

this side of the House, at periods antecedent to the present session, I and my colleagues have received a generous and cordial support. Sir, Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to accept that tender of resignation, and Her Majesty's servants now only hold their offices until their successors shall have been appointed. Sir, I said that if I had complaints to prefer, this would not be the occasion on which I would prefer them; but I must also say, that I did not propose those measures connected with our commercial policy at the commencement of this session without foreseeing that, whether those measures succeeded or failed, they must cause the dissolution of the Government which proposed them; and therefore, Sir, I rather rejoice that Her Majesty's Government have been relieved from any doubt by an early decision of this House, as to the course it would be their duty to pursue; for I do not hesitate to say that, even if that vote had been in our favour, I would not have consented to hold office by sufferance or by the evasion of any principle. (Great cheering.) Sir, I do not hesitate to say, speaking with a frankness which I trust will offend no one, that if Her Majesty's Government had failed in carrying, in all their integrity, those measures of commercial policy which it was my duty to recommend, I don't hesitate to say that there is no exertion I would not have made, in order, if not to ensure their ultimate success, at least to give the country an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion on the subject. (Loud cheers.) In that case I should have felt myself justified in advising a dissolution, because I think that the continuance of doubt on such a subject would have been a greater evil than resorting to a constitutional expression of opinion by the people of this country. (Cheers.) The only ground for dissolution would have been a strong presumption that after a dissolution we should have had a party powerful enough in this House to enable us to give effect practically to the measures which we might propose. We were left in a minority on a question connected with Ireland. Now I should lament, not merely because it is an Irish question, but I should most deeply lament if it could be thought that the measure we proposed for the repression of outrage in Ireland was an indication that Her Majesty's servants held any different opinion with regard to the policy to be pursued in Ireland from that which I declared towards the close of the last session of Parliament. (Hear, hear.) To the opinions which I then avowed—to those opinions which had a practical effect given to them by the Charitable Bequests Act, and by the additional vote for the endowment of Maynooth—to those opinions I, now about to relinquish power, entirely subscribe. (Great cheering.) We brought forward that measure, believing that resistance to the contagion of crime and the vigorous repression by law of the offences which disgrace some parts of Ireland, were not measures calculated permanently to improve the social condition of that country; but we thought they were measures which could be taken in conjunction with others necessary for the purpose of giving effect to legislation upon that subject. (Hear, hear.) The House has, however, decided, and I am not about to impeach their decision. Speaking for myself, I do not hesitate now to say, that in my opinion, there ought to be established between England and Ireland a complete equality (great cheering) in all civil, municipal and political rights. (Renewed cheers.) When I say complete equality, I don't mean, because I know it is impossible, to have a literal equality in every particular. Here, as in matters of more sacred import, it may be that "the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life;" I speak of the spirit, and not of the letter, in which our legislation with regard to the franchise and other privileges should be conducted. (Hear, hear.) I mean, there should be a real substantial equality, in political and civil rights (cheers); so that no person, viewing Ireland with perfectly disinterested eyes, and comparing its franchise with the franchise either of England or Scotland, should be enabled to say, "a different law is enacted for Ireland, and on account of some jealousy or suspicion Ireland has curtailed and mutilated rights." Those who succeed us may have different means of carrying that principle into execution; but if they do act upon that principle, and bestow the favour and confidence of the Crown without reference to religious differences of opinion, they shall hear no complaint from me on that ground. (Cheers.) I think it may be impossible, by legislation, to apply any immediate remedy to the state of things which unfortunately prevails in that country; but, even if the benefit is remote, if it is of a permanent character, so far from being deterred from measures calculated to afford a remedy, the distant period at which the benefit may be derived ought to operate as no discouragement to us to apply our minds most sedulously and impartially to the consideration of the subject. (Loud cheers.) Sir, I have reason to believe that the noble Lord, the Member for the City of London, has been commanded by Her Majesty to repair to Her for the purpose of rendering his assistance in the formation of a Government. Sir, I presume the general principle upon which the Government formed by the noble Lord will act, so far as a commercial policy is concerned, will be the continued application of those principles which tend to give us a freer commercial intercourse with other countries. (Loud cheers.) If that be the policy which will be pursued, as I confidently expect it will be, I shall feel it to be my duty to give to that Government, in pursuance and execution of that policy, my cordial support. (Immense cheering.) I presume, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government will adopt that policy—and that, if other countries choose to buy in the dearest market, it will be no discouragement to them to permit us to buy in the cheapest. (Cheers.) Sir, when I say I presume that these general principles will influence their commercial policy, I do not, of course, mean to

