

that in times past, before Protestantism existed, the instinctive character of Britons displayed itself even in Popish times. The act of Magna Charta—the deeds of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, took place in Popish times; but Protestantism had not then shown itself. Britain seems to have had, at all times, within herself, the germ of freedom.—The head and glory, as she has long been, of the Protestant world, must have had within herself principles of vitality not to be found elsewhere, or the fruit would never have been so rich and luxuriant. And shall we now cease to glory in being the first Protestant nation in the world? Shall we abandon our brethren in Ireland to the tender mercies of their popish countrymen? Forbid it, British Protestants,—forbid it, shame, if not principle! We are told the expense in Ireland will be less; are we indeed to be thought so contemptible a nation of calculating shopkeepers, as to value our religious liberties and privileges by the pounds which they cost? They who use such language may disgrace themselves by so doing; but, my Protestant countrymen, you will not subject yourselves to such a disgrace. Let us preserve our true British hearts, unbiassed by fear, uninfluenced by base selfishness.

"Guard we our hearts, religion keep in view,
To ancient morals, ancient maxims, true."

Our ancient rival may despise such principles, but let us remember we are Britons.

"For French at heart, tho' victory crown'd our brow
Low at our feet tho' prostrate nations bow:
Wealth gild our cities, commerce crowd our shore,
London may shine, but Britain is no more."

My countrymen, now or never is the time for you to declare yourselves, and prove yourselves true to your King, your Country, and your God.

Feb. 13, 1829.

KENYON.

ROMAN CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

At a meeting in Edinburgh, on the 14th of March last, in favour of Roman Catholic Emancipation, the following Speeches were delivered by

MR. JEFFREY AND DR. CHALMERS.

MR. JEFFREY rose amidst long and continued applause.—I greatly fear that owing to a severe indisposition under which I labour, I shall find it difficult to make myself sufficiently heard, even in the few words which I wish to address to you; but I cannot resist the temptation of attempting at least to say, that I never did come to any public meeting, nor ever did rise on any public occasion, with more unmingled satisfaction or more heartfelt delight than at present; not only because I never came into such a meeting, with the greatness and joyfulness of the occasion of which, I was so deeply impressed, and from which I had so near and cheering a prospect of great and attainable good before me, but because I never before had the good luck to be surrounded in any of my former efforts by the many distinguished persons whom I now see about me, from whom it was my misfortune in the former part of my career, to have been divided by general differences of feeling and opinion, but with whom, on grounds equally honourable, I now feel that I am cordially and entirely united. [Applause.] I feel that the greatness of the occasion has entirely obliterated all those slighter shades of difference by which in free states the opinions of men in ordinary times will naturally be distinguished; and when the question is, whether they shall co-operate in testifying their delight and satisfaction in measures calculated to strengthen the empire, and to avert from every part of it the most tremendous and imminent perils, I trust this will always be the case; and that on questions like the present, we shall forget who are Whigs and who are Tories, who are in opposition, and who are on the side of Government; and only think of the common cause of our common country, and the true promotion of the common good. Indeed, unless I very much misunderstand the signs of the times, I am persuaded the period is not far distant when what is commonly called party politics will be of far less consequence than they have been in our day; and when those distinctions which have given party contests a factitious character, and even the epithets and watch words belonging to them, will dwindle into insignificance, compared with the great object of furthering the common good, which was no doubt the object we all had formerly sought to attain, though by more separated, divided, and less effectual courses. [Hear, hear.] At the same time I must acknowledge, that while this is my own impression, I have still so much of the taint of the ancient leaven—so much of the unrighteous mammon of whiggery, in me, [a laugh] that I could not

but have wished that the glory of consummating this great work had been reserved for a Whig Administration—or been left at least as the reward of those who, from first to last, had been zealous in their attempts to produce it. But while I have been free to make this disclosure of the infirmity of my heart, [a laugh] I will go further in chastising and subduing the remnants of my inherent whiggery, by acknowledging in public, before you all, that I am now fully convinced, that this great measure could not have been carried into effect by a Whig Administration in these times—nay, that it could not have been so carried by any Administration, unless it had originated, and been mainly supported by persons who, for the greater part of their lives, had been as conscientiously opposed to those principles as they are now conscientiously devoted to them. Such blind and short-sighted creatures are we, even in those matters which seem to lie most plainly and directly within the sphere of vulgar human wisdom; and so marvellously does Providence work its own great works, by instruments which the erring wisdom of man would throw aside as desperate and useless. [Great applause.] It is among the worst consequences of a system of injustice and oppression, that in some measure justifies itself, by communicating to its victims the vices which it imputes to them. Those who have long been objects of distrust will in the end, I fear, prove to be not trust worthy. Those against whom the law is, will be but too often against the law. Those who are ruled by force will soon require force to rule them. [Hear, hear, and applause.] I will not recur to that frightful chapter of evils and perils to which the refusal or even the delay of this boon will now inevitably lead. I will rather turn to the topics of which I hear something out of doors, regarding the alleged countervailing perils that we are told may accompany concession. Listening with all diligence to the topics which have with sufficient zeal been promulgated on this subject, I am altogether at a loss to find what tangible peril, connected by any degree of probability with the measure, these fervid orators have been able to point out. The great point is, whether 50 or 60 Catholics shall be admitted into Parliament, or shall continue to be excluded? Now, what possible mischief can they do in Parliament, except by their votes? No one who is acquainted with the first elements of Cocker, can venture to propound that this small sprinkling of Catholics can by any possibility effect either the conversion of the Protestant majority over which they are to be diffused, or out-speak or out-vote that majority within the walls of Parliament. But for every other purpose, the powers of the Catholics to do mischief, will be exactly what they were before, whether they are in Parliament or out of it. They will have the same wealth, the same union, the same love of power, the same arts, the same unscrupulous morality, the same rage of proselytism, that are now imputed to them, and no more; and the only difference will be, that while they are excluded from Parliament, they will be naturally disposed to turn all these arts and talents against the Protestant faith and Protestant establishment. By the removal of these disabilities, nothing can be added to their individual power; but a great deal may be taken from their opposition to the Protestant faith. They will look on Protestant establishments and Protestant doctrines, with a less hostile, a less partial, a less rancorous eye, than they do now; consequently, they will have their minds more open to the pervading influence of those unanswerable arguments, those efficacious and illustrious examples, that subduing and harmonising influence of the holy life led by Protestant Divines. They will be more open to receive that light and that correction which it belongs to us to give, who firmly believe that those doctrines will in the end, through the instrumentality of the avenue now to be opened, convert in time the whole erring family of Christians, to that pure faith which recognizes the gospel as the true word of God—as the fountain head and well of living waters, which sectaries and bigots of all ages have sought to pollute, by their vain and ambiguous dogmas. [Great and long continued applause.] It is on these principles, that from the earliest time I could form any opinion on the merits of this great question, my conviction has always been the same, and although it could not be well increased, that impression has been strengthened by the urgent and immediate perils which have brought on the present crisis, and by the example of the many illustrious converts which that great teacher—experience—has added to our original

