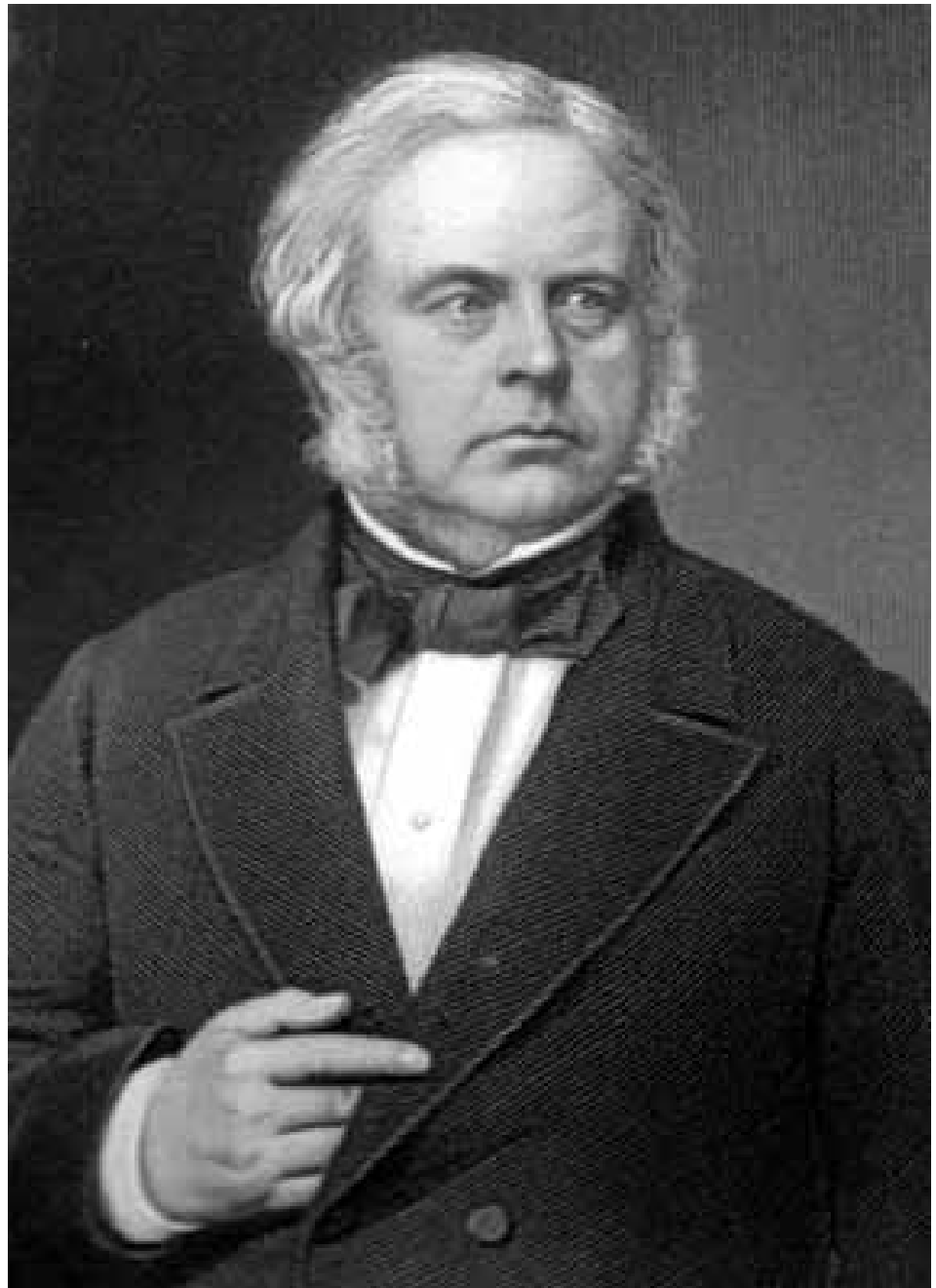


'TRUE TO HIS JOHN BRIGHT, LIBERALISM AND

In his 2012 biography, Bill Cash suggests that John Bright's behaviour during the home rule crisis of 1886 revealed him to have become a Conservative by the end of his life. Cash's reasoning was that Bright had, by 1886, become more concerned with preserving the rule of law and the unity of Great Britain than with the abstract concepts of 'freedom and liberty' that had dominated his political philosophy in his earlier career.¹ **Ian Cawood** examines Cash's claims and concludes that, to the contrary, Bright remained the epitome of radical Victorian Liberalism to the end of his life.



