

RELIEF OF THE CATHOLICS.

Perhaps a more interesting speech was never delivered in the British Parliament, than the late Address of the Minister, Mr. PEEL, on the proposition for removing the disabilities under which the Catholics of the United Kingdom have so long labored, and which had well nigh produced a Civil War in Ireland.

The speech fills thirteen close columns in a London paper. We cannot, therefore, give it at length; but thinking it would be gratifying to our readers to see an abridgment of it, which should contain its most material parts, we present them with the following:

Mr. Peel, after some preliminary remarks, in which as Minister of the King, and sustained by the authority belonging to that character, he wished to vindicate the advice given to his Majesty by an united Cabinet, and to submit the measures which were proposed to be carried into effect for the adjustment of the Roman Catholic Question—that question which has so long and so painfully occupied the attention of Parliament, and which has distracted the councils of the King for the last 50 years. I approach this subject almost overwhelmed by the magnitude of the interests it involves, and by the difficulties with which it is surrounded. Of these difficulties I am unconscious of the extent. I know they are great and many, and they are increased by the peculiar situation of him on whom the lot has been cast to propose this measure, and explain the expediency of its adoption. But, Sir, through all these personal difficulties, however galling to my feelings and afflictive to my heart, I am supported by the consciousness that I have done my duty towards my Sovereign, and my country. According to my heart and conscience, Sir, I believe that the time is come when less danger is to be apprehended to the general interests of the empire, and to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Protestant establishment, in attempting to adjust the Catholic question, than in allowing it to remain any longer in its present state. I have been called upon to give the reasons which have swayed me in the adoption of the course I now advocate, and which is in opposition to that I have so long upheld. And for the satisfaction of those who have made this appeal to me—I should not say for their satisfaction, but from a desire to attempt bringing conviction to their minds in favor of my view of those points on which we differ, and for the satisfaction of the people of this country—I will endeavor to make out the case I have been challenged to make out. I am well aware, Sir, I feel that I speak in the presence of a House of Commons, the majority of which are prepared to vote in favor of an adjustment of this question. I feel that I address a majority of those who have for years argued in favor of settlement of the question upon higher grounds than those which I would press upon the attentive consideration of others who advocate a contrary opinion. It is wholly unnecessary for me to address any arguments to those who are already convinced of the advantages of a settlement of those claims, as the only means of averting from us the embarrassments and evils by which we are surrounded. But I trust that in what I shall think it necessary to say, less with the personal object of self-vindication than with a view to attempt to satisfy the great body of the people of this empire, be their opinion of the question what it may, that more evil than advantage would result from leaving it in its present state, I hope, that those who require no argument to convince them of this fact, will bear with me while I go through the details of an argument which possesses all the force of demonstration.—I have for years attempted to maintain the exclusion of Roman Catholics from political power in Ireland. I do not think it was an unnatural or unreasonable struggle. I have desisted from it in consequence of the conviction that it could be no longer advantageously maintained; and from finding that I was not furnished with adequate materials or sufficient instruments. Others seem disposed to push certain principles to an extent, that would endanger the very establish-

ment they are anxious to defend. His Majesty's Government does not yield to them in a zealous desire to preserve the Constitution and support that establishment. It therefore rests to explain the apparent contradiction between this assertion and the measure we have advised.

