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S P E E C H

DELIVERED BY

JAMES ANTHONY LAWSON, LL.D., Q.C.,

AT

The Election

OF

MEMBERS TO SERVE IN PARLIAMENT

FOR

THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN,

HELD ON THE 30TH MARCH, 1857,

AND FIVE FOLLOWING DAYS.

DUBLIN:

HODGES, SMITH, AND CO., 104, GRAFTON-STREET,

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1857.

Houses of the Oireachtas

DUBLIN:
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13, HAWKINS'-STREET.

MANY of my friends and supporters at the late COLLEGE ELECTION having expressed their desire that the sentiments contained in the following Speech should be recorded in a more permanent and authentic form than that of the columns of a Newspaper, I now publish it, together with my Address to the Electors.

J. A. L.

*Upper Fitzwilliam-street,
15th April, 1857.*

TO

The Electors of the University of Dublin.

27, UPPER FITZWILLIAM-STREET,
21st March, 1857.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN.

I intend to present myself as a Candidate for the honour of being chosen one of your Representatives at the approaching Election.

I have been long, and, I hope, honourably connected with your University; within its walls I received my education, and was fortunate enough to obtain those distinctions which are not unfairly considered as the pledge and earnest of future success: I have been a Scholar, Gold Medallist, and for five years Professor of Political Economy, and since my more immediate connexion with the University has ceased, I have not, amidst the pressure of professional duties, neglected the pursuits incident to that Professorship, but have always taken an active part in the consideration of those social and economic questions upon the true understanding of which the prosperity of our country mainly depends. The great principles of Commercial freedom, so long

resisted, but which now, by their results, extort the approval of those who opposed them, as well as every kindred measure of Financial and Administrative Reform, have always received and shall continue to receive my warmest advocacy.

Should I then be so fortunate as to attain the high distinction to which I aspire, I may at least without presumption say, that I shall bring to the Legislative Assembly a mind not unversed in those subjects which usually occupy the attention of Parliament, and keenly alive to the best interests of that University to which I owe whatever position I have attained.

It cannot be called presumption to ask the Electors of Trinity College to return one of themselves, if they deem him qualified to represent them. The great Universities of the sister kingdom have always been represented by their own sons: I think you will agree with me that there is no reason for the establishment of a different principle in Ireland.

It is the right of the Electors to require from a Candidate a plain statement of the principles which he is prepared to support, and the views which he entertains upon the great questions of the day, and I, therefore, proceed briefly to indicate mine.

I am a member of the Established Church, and I yield to no man in sincere attachment to her doctrines and interests; but true, as I hope, to the genuine spirit of Protestantism, I advocate the largest toleration for the religious opinion of others, and I indignantly disclaim for my own faith any aid which may be supposed to be derived from the imposition of civil or political disabilities upon those professing a different creed.

I also hold that all subjects who contribute towards the revenue of the State are entitled to a fair and just participation in all public grants for educational purposes.

I, therefore, candidly say that I shall oppose all agitation for the discontinuance of the grant to Maynooth. The discussions to which this agitation gives rise tend, in my judgment, to excite and embitter feelings of an angry and uncharitable kind; and I firmly believe that, should the movement eventually succeed, its

promoters will have inflicted a deadly blow upon the Irish branch of the Established Church.

Applying the same principle to the public grant for general education, I shall support the right of the clergy and people of the Established Church to participate in that grant. I am an advocate of mixed education. I remember, with pleasure, that in your University it was my privilege to meet many fellow-students of the Roman Catholic religion? we pursued our studies there without any angry collision or blind bigotry; and we learned from such companionship to respect and esteem each other. It appears, however, that from conscientious scruples, which I respect, though I cannot concur in them, a large body of the persons for whose benefit the grant was made do not, in fact, participate in it. Under such circumstances, I shall heartily support either such a modification of the National System as shall remove those difficulties, while it leaves the exercise of his own religion free to every child, or the introduction of a system confined to secular education exclusively.

With respect to party questions, I think that the mode in which political sections are at present divided is sufficient to shake our faith in old party names. I am, however, bound to say, that ever anxious for the maintenance of the honour and supremacy of the British Empire, I heartily approve of the foreign policy of Lord Palmerston's Government; and, at the same time, it is my conscientious conviction that under his administration we are fairly governed at home. Never was Ireland more prosperous, or her tranquillity less disturbed by the struggle of contending parties; and, above all things, the late appointments to the Episcopal Bench, both here and in England, command the hearty approval of every true friend of religion. So long as that course is pursued, the present Government shall receive my hearty support.

I shall support every measure of well-considered Reform. I am not an advocate of finality, but I deprecate rash changes. The Reform of our Laws—those relating to Wills, the Eccle-

siastical Courts, the relation of Landlord and Tenant, and the Sale and Transfer of Land—have all engaged my attention; and to them, and to the interests of Science and Literature, in connexion with your University, I shall devote all my energies.

I have the honour to be,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES A. LAWSON.

S P E E C H,

&c. &c.

ELECTORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN,—I stand before you to answer one question ; that question is,—What brings me here? I appear before you as the advocate of principles unpopular with many of you (cries of hear, hear, and no, no). I have had the courage to avow those principles in my address, when I might have shrunk from the declaration of them (cheers). I ask you now to hear me while I vindicate them (cheers). To the students, and to the scholars of this University in particular, do I address myself. It seems to me but a short time since, like one of yourselves, I sat in this hall an eager and aspiring student. I, too, have been a scholar of this House ; for many years have I been resident within its walls ; and believe me all my sympathies are with you. I come forward here supported by a body of men in this University, of whose support I

have reason to be proud (cheers), many of them differing from me in political sentiment; but they all know this, that the principles which I now advocate have been the principles of my life (hear, hear). I have not put them on for this occasion; but I have come here to state and to vindicate those principles which are the honest convictions of my heart. Gentlemen, I have not, in appearing before you here, the advantage of being supported by any of the Senior Fellows of this great University. I entertain for them profound respect. I have received nothing but kindness from them, and though I have not been fortunate enough, on this occasion, to secure their support, they shall never hear anything from me disrespectful to them or to the high office which they fill; but I honestly confess that my ambition, if I represent this University at all, is to represent the young and vigorous intellect which is now energizing and vivifying it (loud cheers), and if you confer upon me that honour, the greatest in your power to bestow, and the highest to which I can aspire, it shall be my endeavour to aid in the assertion of those sound principles of University reform which were so forcibly stated on this platform by Mr. Haughton (loud cheers)—and in promoting every internal improvement which will make our University keep pace, as it ought to do, with the advancing spirit of the times (loud cheers).

Gentlemen, I have been told that I came here to disturb the peace of this University (hear, hear). I

have come to disturb that peace—I recognize not the peace which consists in the deprecation of a contest and in the deprecation of manly discussion upon the hustings. I believe it is thus that truth is best elicited; thus that your youth can best be trained to habits of independent judgment on political affairs, and of generous forbearance for the opinions of others who differ from them, which will fit them to take that part in public life, which is the duty and the right of every man; and, whatever the result of this contest may be, I believe it will redound to the good of the University, the advancement of which I have at heart, and which has a right to command my best and most energetic services. Gentlemen, I honestly confess that I desire to open the University—I desire that it shall not be considered any longer a close borough—I desire that the young men who are growing up, when they may become conscious in themselves of the possession of qualities which fit them for public life, and may aspire to the honour of hereafter representing their own Alma Mater, shall not be told that its representation is under lease, and that they cannot succeed to it until the demise of the present occupants. Gentlemen, I deny that either Mr. Hamilton or Mr. Napier has a vested right in the representation of the University; they are not exempted from that liability which is common to all members of Parliament, to stand upon the hustings, and justify their acts as they can; they are bound, when they ask you to re-elect them, to satisfy you that there

are no other candidates so well entitled to represent this great University as the Right Honourable Joseph Napier and Mr. George Alexander Hamilton (loud cheers). Why, then, do I ask your suffrages this day? I first came to your College as a student having no patrimony, except those talents which God has committed to my charge (cheers). I went from this place to a profession, where, by patient and diligent industry, apart from the turmoil of the political world, I have achieved an honourable position, which makes me independent of the favours of any government (cheers). I delight in the exercise of that profession. By it I am able to satisfy every wish, and I enjoy there that which I value more than anything else—the love and esteem of my brethren of the bar (cheers). I never asked and I never received a favour from any government. Why, then, do I come forward to seek the representation of this University? Why do I put myself, by so doing, in opposition to many with whom I have been long associated on terms of the closest intimacy? I have come forward, in the first place, to vindicate the principle, that our University should be represented in Parliament by a graduate of her own. So powerful is the action of this principle, that, before I addressed the Electors, two Junior Fellows, who have done much to revivify this Institution—men whose moral conduct and firmness, in defending the rights of the College, gained them, upon a recent occasion, the approval of every right-thinking

man of the community (cheers) ; these two gentlemen, Messrs. Galbraith and Haughton, had given their support to Mr. Wilson, who has made the manly, straightforward speech which you have heard this day upon this hustings, and they did so because he is a graduate of this University ; although he certainly did not possess a requisite which is generally considered to be necessary for the representative of a University like this—namely, having gained distinctions within its walls. I confess, it did strike me that when he came forward upon University principles, and was able to obtain such an amount of support as this, that I should flinch from my duty if I did not abandon the paths of private and professional life in which I had walked (cheers), and present myself as a candidate for your suffrages. I have now done so, and it will be for you to say whether I have done right or not (cheers, and several voices, “you have”).