numbers. [Loud and long continued cheering from all parts.] He then moved the following Resolution:—

"That for these and other reasons, we have received with a most lively joy and gratitude, the accounts of the great act of wisdom, generosity, and justice, by which His Majesty's Ministers now propose to effect the final relief of his Roman Catholic subjects from their remaining disabilities, and by which they will, at the same time, terminate the unseemly struggles which have so long agitated the empire, and deliver us for ever from our only serious hazard of national disunion or disaster."

Dr. CHALMERS rose to second the Resolution which had just been read, and was received with enthusiastic acclamations. He waved his hand repeatedly to induce silence, which having been at length obtained he spoke *verbatim* as follows:—I understand that the present meeting would not have been called, had it not been for certain anterior efforts made in this city, and the object of which was to obtain signatures to a petition against Catholic emancipation. We should have remained quiet; and this perhaps would have been as significant an expression as we could have given, of our confidence in the measures proposed by His Majesty's government. Had there been no public exhibition on their part, I understand that there would have been no public exhibition on ours. And I advert to this, simply for the purpose of remarking, how delusive the indication often is of the state of public sentiment, in as far as it is grounded either on the majority of petitions or on the majority of signatures. The truth is, that they are the non-contents, the alarmists, who are in motion; and contents scarcely ever think of moving but in the capacity of counter-alarmists. Meanwhile, if arithmetical deduction were to be made of all the petitioners on both sides of the question, it would be found that the great body of the public, the great body of the population, were in a state of rest,—[Cheers]—and they count with us, not with our opponents. [Loud cheers.] We have read of expressive silence; and this is what their silence expresses. [Cheers.] There may have been a local effervescence here and there; but mainly and throughout the land, there is a general attitude of quiescence, perhaps the strongest demonstration that could be given, of the reliance which the people of Scotland have on the wisdom and safety of the measures now in agitation.

But I would scarcely have adverted to the existence of another petition, and of other petitioners, had it not been for the designation which they have assumed, of Anti-Catholic; leaving to us, then, it might appear, the goodly designation of Pro-Catholic. Never was a grosser imposition practiced on the public, and the popular mind, than by means of these two words. We are not Pro-Catholic. We are not hostile, neither are we indifferent, to the holy cause of Protestantism. [Cheers.] I cannot answer for others, but in vindication of myself, I can at least say, it is in the spirit of devotedness to that cause that I come here, and because in this emancipation of Papists, I see for Protestants a still greater and more glorious emancipation. [Immense cheering.] The truth is, that these disabilities have hung as a dead weight around the Protestant cause for more than a century. They have enlisted in opposition to it some of the most unconquerable principles of our nature; resentment because of injury, and the pride of adherence to a suffering cause. [Immense and prolonged cheering.] They have transformed the whole nature of the contest, and by so doing, they have rooted and given tenfold obstinacy to error. [Loud cheers.] They have given to our side the hateful aspect of tyranny; while on theirs we behold a generous and high-minded resistance to what they deem to be oppression. [Tremendous cheering.] They have transformed a nation of heretics into a nation of heroes. We could have refuted and shamed the heretic out of his errors, but we cannot bring down the hero from his altitude; and thus it is, that from the first introduction of this heterogeneous element into the question, the cause of truth has gone backward. [Loud cheers.] It has ever since been met by the unyielding defiance of a people, irritated but not crushed, under a sense of indignity; and this notable expedient for keeping down the Popery of Ireland, has compressed it into a firmness, and closed it into a phalanx, which, till opened up by emancipation, we shall find to be impenetrable. [Prolonged cheering.]

Gentlemen will draw arguments from history against us; but there is one passage in history