

SPIRITED ADDRESS BY SIR BRYAN O'LOGHLEN, M.L.A.

(Melbourne *Advocate*, June 6.)

THE unveiling of the bronze statue erected in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral to the memory of Daniel O'Connell took place, in the presence of a large and enthusiastic assemblage of the public, on Saturday afternoon.

Sir Bryan O'Loghlen, who was received with a storm of applause said—

My Lord Archbishop, Ladies and gentlemen,—To-day is a white letter day in my life—I may say its proudest day—for the high honour has been conferred on me of unveiling the statue of the great O'Connell—the Liberator of the Irish Catholics and the foremost champion of the Legislative Independence of Ireland (cheers). We are twelve thousand miles away from the scene of his triumphs, and forty-four years have gone by since his death, yet we love and admire him as strongly as ever (cheers). To-day is the thirtieth of May, the anniversary of two thirtieths of May remarkable in the history of O'Connell and of Ireland. The first, forty-seven years ago, we execrate. The second, forty-six years ago, we celebrate here to-day. The first was the day of his imprisonment, the second was the day when a triumphant nation hailed him as still their chosen chief at a national *levée* at the Rotunda in Dublin (cheers). His imprisonment was both illegal and unjust. Unjust because Judge Burton, who sentenced him, exonerated O'Connell from any intention of using force or violence, and further said O'Connell had used his unbounded influence to keep and preserve the peace. As a matter of fact, a packed jury had found a partisan political verdict, and this sentence was based on that verdict. O'Connell's imprisonment was illegal, as judgment was reserved by the highest court of the realm, and Lord Denman, one of the Law Lords, in delivering judgment of reversal used the historical words: "If such practices as have taken place in the present instance in Ireland, should continue the trial by jury would become a mockery, a delusion, and a snare." Three months of imprisonment passed away before the final decision was given in favour of O'Connell. In those days there was no telegraph system, but we had organised a national telegraph. On every hill and mountain top heaps of wood had been erected. On Thursday, the 5th September, the *Medusa* arrived in Kingstown. I well remember the wild excitement—the cheering along the roads of distant Clare—as in the gloaming of that autumn evening mountain peak and hilltop blazed in succession to the skies, flashed the glorious news of the release of our nation's leader (cheers). On the 30th of May following, in '45, the whole of Ireland sent deputations from its counties, cities, and towns to *levée* O'Connell. Two hundred thousand people paid their homage to O'Connell in the streets of Dublin as he passed with the other Repeal Martyrs in triumphal procession, and within the Rotunda, what a glorious sight? The mayors and councillors in their scarlet robes; the '82 club in their green and gold. I remember well all the leading Nationalists were there; Thomas Davis, John Mitchell, Richard O'Gorman, Gavan Duffy, Dr. Gray, my brother Colman, Meagher of the flashing sword. (A voice. "Smith O'Brien.") Yes, I saw Smith O'Brien present to O'Connell a solemn pledge signed individually by those present, that they, one and all, would never desist from seeking by every lawful means the Legislative Independence of Ireland until it is obtained (cheers). That is the 30th May, of which we celebrate to-day the anniversary. The pledge taken that day has been kept faithfully and will bear fruition yet in the restoration of its Parliament to Ireland (cheers). And this chosen champion of our nation, what manner of man was he? Was he endowed with a spark of Archangel fire, or was he inspired like the prophets of old? He was neither. He was but a man, with all the passions, all the weaknesses of man, but his intellect, and his soul, his will, and his conscience, all the higher ethereal parts of his being, in its beauty and strength, completely overshadowed and eclipsed the blemishes (cheers). We were blind to his weaknesses—we saw only his virtues and his talents—much as when we gaze upon the firmament of Heaven, with all its glory of countless stars, this lower earth is left aside out of our charmed vision and forgotten (cheers). Now what were his principles? I have often thought they lay in the first two petitions of the Lord's Prayer that he learned in Gaelic at his mother's knee. "Ar n-atair a ta ir neabh, go naomtar t-anam, go tainic do riogdác." "Our Father who art in Heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come." He must have conned these words over and over; out on the purple hills of Kerry, that he loved so well—gazing on the boundless expanse of the broad Atlantic, and listening to the boom of its mighty rollers endlessly breaking on its cliffs and headlands—his soul must have drunk in the greatness of God the Creator (cheers). He must have felt that every man owes unceasing praise to His name, and that the duty lies upon every man of intellectual force to bring about to the utmost of his power the Kingdom of God on earth. These words made all men brothers in his eyes—sharers in that Kingdom, whether Catholic, Dissenter, or Jew—whether his own countryman or a Pole—whether the white pauper of the United

