repugnant to the wishes of Irishmen, and it was a great principle of our human nature that you could not enforce any law except so far as it found echo and response in the hearts of those to whom it applied (cheers). All law rested for its ultimate sanction not upon Acts of Parliament, not upon the penalties prescribed by them but upon the wills and wishes of the people. If the moral sense of the people repudiated and abhorred a law which had been appointed, that law, though it might live on ink and paper, was, nevertheless, to all practical purposes dead and buried (applause). That was a principle deep down in our nature, and all history and experience showed it to be invariably triumphant. Therefore, without dwelling upon the argument on that point, he said they might take it for granted that the system of coercion would not pacify Ireland, and could not satisfy her cravings. The policy could not succeed, even supposing that it had at its back the whole of England, Scotland, and Wales, and as they knew that England, Scotland, and Wales were almost as favourable to Home Rule as Ireland herself, he thought they might believe, and say with confidence, that they were within a measurable distance of the time when Ireland would hold, as Mr. McGuire had said, its own Parliament upon College Green (applause). When Lord Salisbury, in 1886, brought in his new Coercion Bill *Punch* drew a very apt and proper parallel between the task he had undertaken and that of the ancient called Sisyphus, whose duty it was to roll a huge stone up a precipitous mountain and the difficulty of whose task was this that the moment he relaxed his effort in pushing up the stone that instant naturally and necessarily the stone rolled back again; and Mr. Punch, though a comic journal, did at times get to the root of things by a picture—

> Swift rolls the years, and still the ceaseless round,
> The toilsome press up the precipitous ground;
> The sullen, slow ascent, the swift rebound.

The stone of governing Ireland by coercion, which Lord Salisbury had been endeavouring to roll up the mountain for two years, had not budged an inch, and probably had rolled back many inches. He had said they were within measurable distance of Home Rule, and those who kept their eyes upon the English newspapers would notice that the English coercionists admitted it. But they had this hope in them—a disgrace to the human race he called it—that they thought that the Home Rule policy centred in Mr. Gladstone, and if they could but see Gladstone depart this life before the present Parliament ended—that was five years—there would be an end to the Home Rule movement. That was their only hope. He thought, in the first place, it was a disgraceful hope, and, in the second place, he could not see any chance of its fulfilment, because although 79 years had laid their hands upon that great statesman, their weight had pressed so lightly upon him that it would be found in all human probability that he would be able to see the consummation of that cause to which he had devoted the evening of his long and illustrious life (applause). Mr. Gladstone was the first English statesman who had prescribed the true remedies for the evils that were in Ireland. Heretofore all statesmen had been applying their remedies to the symptoms of the disease without going to the root. They could not hear the voice of Ireland, which seemed to say:—

> Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
> And with some sweet, oblivious antidote
> Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
> Which weighs upon the heart?

(Applause). Mr. Gladstone was the first English statesman to endeavour to apply the true remedy for the Irish disease, the administration of Irish affairs according to Irish ideas (applause). It was their hope that being the statesman who first "knew the season when to take occasion by the hand," and endeavour to make the "bounds of freedom wider yet" in regard to Ireland, he would yet live to see with his own eyes the consummation so earnestly desired, the passing of a Home Rule Bill, which would be the best security for the integrity and permanence of the Empire, because it was "broad-based upon the people's will." (Applause.)

The first resolution was then put and carried, amid applause.

Mr. E. Barton, who was received with applause, said he came before them that evening as an Irishmen, and as one whose best sympathies were with the aspirations for Home Rule for Ireland; and it was his purpose to move a resolution which not only committed the meeting to an expression of sympathy, but also to give visible and tangible proof of it (applause). His resolution was 'That a fund be opened to assist the Parnell defence before the Special Commission" (applause). He asked them to vote for that resolution, and to append their names to the subscription list. The charge against Mr. Parnell and his party was that of sympathising and being a party to the grossest crime, the murder of Mr. Burke, or rather Lord Frederick Cavendish. Now, Ireland had always had two classes of leaders, of whom Mr. Parnell and O'Donovan Rossa were representatives, the one trusting to a sense of justice in the English people, and constitutional agitation; the other endeavouring to obtain justice by force, working by organisations like the Fenians, committing outrages. If they took statistics they would see that relatively to population there was no more crime in Ireland than in England, not so much, and much of the crime in Ireland was due, not to natural wickedness, but to agrarian causes. It was with this that it was sought to identify Mr. Parnell; but how absurd was the contention. It was well known that every act of crime committed by the party of violence was a stumbling-block in the path of the party of constitutional action, and the charge meant that Mr. Parnell and his followers, while doing their utmost to enlist English sympathy and support, on the other hand encouraged crime and violence, which was the main cause of their difficulty in fighting the Home Rule cause. The very statement of the absurdity carried its own refutation. Anyone who read the history of Ireland for the last 40 years, since Catholic emancipation, would know that the charges were inherently false, and anyone who looked at the position and said or supposed that the constitutional leaders could be guilty of sympathising with crime must do so on the basis that these gentlemen were lunatics, not to use a worse term; but everyone admitted that they were undoubtedly men of great ability. Now, the position was that those men were called on to face a charge of this sort. The meeting had been told that £100,000 had been raised by the Tories to carry on the prosecution, and the enquiry was certainly pursuing a course which the President of the Commission said would involve its continuation for years. All the details of every outrage were being paraded forth and dwelt on in a manner which, though very satisfactory to gentlemen whose earnings were 2000 guineas a week or month, was tiring to the court and ruination to Mr. Parnell and party. They were private persons with limited means and they must be supported if they were to carry on their defence with subscriptions from the Irish people throughout the world. How otherwise were they to carry on a fight against the wealth of the *Times*, supported by £100,000 from the Tories? It was the duty of all Irishmen to assist and to put their names down for the full amount they could afford, and even forego luxuries for a time in order that they might be able to subscribe a substantial sum. If Irishmen did not, then they must be prepared to share the responsibility of failure before the Commission and the possibility of the next election in consequence going against Gladstone. If these people were assisted to get fair play and fair defence they would no doubt be successful, and there was every reason for believing that at the next election Home Rule would be carried by an enormous majority. There was plenty of evidence that the tide had turned, and that Home Rule was not merely within measurable distance but actually close at hand; and it was his fervent wish, and the fervent wish of every one at that meeting, that Home Rule should be secured, and therefore he placed the resolution before them in confidence that it would be heartily accepted and generally acted upon.