Gentlemen, Mr. George Alexander Hamilton is specially affected by the assertion of this principle for which I contend, and before I speak of the general merits or demerits of your late members, I desire to address myself to this objection, which applies peculiarly to him. For that gentleman, personally, I entertain a sincere respect. I have always differed from him in his political opinions, but I believe he has adhered to those principles of Conservatism on which he originally obtained your votes, with integrity and consistency, and therefore anything I am about to say

is not in reference to his general character, but to that disqualification which unfortunately attaches to him, and which I think ought to be fatal to his pretensions to represent this University—I mean the fact that he is a graduate of Oxford (hear, hear). I need not dwell here upon the importance of being represented by an alumnus of your own. That is now universally admitted, even in the edict which emanated from the archdeaconry of Meath. That principle is now conceded with reference to any future claimant for your suffrages, and it is admitted by all parties, that though heretofore disregarded in the University it is a principle which shall never on any future occasion be departed from. But that is not enough. I present myself here to you as a graduate of this University—long, and I hope honourably, connected with it, and I ask you to affirm that principle now. I am told that this defect in the title of Mr. George Alexander Hamilton has been cured by several elections; that he has been so often returned on this hustings that it is not now open to me or any other man to raise this objection against him. I deny that proposition (hear, hear). Are you prepared to affirm here by your votes, that the electoral body, which, in 1842, thought proper to elect Mr. George Alexander Hamilton, had power to bind you, or that you are to be bound by their acts (cries of no, no)? Were they your agents, did you empower them to betray the solemn trust reposed in them? which I say they did betray by the election of Mr. Hamilton, a stranger to this University (loud cheers,

and cries of no, no). If Mr. Hamilton, in the year 1842, was rightly and properly elected, it could only be on one supposition—that there was no one having the title in which he was deficient to contest the representation with him. If that were so, the act might be excused ; for then, if a graduate of Oxford should say to a graduate of Dublin, “How is it that you are represented by a member of our University?” the answer would be obvious—“Because he was the only candidate that appeared in the field ; we had no other choice.” But, gentlemen, the very instant one comes into the field armed with the title in which Mr. Hamilton is deficient, that instant his title ceases and determines, and you are bound to select a man of your own (loud cheers, and cries of no, no). Possession is very good, but possession is only good until a better title is shown. I come here and show a better title than Mr. Hamilton (cheers, and cries of no, no). My title is that I am a member of your University (cries of hear, hear). And, gentlemen, so far from acquiescence having deprived you of the power of raising that question, it seems to me that the longer that state of things continues the deeper is the stigma which it places upon you. For to what does it amount? It amounts to an affirmation on your part, that during the entire of that time there was no alumnus of your own who was worthy to represent you, and that it was therefore you persevered in the error into which your predecessors had fallen, and still continue to elect Mr. George Alexander Hamilton

(cheers). I do not deny the claim of Mr. Hamilton as a member of the party to which he belongs. I admit, it is true, as stated by his supporters, that he fought the battle of Dublin, and that after he was rejected by the city this University opened her hospitable arms to receive him. Was that the price the Conservative party ought to have paid to him for those services? Was the right to represent this University to be bartered by those persons calling themselves the Conservative party, and to be conferred for that consideration on Mr. George Alexander Hamilton? I deny it, and I say it was a prostitution of the representation of your University. Your representative ought not to be merely one who has rendered services to a particular party, nor is it enough that he should possess those business like qualities, or that efficiency in the discharge of the duties of a country gentleman, which Mr. Hamilton admittedly possesses. He should be one who, from his position in connexion with your University, and from his identification with its objects and pursuits, is competent to deal with those great interests with which it is concerned, and to vindicate them and advocate them as your representative ought (hear, hear).

Gentlemen, having stated so much with respect to the peculiar defect in Mr. Hamilton's title, I now crave your attention, while I state to you very briefly my views upon the topics which are suggested to you in my address (hear, hear). I stand here defending principles which in some respects are unpa-

latable to many of you. I stand here, if I am wrong, to be condemned, and therefore, that sense of generosity which actuates young hearts, and ought to influence a great constituency like this, will, I am confident, lead you to give me the fullest and most impartial hearing, while I candidly and honestly state my sentiments on those several subjects. Dissent from them if you please—condemn them if you will, but give me the fullest opportunity of expounding and vindicating them (cheers and hisses). It never shall be said of me, with truth, that my performance hereafter has been different from the professions which I made upon this hustings, and, therefore, I am cautious of making them too high sounding. I respect my honourable friend Mr. Napier, and I believe that many of the matters which have been brought in charge against him are the result of his making many professions upon this hustings, higher and more extreme than sound judgment and sound discretion would have suggested (cheers and laughter).

Gentlemen, I am a sincere and devoted member of the Protestant Established Church in Ireland. I was born in her bosom, and in her communion; my nearest relatives and dearest friends are clergymen of that Church, and it would be strange, indeed, if I were the man who would be disposed to aim a blow against the Church which I love, and which I revere (cheers). The very first question I was asked when I canvassed some of the members of this College for their support was, are you prepared to uphold the integrity of the