Mr. P. then went into a statement of facts to prove the danger that would be run by the Government from a continued resistance of the Catholics for a redress of their grievances. He said the condition of the Country was such that something must be done. His first position was, that there is an evil in divided Cabinets and distracted Councils which cannot be longer tolerated. This being conceded and that a united Government must be formed—in the next place, that Government must choose one of two courses—they must advance, or they must recede; they must grant further political privileges to the Roman Catholics, or they must retract those already given to them. I am told, it is not now the first time the two Houses of Parliament have differed, and that therefore matters remain unchanged; and that accordingly, the same system should be pursued. But are events exactly the same? Do not the same events, frequently coming to pass, bring about other events? If the two Houses of Parliament have been divided against each other for the last five years, is that a reason they are to be divided in like manner, for ten years, or for ever? So far as my own course in this question is concerned, it is the same with that which suggested itself to my mind in 1825 when I was his Majesty's Principal Minister for the Home Department, and found myself in a minority on this question. When I then saw the numbers arrayed against me in this House I felt that, at least, my position as a Minister was untenable. The moment, Sir, that I, the Minister for Irish affairs, found that I was left in a minority on that question, which was above all others, of paramount interest and importance to the country, that moment I sought to be relieved from the duties and responsibility of office. I stated to the Earl of Liverpool, who was then at the head of the Administration, that it was my anxious wish to be relieved from office. It was, however, notified to me that my retirement would be on the occasion of the retirement of the Earl of Liverpool; and that such an event would of course, at once produce a dissolution of the Administration, the responsibility of which would rest with me I held my hand. If I had acted simply in obedience to my own wishes, as an individual, I should have resigned. I was induced, however, to retain my office, and make another experiment upon the feelings of the country. I have stated the motives which induced me. In 1826 there was a new Parliament, and in 1827 a majority in this House of twenty-three against the Catholic question. In 1828, however, the House took a different view of the matter, and though it did not pass a bill, it agreed to a resolution favorable to the principle of adjustment. That resolution being passed, I felt satisfied that the sense of the country had been fairly taken, for it was the decision of a new House. I then determined that nothing should induce me to remain longer in office to obstruct this measure. In the last year, for the first time in this Parliament, discussion between the two Houses was revived. I then saw there was only one course open to me, and that was a most painful one—it was painful to act in opposition to pre-conceived impressions, and to esteemed friends, and in short to hold a course inconsistent with that which I once felt and advocated. The events of last year pressed upon me with their full force which belonged to their importance, and I was determined to sacrifice all private feeling for the public weal. I was determined—but it was no easy task. To use the beautiful words of Dryden—
"Tis said with ease, but oh! how hardly tried
By haughty souls, to human humors tied;
Oh! deep convulsive pangs of agonizing pride."
When I felt last year, that the case was as I have stated it to be, I determined to take the course which I wished to take in 1825; but with this difference, that I intimated to the Noble Duke at the

head of his Majesty's Government, not only that I was anxious to retire from office, but that I felt so strongly the current of public opinion was setting in favor of the Catholic Claims, that in whatsoever situation I might find myself, I should not consider myself justified in making any further opposition to those claims; adding, that whatever private and personal sacrifice it might inflict upon me, I was prepared after the events of the last year, to submit to it, in the support of any measure which I might consider compatible with the safety of the Protestant Establishment. I detailed on a former occasion, that a dreadful commotion had distracted the public mind in Ireland—that a feverish agitation & unnatural excitement prevailed, to a degree scarcely credible, throughout the entire country. I attempted to show that the social intercourse was poisoned there, in its very spring—that family was divided against family, and man against his neighbor,—that, in a word, the bonds of social life were altogether dissevered—that the fountains of public justice were corrupted—that the spirit of discord walked openly abroad—and that an array of physical force was marshalled against the law, and to the imminent danger of the public peace. But, perhaps I shall be told, as I was on a former occasion, in forcible though familiar language, that "this is the old story—that all this has been so for the last twenty years, and therefore there is no reason for a change." To this I reply, Sir, there is reason for a change, and the reason is, because it is the old story. It is, because this state of things has so long existed, and we have been so long unable to find a remedy. It is for this, Sir, that I am tired of maintaining the present system. It is obvious it cannot exist; it must be changed. We cannot determine upon remaining idle spectators of the sufferings of Ireland. The universal cry of the country declares that something must be done. Some of my Hon. Friends may come to an opposite conclusion, but I know I am only echoing the sentiments of all reasonable men, when I say that something must be done. I ask you to examine the state of his Majesty's Government for the last thirty five years, and to mark the bearing of the Catholic Question upon the Government—the divisions it has created among the Statesmen—the distraction it has occasioned in our Councils, and the weakness it has consequently produced.

Mr. P. called on gentlemen to reflect on the disunion that had prevailed in the Administration on Irish affairs for the last 35 years, and then say whether the course now proposed is not the only one that will do any good. Mr. P. then took a brief history of the Catholic question from Mr. Pitt's Administration to the present time, showing that the Cabinet had always been much divided on this subject, and that Parliament had also been in the same situation. The consequence has been that differences have arisen between honorable men, and that the public mind in Ireland had been probed until a dangerous and exaggerated sensitiveness has been created in it with respect to all passing events.

With respect to the present House of Commons, is it an unfair representation of the public opinion upon this great question? Was it not elected at a period when the public mind was sufficiently alive to the Catholic question? Was it not sufficiently acquainted with the efforts made to pass Catholic Relief Bills through Parliament, and with the state of Ireland? Sir, this House was elected after the direction of the public attention had been given to the proceedings of the Catholic Association. The bill to suppress that Association had been passed, and the discussion on the question was not brought to a close in less than five nights. Then, Sir, was the time for public opinion to have declared itself, and afforded us the materials for a successful contest. But, having suffered this proper occasion to pass by, it is now too hard that we should be blamed for not carrying on a bootless resistance. It is a hard thing to call upon the responsible ministers of the Crown to carry on resistance, without furnishing us with those instruments by which alone the battle can be fought. For, Sir, ask you, when we are told of the feeling of the country against the Catholic ques-

tion, to look to the returns. If any discontent pervades the people, it is but of a short date. It is a recent disquietude—(great cheering)—and I say, Sir, it ought to have been shown, not by public meetings, but by the public exercise of the elective franchise. It is not fair to throw upon Ministers the whole responsibility of resistance when that resistance was paralysed by the way in which the people had exercised the elective franchise.