PRINCIPLES'?

IRISH HOME RULE 1886 – 1889

OF COURSE, BRIGHT was famously poor at explaining his actions over the home rule debate, rarely speaking in public during these years and seldom visiting Birmingham, where his constituency was located. In this way, he allowed others, most notably Joseph Chamberlain and the nascent Liberal Unionist Association, to present his behaviour in ways that benefitted their agenda. Cash, in what is otherwise a very good biography, has, however, perhaps not placed Bright's opposition in the broadest possible context of contemporary Liberal attitudes towards the idea of home rule. Bright's position on Ireland was much the same as that of Millicent Fawcett, T. H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Leonard Courtney and Sir John Lubbock, none of whom, even after 1886, could be safely categorised as 'Conservative'. In contrast to Cash, who interprets Bright as shifting his position in 1886, Robert Walling, who edited Bright's diaries, regards him as 'a *Unionist* by absolute and lifelong conviction.'²

Bright had long taken an interest in Ireland and had visited the country in 1832, 1849 and again in 1852 in order to see for himself the condition of the country, finding there conditions that 'move the hardest heart'. As the Fenian disorders of the 1860s spread he returned to Ireland twice and reported to the House of Commons in 1866 that Ireland was the only part of the United Kingdom to have become poorer since becoming part of the United Kingdom. Perhaps unsurprisingly given his radical Quaker

background, Bright blamed Ireland's condition on the power of the established Anglican church and the wealth of the absentee Irish landlords. Bright had contributed to the eradication of the first of these problems when the Irish Church was disestablished in 1869, but the land problem remained intractable. Bright personally believed that the landed estates should be broken up, stating that he 'would give Ireland to the Irish.' He was however, not sure that the landlords could or should be bought out, and favoured the idea of building up the Irish small landowners with the compulsory purchase of land from corporations or of private land capable of cultivation, but left to waste after the depopulation of Ireland in the 1860s. Bright, together with his political mentor, Richard Cobden, believed that Ireland needed such state intervention in order to create the crucial feature for a stable and workable political system, a strong middle class.³ Even before 1886, Bright favoured policies that cannot be reconciled with either historical or with present-day Conservatism.

Bright had been disappointed by the 1870 Irish Land Act, as it had failed to create an Irish class of small landowners, but he had been increasingly concerned by the willingness of the Irish Nationalist leaders to endorse (or, at least, fail to condemn) the violence and intimidation of the Irish Land League. He endorsed the 1881 Land Act with its guarantees of fair rent, fixity of tenure and free sale, but as he did so, he lectured the

Nationalists in the Commons that they would win much greater support if they confined themselves to purely peaceful, constitutional lobbying, which Cobden and Bright had pioneered with the Anti-Corn Law League between 1838 and 1846. He persisted in referring to the Nationalists as 'rebels' and he attacked the Conservatives for flirting with Charles Stuart Parnell between 1883 and 1886. His dislike of Parnell's character and his impractical and foolish solutions to the Irish problem (in Bright's eyes) would be a decisive factor when the issue was forced to the front of the political agenda in 1886.

While Bright's position on land reform was crystal clear, his attitude towards Irish demands for political autonomy was far more opaque. In 1868 he condemned the means whereby 'the extinction of the Irish Parliament' in 1800 was achieved as 'force and fraud and corruption' but, in the same speech, he claimed that he much preferred to find the policies whereby Westminster could render 'Ireland content to be a portion of a greater nation.'⁴ In the same year, he described the political condition of Ireland as 'anarchy, which is subdued by force' but was non-committal on the solution to this problem.⁵ When he was named as a supporter of home rule by nationalists in 1872, he actively demurred, issuing a public denial in which he condemned the idea of 'two legislative assemblies in the United Kingdom' as 'an intolerable mischief.' This was a rejection of the federal solution for the United Kingdom,