Mr. Major, who was received with applause, said he would for the moment look at this question of Home Rule from a very matter of fact point of view, as distinguished from the higher standpoints from which it had been viewed by previous speakers, with whom he had cordially agreed. How much cheaper it would be for England to give Ireland self-government than to maintain an army of 30,000 there to keep the peace. He would also point out that it seems to take half the time of the British Parliament to discuss this Irish question. The matter had been so thoroughly treated by Messrs. McGuire and Hutchison that he found it difficult to add anything, but he might point out how wonderfully the opinion in favour of Home Rule had grown outside of Great Britain during the last eight years. Nearly all colonial statesmen were in favour of it, and to keep within New Zealand, they need only remember the fact that the present Premier was in favour of it, and so were Sir Robert Stout, Sir George Grey, Mr. Ballance, and others, and they advocated it on every possible occasion. At Home the cause had gained the adherence of men like Lord Roseberry, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Labouchere, and others. It was identified with the cause of Liberalism, and how the cause of Liberalism was progressing was to be recognised by the fact that in the recent elections under the new system of local government two-thirds of the positions had been filled by Liberals. To return to the practical question, funds must be provided to carry on the battle with the *Times*, and he quite agreed with Mr. Barton that if this trial had a successful issue for the Parnell party, it would materially hasten the granting of Home Rule. He had much pleasure in seconding the resolution.—Agreed to unanimously.

The chairman, in a few remarks, then asked intending subscribers to come forward. Irishmen must throw their minds back 16,000 miles, and their recollections to the days when they were at home, if they wished to feel how their poor countrymen were being tried. The evictions were still being hurried on, because the landlords saw that their time was short, and the Parnell party was the only source to which they could look for assistance in their troubles. It was, therefore, the duty of all Irishmen to assist the party by every means in their power.

A subscription list was then opened, and over £50 was subscribed for in the room.

CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE Shakespearian Festival came to a close last Friday night, after a most successful "run" of fifteen nights. After the withdrawal of the Swiss Singers, the attendance continued as good as ever, and the visitors, instead of having their attention distracted by the musical performances, devoted themselves to inspecting the stalls. The result was that in the early part of the week some good business was done by the fair vendors of the beautiful and useful things which were on sale in the Rink. On Thursday and Friday nights, in addition to the auction sales, the business of getting off the art-unions in connection with the various stalls was attended to. These art-unions were, I thought, a somewhat novel feature. Usually there is one big art-union in connection with a bazaar, and frequently prizes are contributed by each stall, as well as from outsiders. At the Festival each stall had a special art-union, and the stall-holders had to attend to the business of selling their own lottery tickets as well as that of getting off raffles and making sales. I think myself that the old plan of having one general art-union is preferable. Better prizes can be given, the ladies are freed from a lot of responsibility, there is no clashing between the art-union and the bazaar, and better results are ensured altogether. These lotteries, however, were, I believe, tolerably successful. In Mrs. Lonargan's art-union there were some very good prizes. Among these were a suite of furniture, a cow, a pony, and a watch. These have been pretty widely distributed. The furniture was won by a ticket-holder in Queensland; the pony by a lady in Geelong; the watch by a gentleman at Springston, and the cow by I know not who. Probably Crummie will find her way back to the donor (Mr. Henly, of Shand's Track), upon the payment by him of her equivalent in gold to Mrs. Lonargan.

Among the prize-winners at the bazaar, the police have been singularly fortunate. I believe some distinguished members of the gallant corps have been so "set up" with domestic articles that they