he said last night, that there is no half-way house between giving Ireland legislative autonomy, such as we propose to give her, and making her a Crown colony. (Hear, hear.)

I will not hesitate to say to you what I have said in the House of Commons, what I have said to my own constituents—that I, for one, am so oppressed by the disturbance, by the confusion to England and the misery to Ireland, of the present arrangements, that I for one—Liberal as I am, and Radical as I am—would rather vote for making Ireland a Crown colony to-morrow than I would go on in the old slovenly, bad system of misery to Ireland and disorder at Westminster. (Cheers.) I have, during the last six years, since the Irish movement assumed forms which could no longer be neglected, looked at it from two points of view. I have looked at it from the point of view of Ireland, and I have looked at it from the point of view of Great Britain and of the Empire. (Hear, hear.) A great deal has been said during all these discussions as to the proposal in the Government Bill to relieve the Irish peers and the Irish members from attendance at Westminster. I am not now going to defend our position in that very important matter, though I for one think it is capable of a very perfect defence. (Hear, hear.)

But what I wish you, who are so influential, who will presently go to the country, some on one platform and some I fear on the other (laughter), what I wish you to realize is this single fact—that whenever the English and Scotch majority combined on either side—Whig or Tory—

is less than 85, the Irish members would have in every detail of our business, large and small, the casting vote. (Hear, hear.) You cannot pass a resolution, you cannot amend a clause, you cannot vote money for an expedition, you cannot dismiss or retain an Administration, except at the goodwill and pleasure of the Irish members, unless your majority is over 85 ; and the goodwill and pleasure of the Irish members will depend upon their contentment with your settlement. (Hear, hear.) If the Irish members in the House of Commons are discontented with your settlement, you may be perfectly sure that they will give every vote on every matter of business with a view to buy or to extort a transformation of the sham councils, or provincial councils, or whatever the scheme may be which they do not accept, into the legislative body which we propose to give them without further parley. (Hear, hear.)

Do mark this—that, while many of you who support the Government Bill have objected to clause 24, and all the provisions which attend upon it ; do remember that, while you are violently and passionately clinging to the name of the Parliamentary veto, you insist, if you wish to retain all the Irish members for all purposes, upon handing over to Mr. Parnell the substance and reality of power. For the sake of flourishing about a Court sword—the nominal veto—you are giving to him the real strength and the real sharpness of the weapon. (Hear, hear.) While we have given in our Bill to Ireland every reasonable protection for her fair claims and just rights, we were also careful to frame provisions for the protection of our own Parliamentary rights. One consideration not unworthy of the attention of those who are honestly interested in the successful working of Parliamentary institutions is this. We are now seeing the opening up in the English House of Commons of that condition of things with which we are familiar enough in

Continental Assemblies, in which you do not see two great parties strongly opposed to one another, but you see four or five dissident groups. There is every prospect that that tendency will be aggravated and increased by what is now going on. I hope not. With all my heart I am strong for restoring the two old English parties. It is because I am for that, I am not willing to give the Irish group the power of holding the balance between Englishmen and Scotchmen.

There is a powerful fiction by a French genius in which he describes a great gun on board ship that had broken free from its lashings. It went crashing uncontrollably from larboard to starboard, the roll of the blind mass crushing men, demolishing gear, and dashing holes in the sides of the vessel. Take care you do not place the Irish party in the position of that blind mass. This is no fancy picture. The break down of the old order in Ireland is only one side of the emergency ; the restoration of power to your ancient Parliament is the other, and not the least important, side. Federation is a high and a grand ideal ; but the hour for federation has not yet struck. Our kinsfolk across the sea, I am well persuaded, will stand by us in all our misfortunes ; but for many years to come it is my conviction that upon this island and upon the people of this island the burden and the responsibility for maintaining the safety and greatness of our Empire will lie. The burden and the weight are great, as the glory is great. I believe our strength will be fully adequate to the burden, but only on one condition, and that is that Parliament which must for long preside over the destinies of our realm with wakeful eye and strong right arm, shall be restored to its old vigour, to its old homely wisdom, and to its ancient good counsels. (Loud cheers, during which the right honourable gentleman resumed his seat.)