Established Church? My answer was, unhesitatingly, I am, and as unhesitatingly their support was given to me (cheers). And should I be chosen as your representative, I pledge myself upon this hustings to maintain, to the utmost of my power, the revenues of the Established Church intact and inviolate (loud cheers). And though I am told that I come forward as the supporter, in all respects, of Lord Palmerston, yet I have no hesitation in stating to you that I shall, if elected, oppose, to the utmost of my power, that measure which was recently before Parliament, for taking away indirectly what would not be attempted to be done directly—a portion of the revenues of that Church (cheers). If I enter Parliament, I enter “nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,” I enter an independent man, and every measure calculated to injure the Church, or encroach upon its revenues, would have my strongest resistance (cheers). Gentlemen, I conceive that when at the close of the tithe agitation, which so long cursed the country, an encroachment of 25 per cent. was made upon the revenues of the Church, when the rest of those revenues were secured to the Church by a solemn title, and made charges upon the lands of the country, that from that time forth all question with respect to the ownership of Church property was intended to be closed and settled, and accordingly, as closed and settled I will treat it (cheers). I speak in the hearing of many Roman Catholics in this hall, and I ask them to whom does the existence

of Church property do injury? Does it injure them in their purses or property? No; it is a property distinct from that of the owner of the land, a property to which the Church has as good a title as the title of any landlord I see around me (cheers); and I have yet to learn that our national condition would be improved by taking the revenues of the Church and transferring them to other and different purposes (cheers and Kentish fire). Gentlemen, I have said the existence of that Church property injures no man in purse (hear). No man has a right to complain that his neighbour has an estate which he has inherited from his ancestors, and which he will not transfer to him (hear, hear); and as little right have any other persons in the community to try to wrest from that Church the property which it enjoys, and which it rightly and beneficially uses. But let me ask every candid man in this hall what would be the social effect of such a measure? Mr. Whiteside said here that I spoke of the Church being injured if the withdrawal of the grant to Maynooth was pressed. My conviction is, that if all the property of the Church was taken away to-morrow, her religious efficiency would not be one whit disturbed (cheers). I believe we have still the virtue and energy amongst us, if those endowments were taken away, to send out our clergy and our missionaries through the length and breadth of the land to spread the knowledge of the truth (cheers). But I tell you what we would lose. We would lose the benefit of a

resident clergy; and when you consider how the character of the clergy of our Church has within the last half century improved—when you consider the position which the ministers of the Church now occupy in our country parishes—when you see the minister the centre round which every kindly and social feeling of the parish gathers (hear, hear)—when you see him the temporal succourer and adviser even of those who belong not to his own communion—I ask, who would be the man to raise his hand to destroy the system from which spring such glorious results (cheers)? And, gentlemen, when I recollect those disastrous times which recently passed over this country—when I recollect how that noble band of ministers then stood between the living and the dead—how, with energy which could only be supplied from on high, they struggled with all their might to mitigate the horrors of that visitation—when, though their own cheeks were often blanched with want, though they saw the tender frames of their wives and daughters sinking into the grave under the accumulation of woes—was any man ever heard to say that their feet were absent from the house of death, or that their hands were not stretched forth to minister and to save (loud cheers)? Many of those men, we know, perished under the sufferings of that visitation (hear, hear). No human pen can write their epitaph; it is written in characters of everlasting light (hear, hear). One of them presses upon my recollection now—one whom we all loved and revered—one who

occupied a chair in this University—one at whose feet I myself have sat and learned lessons of wisdom, whom in that chapel opposite I have heard expounding the truths of religion—he, too, sank under that visitation, and I feel that I strike a chord in every heart when I mention the name of William Archer Butler (cheers). It has been gravely said that I have given in my address no pledge for the maintenance of the Establishment; that I was the first candidate for this University who came forward unpledged to the support of the Church. Gentlemen, I did not need to make that pledge. You remember the legislator of old who was asked why he had allotted no punishment in his laws to the crime of parricide, and he answered, because he did not believe it possible that such a crime could be committed (cheers). Was I, in coming before you, to negative the monstrous supposition that my sacrilegious hand could ever be raised to take away the life of that Church which gave to me my own (cheers)? But while I thus speak for the maintenance of that Church, am I insensible to the fact that there are many things therein which require reform, and which, above all others, challenge the investigation and attention of those who will have the honour to be elected as your representatives (hear, hear)? I avow that I would support a motion to consider whether a more proper and equitable distribution amongst its clergy of the revenues of the Church could not be made (hear, hear, and continued cheering). I avow that (renewed

cheers). The avowal may be unpalatable to many, but, notwithstanding, I make it (cheers). I have said that my sympathies and interests are with the scholars and students of this University, and so, too, are my sympathies and interests with the hardworking clergy of our Church (loud cheers). I am a hardworking man myself, and I hold that the labourer is worthy of his hire. Moreover, I feel satisfied that greater powers of self-government should be entrusted to the Church than she is now possessed of ; and, without indicating any particular views, I think that such a reform would be a thing reasonable in itself (hear, hear). But we should never lose sight of this, and it is the very corner-stone upon which the Establishment rests, that it is not the "Church of Ireland" at all, but that it is the United Church of England and Ireland—and that as such it is to be dealt with (loud cheers). And let no man dare to bring forward in Parliament any motion relating to the revenues or property of the Church, without including in it that of which we are a part—the Church of England (cheers). But while thus I am a supporter of the Established Church, I am warmly attached to the voluntary principle, too. If we were sitting down, like Plato, to plan a republic of our own, we might be led to the conclusion that the voluntary system was the best—it affords the widest scope and range to healthy individual action ; but as in the British constitution the most desirable results are brought about by the combination and joint action of princi-