Kingdom, or the negro slave of Jamaica or the States. All, in his eyes, were entitled, not to an equality of intellect, strength, or beauty, of rank, power, or money, but, as subjects of that Kingdom, to an equality of rights, an equality of justice, an equality of good government, an equality of freedom—in a word, entitled to civil and religious liberty (cheers). His two principles were these—first, glory to God; and, second, ordered liberty. If he wanted any confirmation of these convictions of his, there were the words of the angelic song, "Glory be to God on high, and peace on earth to men of good-will." Epitomise these words, and you may shortly say that O'Connell's life-long principles were what are ours to-day—faith and freedom (cheers). In his dying days he exemplified these principles. "I leave my soul to God, my heart to Rome, and my body to Ireland." Thus he crystallised his heart-whole devotion to his Church and his country. Lord O'Hagan, late Lord Chancellor of Ireland, wrote of O'Connell as the Apostle of Liberty and the enemy of license. O'Connell, had reconciled order and progress, and identified religion with the advancement of human right. The famous Montalembert addressed O'Connell on his last journey through France not only as "the man of one nation," but "the man of Christendom," for he had shown all nations how to combine the cause of liberty with that of religion and order (cheers). What, then, were his methods? Discussion, agitation, and public meeting—public meeting, agitation, and discussion. Blessed with a great presence—a smile that won the heart—a voice as clear, as silvery, and as far penetrating as the tones of a bell—with a magnetic sympathy drawing all men towards him—with a power to play at will upon all the chords of the human heart—evoking in turn mirth and laughter, indignation and boisterous elation and cheering, ridicule and jeers, scorn and groans, pity and tears—blessed, too, with a vigour and terseness and variety of argument to convince his friends and to overwhelm his opponents, he devoted all these gifts to the service of his country (cheers). After more than twenty years of unsuccessful effort in support of the Catholic claims and the Repeal of the Union, in the year 1823 he founded the Catholic Association, which the Government suppressed by Act of Parliament in 1825. Nothing daunted, he founded the new Catholic Association, which body attained such influence that, in the general election of 1826, it succeeded in returning seven more emancipators, and ousting their opponents from Waterford, South Monaghan, and Armagh (cheers). Its successful weapon was the franchise gained in 1793 from the Irish Parliament. The talisman had been found. The man to use it was there, and the hour came. Vesey Fitzgerald took office in the Government. The seat for Clare became vacant, and O'Connell, the proscribed Catholic, was returned by a majority of two to one (cheers). All honour to the electors of Clare who thus changed the destiny of their race and the future of the world to all time (cheers). Peel and Wellington acknowledged themselves beaten, and carried emancipation in 1829. While celebrating this almost miraculous success of O'Connell, let us pay a tribute to those noble Protestants who for years renounced power, place, and pay that justice might be done to their fellow-countrymen, for without their aid the Catholics alone could not have carried emancipation (cheers). O'Connell did not rest here. He threw himself into the arena of Parliament, and helped to carry the Reform Act of '32, the Tithes Commutation Act, the Emancipation of the Dissenters and of the Jews, the Test and Corporation Acts. But the one question that he made his own, that for forty-five years he proclaimed to be of more importance to Ireland than even Emancipation, was the Legislative Independence of his country—the Repeal of the Union (cheers). Like another Moses it was not given to him to see that promised land, though he had led his people out of the house of bondage. But his spirit still lives. It walks abroad. His works have not been in vain. That cause will yet triumph, and Ireland, as sure as to-morrow's sun will rise, will yet see her own Parliament in College Green (cheers). There is one great lesson in O'Connell's life for all men. Stand up for the right, in and out of season, for the sake of right, regardless of the consequences to oneself. But there is a second, bear good will to all men—know no distinction of race, colour, or creed. Let not difference in religion or politics create dissension. Let each man act up to the best of his lights to promote full, civil, and religious liberty, and though like O'Connell he may not live to see the promised land of his political desire, yet like O'Connell he shall hear the words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord." My Lord Archbishop, I have been requested by the committee of subscribers to the O'Connell statue to entrust it to the custody of your Grace and your Grace's successors, in trust for the citizens of Melbourne, with every confidence that here, in front of that splendid cathedral that is dedicated to our national saint, the statue of his great spiritual son, O'Connell—second to none in the benefits he conferred on the Irish nation—will be preserved for future ages to the utmost of your and their power.

On resuming his seat Sir Bryan was loudly applauded.

Coal of all descriptions may be ordered of Messrs Longworth and Sons, Stuart street, Dunedin, and will be found of satisfactory qualities, and supplied at the lowest rates.