Mr. J. D. FITZGERALD: Mr. Haldane, my Lords and Gentlemen,—I have the honour to propose a cordial vote of thanks to our distinguished guest for the address which he has just given us. I emphasize the word "cordial" because cordiality has not always during the last three months been the feeling with which Liberals have regarded each other. But in this Club we have always prided ourselves on the breadth of our Liberalism; in our ranks are represented every section of the Party, every shade of Liberal opinion, and all the more for that reason we have been able to give a united welcome to the Liberal statesmen who have successively honoured us with their presence, amongst them possibly even the envious Casca himself (cheers; laughter).

It must have been, I think, with a view of accentuating this position of the Club that our Hon. Sec. asked me to undertake this pleasing duty, knowing that I had been unable, if I may not appear presumptuous in saying so, to agree with the policy of which our distinguished guest is possibly the originator, certainly one of the most forcible exponents. The division of opinion which exists among our representatives in the House of Commons is reflected in this Club, in what proportions I do not pretend to say. But I feel certain that I speak for the whole Club when I say that we unite in thanking the right honourable gentleman for the address which he has given us, and for the honour which he has conferred upon us by being present here this evening. (Hear, hear.) We see in him not merely a leading member of a Liberal administration, but also one who, whether as a writer, a journalist, or a politician, has always been the advocate of that larger Liberalism which is above and independent of the Party exigencies of the moment, which prizes independence of thought and action as the most valuable of Liberal possessions. I think I am not wrong in saying that it is the belief of the country in the courage

and independence of the right honourable gentleman that has brought him in so short a Parliamentary career to the position which he now occupies. He has told us to-night that he has never said an unkind word of any Liberal member who voted against the Government, and I believe he would be the first to resent any action that would reduce the Liberal Party to the position, to use his own phrase, of mechanical adherents of a Ministry.

To enter upon any question of controversy would be unbecoming on my part. I may say this, that whatever be the decision which the Cabinet has arrived at to-day, it is clear that a General Election cannot be far distant. The right honourable gentleman has pointed out the three policies which it is open to us to advocate. Some of us will be sorely tried in making the choice. Whichever path we take I trust that we shall all remain Liberals stiil, that liberty to differ will continue a feature of our Liberalism, and that, whatever our differences, we shall always be able to unite, as we do this evening, in doing honour to a statesman to whom the Liberal party owes so much. (Cheers.)

Mr. GEORGE G. GREENWOOD seconded the resolution, and said: Mr. Haldane and Gentlemen,—When I learned that I was to have the honour of seconding this vote of thanks, I remembered that on a similar occasion, some little time ago, I took counsel with a friend who is acknowledged to be an authority on these matters, as to what might be the most approved method of performing this important and honourable duty. And my friend at once laid down three rules for my guidance. He said, in the first place, that I was to be short; secondly, that I was to say little or nothing

about my own political opinions; and thirdly, that I should say everything pleasant and eulogistic concerning the distinguished guest of the evening, whoever he might be, without descending into the language of adulation. (Laughter.) Now those, I have no doubt, are three very excellent rules. As to the first, I am sure those whom I am addressing will be glad to hear that I intend to yield the most implicit obedience to it. With regard to the second, I think it is a somewhat difficult rule to observe, especially in days like the present, when the expression of opinion acts like a safety-valve to our pent-up feelings. But I will endeavour to restrain myself and be circumspect, and therefore on the Irish question I say nothing. I say "nothing"—but this I *will* say, namely, that I could not have felt one tithe of the pleasure that I do feel in seconding this vote, if I did not also feel, at the same time, that I am giving utterance to an expression of thanks to Mr. John Morley, not only for coming amongst us to-night and delivering a most eloquent and instructive address, but also for the opinions which he has uttered, and the whole line of conduct which he has pursued with regard to Ireland—conduct and opinions which, I venture to say, have met with nothing but the most cordial approval from the large majority of the members of this Club. (Cheers.)

I say this notwithstanding what has been said elsewhere to the contrary. (Hear, hear.) I know, of course, that very grave differences exist among us; I know, of course, that this Club, like the rest of the Liberal Party, at any rate in its upper stratifications, is divided by a great line of cleavage. I will not undertake to say whether that line extends very deeply downwards; and I certainly think that in a great many places it is a by no means well defined line; still, it exists, and the speech delivered by my friend Mr. Fitzgerald to-night is itself sufficient to remind us—if

any reminder were necessary—of the great dangers that we are in by our unhappy divisions. Well, we must make the best of circumstances as they exist. There is no use deploring our disunion; there is no use thinking of what *might* have been if this Club, and if the Liberal Party, had been united upon these questions.