ples apparently adverse and opposed to each other, so it is my belief that the perfection of religion and Church government is brought about, when the voluntary principle aids and supplements the existence of the Church Establishment. While the Establishment provides a barrier against infidelity, by keeping the standard of religious truth fixed and ascertained ; while it discourages the undue multiplication of small sects, and induces moderation in religious opinion ; the voluntary system, by its individual energy, supplies an amount of vigorous action which is wanting in the other, and affords an opening for the exercise of the most active and ardent piety—*“utrumque per se indigens, alterum alterius auxilio eget.”* Such an union has worked with eminent success in our country (hear). Look at the societies which now spread out their arms to send the Gospel through every part of the world ; look at those organized to give temporary succour at the bedside of the poor at home ; look at the churches which have sprung up in populous districts founded upon those principles ; look upon the ministers who fill their pulpits, and the manner in which they proclaim the truths of the Gospel to their congregations. Look at this, and you will agree with me that our Establishment would be weak indeed, if it were not sustained by the voluntary principle (hear, hear).

I now come to the Maynooth question, which is a stumbling-block in my career (hear, hear). If I had taken counsel with others when I was pre-

senting myself for the honour of representing this great constituency—if I had advised with my friends as to the composition of that address, which was the spontaneous expression of my own feelings, I have no doubt that policy would have suggested to me—“You can never hope to succeed while putting forward those views.” But, gentlemen, was it better to do that which I have done, or stand here a traitor self-convicted (loud cheering, and some confusion) on this hustings, when I was asked what my sentiments were upon that subject? and if I have gained any credit with your hearts for the bold and manly avowal of that belief, I ask you to give your patient attention while I explain my views on the subject; and if I do not reconcile them with your own, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that you are in possession of my sentiments, and that if I am condemned by the majority of this constituency for adhering to these principles, which have been the principles of my life, it shall be after full inquiry and examination that you will have so condemned me (cheers). The question here is not as to the creation, but as to the continuance of the grant to Maynooth. I confess I entertain a strong opinion, grounded upon the political studies which I have pursued in this University, that, as a general rule, grants by government, even for purposes of general education, are open to objection. I believe that the public in general know best their own requirements, and how they can be most efficiently and most economically provided for; I believe that such grants frequently tend

to paralyse private enterprise, to waste the money of the people on Commissioners, Inspectors, and a host of public functionaries, and to arm the ruling powers with undue and formidable means of directing and moulding the mind of the nation. But if this be so with respect to general instruction, how much more forcibly does it apply to grants by government for purposes of special religious training. And, therefore, if this question were now brought forward for the first time, and if I were asked to grant the public money, for the purpose of educating Roman Catholic clergymen, or clergymen of any other persuasion, I would not vote for it, because I believe it to be inexpedient. That, however, is not the state of things we are looking at here, and I pray your attention while I call to your minds the circumstances under which that grant was given. In the year 1795, in the reign of the good King George, whom I never heard suspected of heresy, and when the great William Pitt, the admiration of many amongst you, was Prime Minister of England, this grant was first given to Maynooth. At that time the Duke of Portland was Home Secretary; he was afterwards the Chancellor of the University of Oxford. That grant was made by the Irish Parliament, in which you will remember there was not then a single Roman Catholic—a legislature composed exclusively of Protestants first gave the grant. It is not in our power now satisfactorily to investigate the motives which influenced the legislature at that time; but afterwards, when the Union

was brought about, this was one of the very things which Pitt perpetuated. The perpetuation of the Established Church was one article of the Union, and he perpetuated contemporaneously this very grant to Maynooth, and also the regium donum to the Presbyterian clergy. Again, in 1808, by a vote of the Parliament of England, that grant was increased, Mr. Perceval, a staunch supporter of Protestantism, being Minister; and in 1813, when Sir Robert Peel was Chief Secretary for Ireland, the grant was again increased. And I pray your attention to this, that, in 1845, Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, who were then at the head of affairs, brought forward a measure for the purpose of making permanent the grant, which had been theretofore the subject of annual discussion. Mr. George Alexander Hamilton was at that time member for this University. I think I collected from him that he did not approve of that measure, but I am not aware that he divided the House upon it. (A Voice—He did.) He did then, and that only shows that what I said of him at the outset is borne out, that he has been consistent throughout his political career (loud cheers). I do believe that the object of Sir Robert Peel, in making that which had been an annual grant a permanent one, was to remove the question out of the pale of annual discussion. He thought, and in my opinion wisely, that when the question of the Established Church and of its property was settled, it was extremely desirable that this other question of Maynooth, which

had been then existing for fifty years, should be settled also. But though it is no longer necessary to resort to Parliament annually to renew the grant, Mr. Spooner and others, actuated, I suppose, by conscientious motives (cries of hear, hear, and considerable uproar in the hall for some time). Gentlemen, I know it would have been the most politic thing that I could have done to have declared myself an opponent to the Maynooth grant, and I have not the slightest doubt that it would have ensured my success with this constituency if I had swallowed this pledge and promised to support Mr. Spooner (cheers). But, I do believe, as I have already said in my address, that the agitation of that question is extremely dangerous (no, no). I believe that the removal of one stone from the structure, so erected by our ancestors, is dangerous to the stability of the whole (shouts of no, no, and Kentish fire, and great uproar).