Mr. P. then referred to the members returned to the present Parliament, shewing, that in many of the counties they were equally divided on the Catholic question, and in a greater number of counties and towns there was a majority in favor of granting relief.

These things, I say, prove to me, that the voice of the people was not deliberately pronounced against the consideration of this great question, at that period when it might have been pronounced with most effect. I therefore conclude that it does not exist. Be this so, or be it not so. I do say, that it is hard upon those who have fought the battle against making further concessions to the Catholics, for the last ten years, with Houses so nearly divided, with forces so nearly equal, now to charge them with want of zeal, because they consider it would be useless to continue the struggle longer. I maintain, that when the course of the question is looked at, during the period which I have named, it is not fair to throw upon me all the responsibility for making it what it has become. With respect to the sentences which may be drawn as to the state of public opinion, from the debates in this House, I should like to know to what conclusion any man must come who has watched the progress of our discussions. Who, I would ask, are they who have taken the most prominent part in them? On whom has the brunt of the battle fallen? Sir, I hold in my hand a list of the speakers in the several debates which have taken place on this subject. It would be invidious to go into details, and I am the last man who would wish to do so, as many of my Hon. Friends, who feel the utmost zeal in the cause, have been, by various circumstances, precluded from taking a part in debate. It might, therefore, be unfair to draw any inference from that to which I have alluded. I will not assume any deficiency of zeal from the paucity of numbers; but I do think it hard that an individual, after fighting the battle for ten years, should be accused, as I have been, by those who, during that long period have witnessed the struggle without once opening their mouths in support of that cause for which they now manifest such extraordinary anxiety.

Now, Sir, having described to the House what has been the state of the Government, and what the situation of the two Houses of Parliament, during the last five and thirty years, I come next to the consideration of a subject not less important—what was the state of Ireland during that period?

Mr. P. then took a view of all the difficulties and disturbances that have taken place in Ireland for the last twenty-five years. After which he added, couple this with the differences which have existed between the two Houses of Parliament on this question, and with the divided state of the Government, and then, I will ask, is not the position which I advanced at the outset perfectly made good, namely, that this state of things cannot continue—that some effort must be made to enable Parliament and the Government to unite with one common feeling in the administration of the affairs of Ireland? I now, Sir, approach the consideration of the important question, what that course ought to be.

(To be concluded in our next.)

Horrible Executions at Lisbon.

Lisbon, March 7.—The day of yesterday will be memorable in the bloody annals of Lisbon. The special commission appointed to judge the unfortunate men charged with rebellion against Don Miguel on the 9th January, having ordered them to give in their written answers in twenty-four hours, concluded its proceedings on the 20th ult. On that day the sentence was drawn up, signed, and sent to Miguel for his approbation. By that sentence Brigadier Moreira and four more were condemned to transportation for ten years.—The remainder of the