say that the adoption of these principles is at once to overrule every moral consideration, and at once to subject every part of the inhabitants of this Empire to unequal competition with other nations. I speak generally as to the tendency of our commercial policy, and I trust that every step that is taken will be towards the relaxation of restriction upon trade. Sir, I do not know that it is necessary that I should make any other declaration than those I have made. I wish to draw no invidious contrast; I wish to make no unseemly allusions; but I cannot surrender power without making at least this observation—that I do hope, during the five years for which power has been committed to our hands, neither the interests nor the honor of this country have been compromised. (Cheers.) I think I may say with truth, that during that period, the burden of taxation has been equalised, and the pressure, which was unjust and severe, has been removed from many classes of Her Majesty's subjects. (Cheers.) I think I may say with truth, that many restrictions upon commerce injuriously affecting the trade of this country have been removed. (Cheers.) I think I may say that, without at all interfering with legitimate speculation; without at all paralysing or deranging the credit of the country, stability has been given to the monetary system of this country—(cheers)—through the cordial support which again (without reference to party distinctions) the measures I proposed with regard to the Bank of England, the Joint Stock Banks and the private Banks of this country, received in the year 1843. (Cheers.) Sir, I trust also that the stability of our Indian Empire has not been weakened by the policy we have pursued—(cheers)—and that the glory and honour of the British arms, both by sea and land, in every part of the world have been maintained, not through our exertions, but through the devoted gallantry of the soldiers and sailors of this country. (Cheers.) Sir, although there have been considerable reductions, great reductions made in the public burdens, yet I have the satisfaction of stating to the House, that the national defences of this country have been improved both by sea and land, and that the army and navy are in a most efficient state. Sir, lastly, I think I may say, that without any harsh enforcement of the law, without any curtailment either of the liberty of the subject or the liberty of the press, speaking of Great Britain, there has been as much of obedience and submission to the law as there ever was at any period of our history. (Cheers.) Nay, I will say more; in consequence of the greater command of the necessities and minor luxuries of life, in consequence too, of confidence in the administration of the law, there has been more of contentment, less of seditious crimes, less necessity for the exercise of power for the repression of political outrage, than there ever was at any antecedent period in this country. (Cheers.) I said lastly—but I have reserved one topic, on which I also think I may, without any unseemly boast or invidious contrast, say a few words. I think I may take credit to Her Majesty's Government, at least to that distinguished member of it, less prominent perhaps in debate, than others, but as deserving of public honor and public credit for the exertions which he has made in the maintenance of peace—(loud cheers)—I mean my noble friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—(loud cheers)—he has dared to avow that he thinks in a Christian country there is a moral obligation upon a Christian Minister to exhaust every effort before incurring the risk of war. (Loud cheers.) But while he has not shrunk from the avowal of that opinion, I will in justice to him say this—it is perfectly consistent with that opinion, as to the moral obligation of maintaining peace while peace can be maintained with honor, that there never was a Minister less inclined to sacrifice any essential interest, or abate any thing from the dignity and honor of this country, for the purpose of securing even that inestimable blessing. (Cheers.) Sir, I do hope that we leave the Foreign relations of this country in a satisfactory state—(loud cheers)—that, speaking not only of France, but speaking of the other great powers of Europe, there is confidence in the intentions of this country, and a real desire on the part of the Governments of other powers to co-operate with us in the maintenance of peace. (Cheers.) Sir, if anything could have induced me to regret a decision on the part of the House, prematurely terminating the existence of the Government, it would have been the wish that we should have survived the day when intelligence might be received from the United States—(loud cheers)—as to the result of, perhaps, our last attempt to adjust those differences between this country and the United States, which, unless speedily terminated, might have involved us in war. The House will probably recollect that, after we had offered arbitration, and that offer had been rejected, the President of the United States sent a message to the House of Congress in that country, which led to discussions with regard to the termination of that convention which provided for a temporary adjustment of our differences—at least, for a temporary avoidance of quarrel,—and enable the two countries jointly to occupy the territory of the Oregon. Sir, the two Houses of the American Congress, although advising the President of the United States to signify to this country, as he was empowered to do, the termination of the existing convention, by giving a year's notice, added to that advice, which might, perhaps, have been considered of an unsatisfactory or hostile character, the declaration that they advised the notice for the termination of the convention to be given, in order that it might facilitate an amicable adjustment of the dispute. We thought the addition of these words by those high authorities, the expression of a hope that the termination of the convention might the more strongly impress upon the two countries the necessity of amicable adjustment—we thought those expressions removed any barrier to