Gentlemen, I have now stated my views as to the inexpediency of discontinuing this grant, but I fully concur with Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Napier in saying, that if this grant be in itself morally wrong the question of expediency is beside the case, and that no considerations of mere political expediency should be suffered to prevail (hear, hear). And if I were in my conscience convinced that the thing was morally to be condemned, I would never stand upon this hustings, or anywhere else, to say that what is morally wrong could be politically right (hear, hear). But, gentlemen, if I believed it to be mo-

rally wrong I should go a great deal farther than my honourable opponents have done upon this question (cheers and hisses). If I were convinced, as my honourable opponents profess to be, that the support of Maynooth College is a national sin, I would in two respects have acted differently from what they have done. In the first place I would feel bound not to take office under any government that would not bring forward or support a motion for the withdrawal of the grant (hear). I hold in my hand an extract from a speech of Mr. Stanley in 1832; that Mr. Stanley is now Lord Derby, the chief of the party with which my honourable opponents are associated. Did he then advocate the discontinuance of this grant? No, so far was he from doing so that he stated that he did not hesitate to say the Protestant Establishment would be placed in imminent danger by the withdrawal of the grant (hear, hear). He has been consistent in that opinion. When he came into office, not only did he not bring forward any motion to abolish the grant (hear hear), but he declared that it was not the intention of his government to do so, and he utterly disclaimed this notion that the making of such a grant was contrary to religious principle. My honourable opponent, Mr. Napier, was his attorney-general. He asked yesterday was there any vote of his on which any man could lay his hand and say that it was given contrary to his conscience and conviction. That is a difficult issue to determine; but the sins I charge

against him are sins of omission, not commission (cheers). I charge against him that if this is a national sin he had no right to form a connexion with a government which did not pledge itself to sweep that sin from the statute book. Gentlemen, I would do more than this. Were I convinced that this was a national sin, I would follow out the principle to its utmost, and when I find the government in this country paying Roman Catholic chaplains for visiting our gaols and poor-houses—when I find them paying Roman Catholic chaplains attending on regiments—when I find them sending out with our gallant soldiers Roman Catholic chaplains to dispense the consolations of their religion—I would say, “you have committed a national sin—you have abetted error.” I would point to large grants annually voted for the sustainment of the Catholic faith in our colonies. Do not these things stand on the same footing as Maynooth—are not they to be abolished—must not they all be swept away? Can you see any limit to the career of aggression which is opened if the principle be carried out to its legitimate consequences? But I stand here, unpalatable as the truth may be, to tell you that I do not believe the Maynooth grant to be morally wrong (cheers and confusion). I believe the notion that it is so arises from an entire misapprehension of the nature and duties of a representative government, and from confounding them with the duties of the head of a family. The representative is a trustee for the entire community—a trustee of the funds which are

levied from the whole country. He is not entitled to ignore the existence of any section of the people, or to deny them a fair share in the allocation of their own money, which they have entrusted to him. He has no right to prescribe to them the form of their religious belief. Refuse your Roman Catholic fellow-subjects their share of the public money, which they themselves contribute, on the grounds that such an application of it would be an encouragement of religious error, and how much farther must you go? If you are bound to do what is in itself unjust, lest you should encourage error, must you not also be bound to do what you can to discourage it? If you are bound to withdraw the grant from Maynooth, should you not go farther and suppress the College? Is it enough that you will not educate Roman Catholic priests in error, must you not also prohibit them from teaching what is erroneous? Where will you stop—what limit do you propose to yourselves, until you arrive at the conclusion that it is the duty of your representatives to suppress the Roman Catholic faith, by every means in their power, directly and indirectly, until, in short, you will have re-enacted the old penal code of a barbarous age? We are living under a representative government. I stand here to avow that such a government is bound to care for every class of its subjects—that it cannot ignore the existence of your Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, and that there is no medium whatever between the extreme law which existed in the penal

times, when no Roman Catholic was supposed to exist, and the fullest measure of toleration and of justice. When I, as a representative in Parliament, consider the claim of a certain class of my fellow-subjects, that a portion of the public money should be allotted to them, I am not incurring the responsibility of pronouncing that their doctrines are true, I am but a trustee for that community who have appointed me. When I am called upon to dispose of my own money I do so according to my own feelings and convictions, but if I am appointed a trustee for another, and accept that trust, I am bound, in distributing his funds, to have regard to the wishes and objects of the donor, although they differ from my own. And it is a narrow and impolitic view of the office and duty of a legislator, if he conceives that he is to extend no privilege to any except to those who concur with him in opinion (hear, hear),—it is an erroneous and unjust view if he arrogates to himself the power to ignore their rights. If I err in this I have high authority to support me. I read yesterday a charge delivered by the present Archbishop of Dublin, in 1845. Its arguments I have endeavoured, however imperfectly, to present to you, —I adopt its reasoning as my own ; and to the numerous clergymen I see around me I say, read that charge and consider the arguments it contains. I believe that the clamour against Maynooth is an error into which the zealous and unreflecting naturally fall, but which I am convinced is often fostered by others who are clear-sighted enough to perceive the delusion, but not