John Bright
(1811-89)

rather than mere anti-Irish prejudice, however. Although Bright shared Gladstone's desire to reform Westminster, where the Nationalists carried out a policy of obstruction which disrupted his second administration between 1880 and 1885, Bright preferred to retain the issue within the institution.⁶ Although seriously tempted by the idea of excluding the Irish members from Westminster, in July 1886, he suggested that a special 'Committee For Ireland' should be formed of the Irish MPs, which would be given the role normally reserved for the whole house, of approving or rejecting the second reading of any Irish bill. For Bright, the advantage of such a scheme would be that:

You get the absolute control of the Irish members in their own chamber at Westminster to arrange the clauses of [a] bill ... would shape it exactly as they liked, and then it would be submitted to the whole Parliament ... [who] would be willing ... to defer to the opinions of the Irish Committee, and to accept the measures they had discussed and agreed upon.⁷

Like many Liberals, John Bright was therefore horrified when William Gladstone, after falling seventeen seats short of a majority in the December 1885 general election, announced his conversion to the principle of Irish home rule, without any consultation with his colleagues or party. Bright, in common with others in his party, favoured some limited measure of local government in Ireland, in much the same way that they wanted rural England to be controlled by elected councils. Bright had discussed a scheme of 'County Councils for Ireland' with Lord Dalhousie in autumn 1885, an idea not dissimilar to Joseph Chamberlain's 'Central Board' scheme.⁸ Bright also regarded Gladstone's Land Law (Ireland) Act of 1881 as having provided suitable protection for the Irish tenant farmers and was reluctant to buy out the landlords as proposed in the Land Bill that would accompany the Government of Ireland Act. This would, he felt, compensate those Irish landlords who had ultimately caused the tensions in Ireland with the money of

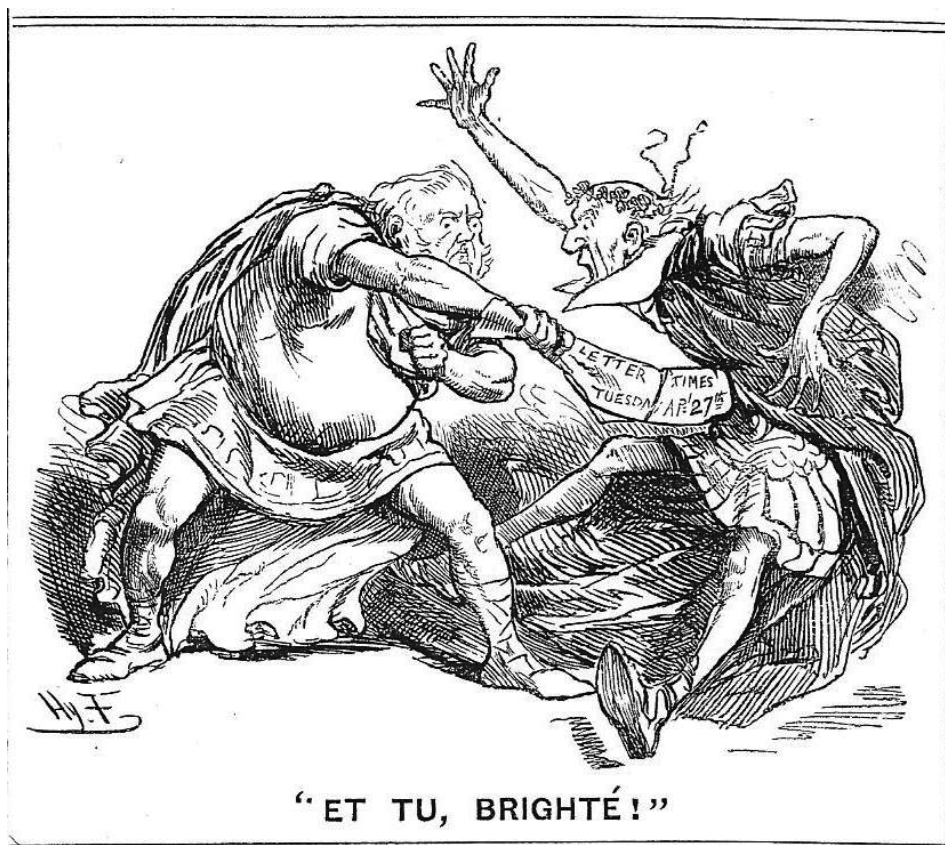
the struggling British taxpayer. When Gladstone announced precisely this on 16 June 1886, Bright noted in his diary, 'scheme, in my judgement, not a wise one.'⁹ He was, however, far more alarmed by the Irish Government Bill, which did exclude the Irish members, but insisted that Ireland should continue to pay £4.5 million to cover customs, bureaucracy and defence. As the Irish would have no MPs in Westminster to scrutinise how this money was spent, this violated the Liberal commitment that there should never be 'taxation without representation.' Furthermore, the Irish were to have a parliament in Dublin, not merely a council, which, Bright told Gladstone to his face, was 'surrender all along the line' to what he termed 'the Rebel Party', who had used violence and intimidation to gain political representation.¹⁰