accused were acquitted, from a denial of their innocence, or from want of sufficient evidence of guilt. But such a sentence could not satisfy Miguel; he, therefore, resolved that another should be drawn, by which the first five convicts should be hung, the two next transported for life, and all the rest for ten years. They met with opposition from one or two of the judges, and a negotiation took place which lasted some days, but their scruples were either satisfied or silenced, and the sentence which Miguel desired was signed on the 4th inst. It was read to the prisoners on the 5th, and only twenty-four hours were allowed them to prepare for death. This was against all law & custom, three days for preparation being always hitherto granted. Yesterday accordingly they were executed. A new gallows was erected on Sodre square, where the merchants generally meet in the afternoon on business, because their loyalty to the young queen is fully established by their expressed sentiments and their scanty charities to the usurper's government.—The same square is the principal quay and landing place from the Tagus. There, from the morning, a great number of troops were collected; but it was only by two o'clock that the fatal procession arrived, numerous escorted. The unfortunate men to be executed were all barefooted, with white large sleeved frocks, which covered them all over: each of them had two priests by his side. The execution began by a youth only seventeen years old; though the sentence said twenty. He was midshipman, the son of Colonel Chaby. He was led to the ladder of the gallows, and obliged to kneel before it during ten minutes, whilst the priest were praying over him. Having ascended it, he was directed to turn round and to seat himself on one of the steps. Whilst the hangman who, covering the young man's head with the white cap of his gown, turned him off from the ladder, and got on his shoulders, riding him and swinging about with one of his feet upon the victim's hands (which being tied together made a kind of stirrup,) another hangman pulled him down by the feet. This lasted about ten minutes more, and when life was considered to be quite extinct, the body was taken down and laid on the ground. The second was also a very young man, cadet in the Corps of Marines, said in the sentence to be twenty-three, but who was hardly twenty years old; his name was James Ghavis Scarnichia. The third was said to be one Joaquim Velez Barreiros, but was, in fact, the gallant Prestvello, who gave a false name on entering the goal, and kept it in order not to injure his family. He showed the greatest courage and resolution to his last breath, refusing to answer to the priests, who endeavored to make him acknowledge Miguel. The fourth was Jose Gomes Ferreira Braga, thirty-three years old, a lieutenant of artillery; and the last, Brigadier General Alexandre Manoel Moreira Freira.—They generally showed courage, but none like the brave Prestvello, who had been formerly an officer in the army, and lately Colonel of the Militia in one of the northern provinces where he had his estate, for he belonged to a wealthy and distinguished family. He had served under Napoleon, and gained from him the cross of the Legion of Honour. He had gone to England, but being ashamed to remain inactive, returned to aid the public cause. He landed on the very night of the 9th of January, and a few hours after he was in iron! There he remained six weeks without speaking a word to a friend, seeing any one, or even being allowed to change his linen! When called to give his defence in twenty-four hours he was covered with vermin, and nearly in a state of distraction. After the five bodies were cut down and laid on the ground, the hangman began to chop off their heads with a cutlass on a piece of wood. The heads were then stuck upon iron points fixed on the post of the gallows, and there they remained three days.

Remarkable Snake hunt.

The following extraordinary circumstance is said to have lately occurred at or near Hillsborough, in Fountain County, in the State of Indiana: For some years past this place has been infested with snakes, so numer-

ous that people were not safe to ven in their beds at night. So great was the terror of the citizens that few dared to venture out after dark for fear of them. Last Fall, a person living in the neighborhood, discovered a cave in the bank of the creek, where it was supposed they had taken up their abode for the Winter. Upon the information obtaining circulation, the citizens turned out en masse to destroy them. They commenced by digging and removing the earth and rocks, from the mouth of the den, until they came to them: They lay in coils in the crevices of the rocks. Wooden hooks were thrust in, and frequently three or four were drawn out. The two first days, they caught one hundred and forty-two—about one hundred were Rattle Snakes and the remained the Copper headed Snake. They were in general of the largest size. Digging and killing have since continued, but to what extent we are not informed.

Stop the Murderer!

An honest, thrifty farmer of this county, was murdered (killed dead) some twelve or fifteen days since, while travelling home from market, by a notorious vagabond, who has long been in the habit of knocking folks down, whenever he could catch them from home: and he has grown so bold, that it is not uncommon for him to steal into the very domicils of people, and level them with the floor of their own dwellings! It behooves all of us, to endeavor to put a stop to the devastating course of this abominable marauder, and not suffer him to run at LARGE any longer. His name is "Whiskey," and we presume he is so well known, it will be unnecessary for us to describe him: our only object is to raise a hue-and-cry, that the people may turn out & stop him, to the end that he may be confined within proper limits.
West, Car.

We find the following notice in the Boston daily Advertiser:

Married—In Fall River, on Monday morning, Mr. Andrew C. Fearing, merchant of this city, to Miss Aldiborontiphosphonio Cowen, of the former place. The father of this lady must certainly have been caged when she was christened. No wonder the parties were married in a river, and that the husband is fearing.

Trial of a Deserter.

A court martial was held at Jefferson Barracks, on the 28th December for the trial of William Huston, or Hart, of the 8th regiment U. S. Infantry, for desertion from said Barracks in April last; for re-enlisting at Natchez and receiving bounty while a deserter; and for deserting thence shortly afterwards. The prisoner pleaded guilty, and was condemned to be shot. The proceedings were transmitted to the War Department, for approval, and an order was issued on the 17th ult. containing a pardon from President Jackson, on the ground "that while the conduct of the soldier presents no mitigating circumstance which in a state of war, would demand interposition of the pardoning power, there is at the same time nothing in it of a character which at a period of profound peace requires the punishment of death."

A New State in North America.

A Parris paper of February 17, says—"By an act of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, a new State has been formed in that part of North America; it bears the name of Macon!"

RHODE ISLAND.

A letter from Newport of the 18th inst. says, that returns from all the towns in this state render it certain that the Jackson ticket of State Officers is triumphant by a majority of 300.