manly enough to condemn it; who, if they could, would gladly get rid of the agitation altogether, but yet do not hesitate to make use of it for the mere purposes of party. And I ask my honourable opponents, who profess to take their stand upon the high ground of moral principle, and not of expediency, are they now prepared to follow out their professions to their legitimate limits? Are they prepared to pledge themselves in the sight of this great empire, and of this great constituency, that they will not accept office under any government which does not make the withdrawal of this grant a portion of its policy—never to take office under any government which does not pursue that principle to its just and fair conclusion? If they make that profession and keep it, they are brave and hardy men, and I ask them now are they prepared to do it, and I expect their reply.

I pass from this question to one of vital importance, and from the agitation of which unhappy differences have arisen between our clergy and the government, whereby, I conscientiously believe, irreparable injury has been inflicted upon our Church—I mean the question of national education. I am one of those who believe that our clergy ought originally to have taken part in the system of national education, but I respect their conscientious scruples when they consider that they cannot consistently acquiesce in the principles of that system, especially when I recollect that for one amongst them I feel peculiar deference—I mean the Bishop of Ossory, so dis-

tinguished an ornament of this University. I do, however, believe, gentlemen, that the time has arrived when this question may be satisfactorily settled, and I am prepared to support such a modification as will coincide with the views which have been put forward and acquiesced in by the moderate men of both sides. And on this question I again arraign my honourable opponents with inconsistency and omission. If they felt that the establishment of that system of national education was, as they expressed it, "a national sin," what right had they to attach themselves to any government which did not make it part of its policy to remove that stain? I ask what measure did Lord Derby, he who was the founder of this system, bring forward when he was in power to set this matter right? Did he not, on the contrary, pledge himself to the maintenance of the system as it stood? My honourable opponents took great credit to themselves for having carried an address to the Crown upon this subject of national education. I believe it will be found that that address was carried when they were in opposition, not when they were in office. What did they do when they were in office to redeem the pledges which they gave upon this hustings on that subject? Again, I say, to this question I expect their reply.

Gentlemen, I think I have now adverted to nearly all the controverted topics which can excite angry feelings, and I have already stated to you some of the principles and motives which induced me to contest

this great constituency. But I have yet more to say. My great political object, I frankly avow, in coming here, has been to induce the Protestants and the clergy of this country to rally round a liberal government. I do believe that the Protestants of Ireland occupy a false position—I do believe that they are associated with a party with whom they have no real or genuine sympathy. My earnest desire is to rescue them from that association, and to ask them to rally round a government which is friendly to their Church, and at the same time friendly to measures of liberal reform. I have yet to learn that the genius of Protestantism is not liberality. When I turn to every country of the world except our own, how do I find the parties classed? I find Protestants universally advocating the cause of progress and of reform—I find that the spread of their faith has been coincident with the extension of personal liberty and the establishment of free institutions. Why then is it in this country only that this natural order is reversed? Are you, in opposition to the very essence of your faith, to be excluded from the ranks of liberalism and of progress, and to range yourselves under the banners of a party whose only political creed is resistance? I come forward to claim and vindicate for my Protestant brethren their true and just position, to rescue them from connexion with a party with which they have no genuine sympathy—the effete and decaying party of Conservatism. I have been taunted here with having stated in my address that I approved generally of Lord Palmerston's policy in this country,

and it has been put to me—Has not Lord Palmerston been Protestant in England and Roman Catholic in Ireland? Whose fault is that? I say it is the fault of those Protestants who stood aloof from that government, and gave it every opposition in their power (hear, hear). I ask you to make your choice. Will you commit the fortunes of the Irish Church to the care of Lord Derby? Is Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, under whose banner my honourable opponents served in the House of Commons—is he the Christian statesman to whom we are to look for sustainment of Protestantism? I ask the Protestant clergy can they have reliance on him? What is this party of Lord Derby pledged to? What is Mr. Disraeli pledged to? Mr. Disraeli stated the other day that it was of importance that party distinctions should be preserved—that it was only by means of party that the country could be governed, and he announced himself as belonging to the old Conservative and country party. That party is pledged to resistance to improvement, opposed to the cause of progress and reform, with which the genius of Protestantism is inseparably associated. I have heard it claimed for this party that they are supporters of all sound and rational reforms. But I shall not be driven from this ground by a play upon words—I look to acts. I look to the history of the past. Look to the three great political events of modern times, and see what part the Conservative party took in connexion with them. Look at the Emancipation Act of 1829. We have now under the hand of Sir Robert Peel him-