> "If of all sad things of tongue or pen
> The saddest is, 'it might have been';
> Still sadder is this we daily see—
> 'It is, but it didn't ought to be.'"

(Laughter.) Therefore I pass away from the delicate ground of controversy, and I come now under the operation of my third rule. And here I confess I am in some little difficulty, and for this reason—I am anxious to speak to-night in the language of the most absolute sincerity, but I know that if I were to use words which should adequately and sincerely express the feelings of members of this Club towards Mr. John Morley, I should have to employ expressions which might have the appearance—although it would be an appearance only—of transgressing the very admirable third rule laid down for my guidance by my guide, philosopher, and friend. But there is one form of flattery which is proverbially sincere—I mean, of course, imitation; and if by imitation we may understand an endeavour to follow a bright example, then I think that is a form which some of us might adopt towards our distinguished guest of to-night, not only without offence, but with the most excellent results to ourselves. Not to all of us, of course, is it given

> "To soar aloft on paper wings to fame,
> Or ride a goose-quill to the highest heaven."

Not to all of us is it given "the applause of listening senates to command." To few indeed is it permitted to combine the two. But there are other qualities, less brilliant perhaps,

but not the less valuable on that account, which we should, I think, do well to set before us for emulation. Among them, ever mindful of my first and my third rules, I will only mention that transparent integrity which assures the world that whatsoever he may be doing, whatever opinions he may be advocating, whatever line of conduct he may be pursuing, he is always "running straight." Whether he was boldly propounding "New Ideas" in that famous article in the *Saturday Review*; or whether he was, with characteristic pluck, in the cause of Radicalism, endeavouring to arrest the fall of the *Morning Star* from the political firmament; whether he was warning us against the dangers of dallying and coquetting with untruthfulness and inconsistency in the guise of "compromise"; whether he was advocating the cause of Freethought in the *Fortnightly Review*, or of justice to Ireland in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, or in the House of Commons—it was always known (and his very enemies, if he has any, would not dispute it) that he was never merely "playing a hand," but always, through good report and through evil report, sincerely and consistently upholding those opinions which he honestly believed to be the most beneficial to the community and to mankind. (Hear, hear.)

But, gentlemen, I fear I have been forgetting all my rules. I will therefore conclude with a hope. We have heard a good deal of the dissolution, through the throes of which we are told that the country is so soon to pass. Well, I am sanguine enough to believe that that dissolution will prove to be *mors janua vitæ*. Quatre Bras is over, and we are now preparing for Waterloo. And I trust that we may soon see the day when our honoured guest of to-night, who has done so much for Ireland, may, after witnessing the establishment of a true union between those countries now called by courtesy the United Kingdom, be free to devote

his undivided energies, his great powers and his great influence, to the cause of those social and domestic reforms which are so urgently needed for England and Scotland, and in the furtherance of which all the members of this Club may be able once more thoroughly and cordially to unite. (Cheers.)

This, on being put, was carried with the greatest enthusiasm.

Mr. MORLEY, in returning thanks, said: You have received me with very great and singular kindness, and I think that the reception you have given to the opinions I have expressed shows that Mr. Gladstone was not as right as he usually is when he described the intellect as being all on one side. (Laughter.) I think I have read that most of you have gone through an academic course, and I believe there is no better foundation for honest and practical Liberalism of the best kind than an academic course. I confess I came here in some trepidation, because an academic course makes people somewhat fastidious, and I did not know how many I should find in agreement with the views I hold. I do not know now, but I can guess. (Hear, hear.) I came here meaning to discuss the question on the lines which could give as little offence as possible.

You have an admirable rule that nobody shall become a member of this Club who is over 40 years of age. I venture to predict that no single member of this Club will see the age of 42 who will not see the realization at our hands (hear, hear) of the policy of which I have been so inadequate a spokesman. (Cheers.) Do not forget that it is but one man who is the real author of this policy. You may call it—they do call it—a one-man system. But, the more I think of all the facts of the present situation, the

more delighted am I that in the face of a crisis of this magnitude and this urgency we are fortunate enough to possess as the head of our Party a statesman with such gifts of imagination, such powers of sympathy with a truly national aspiration, such undaunted courage, such patience and steadfastness, as to place himself at the head of the movement in which we are all subalterns, and which I believe in his lifetime and in his day will come to a triumphant issue. (Loud cheers.)

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