self an avowal of the motives which led the Conservative party to concede emancipation; they resisted the force of argument, they denied the justice of the claim, the matchless eloquence of Plunkett could not convince them; but they yielded to threats of violence and rebellion what neither reason, nor justice, nor eloquence could extort from them. Look, again, to the Reform Bill. The old representative system had become unsuited to the growing greatness of the nation; Manchester and Bradford unrepresented, Old Sarum and Gatton sending members to Parliament; but here again the Conservative party were steadfast to their creed, and they strenuously resisted this great and obvious reform as a dangerous innovation. Take, again, the Repeal of the Corn Laws. The agitation for this measure lasted for years; the public mind was fully informed upon the subject and the public voice called loudly for their repeal; year after year it was steadily opposed by the Conservative party; and when Sir Robert Peel yielded at last, and, although the head of a Conservative Cabinet, passed the measure, his party never forgave him the offence, and he was pursued with persevering malignity to his death by the present leader of that party in the House of Commons. Are the Protestant Clergy prepared to continue to associate themselves with that effete and expiring party? I ask you, Protestants of this kingdom, to fulfil your proper destiny—to take your proper place—rally round the banner of liberal, rational reform, and no longer associate yourselves with

a stationary and decaying party. Do so, and what will be the result? What will be the position of Lord Palmerston in this country? You will place him at the head of a powerful government, a government able to afford to disregard the suggestions of any one section—able to govern for the country—not forced to rule through a party. Let but the Protestant clergy and Protestant gentry of Ireland rally round that minister; let them but take their just part in the administration of his government, and the complaint will be for ever at an end, that their interests are neglected, or that patronage is bestowed upon others to which they are more justly entitled. I am convinced that it has been a disastrous thing that the Protestant Church in this country should be always found in antagonism to a Liberal Government. I know the liberality of sentiment of the great majority of this constituency, and I believe that they do not entertain the extreme opinions to which my honourable opponents have pledged themselves. I know they would be desirous to adopt more just, more temperate, and liberal views of politics. I ask them now to have the courage to make that choice, and to dissociate themselves from the party to which they have been so long unnaturally allied. The Church is a noble institution, full of life and vigour, sending forth its rays of truth into the darkest corners of the land (hear, hear). I call upon you not to bind it any longer to this party which has no principle of life. Pronounce not upon it the doom to which the tyrant of old consigned his victim—

Mortua quinetiam jungebat corpora vivis
 Complexu in misero longâ sic morte necabat.

Unite not that living form to the decaying corpse of Conservatism—shake off this old, unnatural, unworthy association, and take the place which the genius of your religion tells you is your own. Let not the name of Liberal Protestant be any longer unknown in Ireland. Let not the cause of Liberalism and Protestantism be any longer antagonistic. That is the exposition of my creed—that is the embodiment of the principles on which I seek the suffrages of this great constituency.

The same principles of temperate and well considered reform I would hope to apply to increasing the efficiency of your University. We have been told that Mr. Napier and Mr. Hamilton have rendered great services to this University. I ask them where they are? I have sought for them in vain. Have they done anything towards improving the status of your scholars? Have they taken a single step towards giving your graduates their due share in the administration of their University? What have they done for the extension of the principle of competitive examination? This is a subject which must be dear to every young student whom I address. Most of the honours in this University are open to free competition. The fellowships and scholarships are open to free competition; of its professorships, two are open also—one is the professorship of oratory, and the other the professorship of political economy. The

professorship of oratory is worthily filled by one whom I have the honour of ranking amongst my supporters, Mr. Ingram (hear). The other, that of political economy, by reason of this principle of competitive examination, I once had the honour to fill, and but for that competition I would not be standing before you here in the position I now occupy. Knowing the vigour of the young intellect of this college—knowing the ability and zeal with which it is directed, my conviction is that if all ranks of the civil and military service were thrown open to public competition, Trinity College would obtain a large portion of the public appointments, as it has hitherto done, and that the result would be a great accession to the wealth and honour of our native land. I will not now dwell on the political advantages of the extension of that system, they are obvious—a system which must tend in so great a measure to abolish political corruption, and to secure for the public the most efficient servants.

I now state the grounds upon which, in conclusion, I rest my title to your support. First, I am your own. There is not a building in your college which is not endeared to me by some happy associations. I have formed friendships here that shall never be lost. I love every stone in these old walls. Again, I am a sincere friend of the Established Church. I am favourable to a settlement of the education question. I am ready to give support—but not an indiscriminate one—to every government pledged to reform. I am prepared to work for the cause of this University

until the general principle is acknowledged of making merit the test of promotion; and, above all, I will strive to the uttermost to identify the cause of Protestantism with that of liberty and of progress. I should be ungrateful if I concluded here without thanking those members of the University who have rallied round me on this occasion. I rejoice to know that many of them are my own class-fellows—with many of them I have not been deemed unworthy to break a lance in the course of our collegiate career. My honourable and esteemed proposer, Professor Jellett, whose friendship I cannot too highly value, has not now for the first time come forward to plead the cause of his old friend. My friend Professor Foley, although he differed from me upon the question of Maynooth, yet did not consider it such a diversity of sentiment as should disentitle me to his support, approving as he did of my general principles. Gentlemen, if you think me worthy of your support, I pledge myself to use my best exertions to carry out the views which I have this day advanced; and my earnest desire will be to give to this University all those services which, from me as her faithful son, she has a right to expect.

THE END.