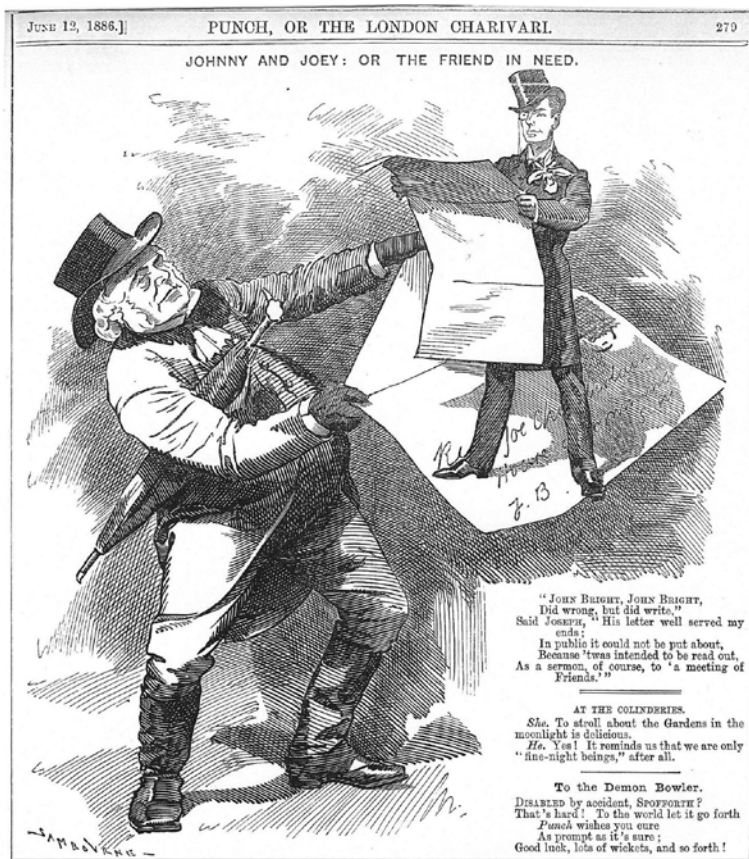
Although Bright disliked both Bills for consistently Liberal reasons, Gladstone's lack of consideration for the stated principles of his own party was probably crucial in provoking Bright to join the Unionist rebellion. As he wrote to William Caine, a fellow radical, 'what will be the value of a party when its whole power is laid at the

disposal of a leader from whose authority no appeal is allowed?'¹¹ This dislike of Gladstone's perceived dictatorial tendencies united the leader of the moderate Unionists, Lord Hartington, with the leader of the radical Unionists, Joseph Chamberlain. The authoritarian approach which Gladstone appeared to be taking to the Irish question was regarded by many, such as Bright, as contradicting the founding principle of the Liberal Party: to protect the right of individuals to hold firm to their principles.¹² A Liberal was distinguished, according to Andrew Reid, by his 'love of his own conscience more than the approval of the conscience of the people' and Gladstone's capitulation to the demands of Nationalist Ireland led many to reject their revered leader.¹³ Bright therefore opposed the Home Rule Bills, not merely for their content, but for the manner of their adoption.

At first Bright attempted to refrain from committing himself in the home rule debate. When contacted by the former Attorney General, Henry James, he refused to join the Liberal Unionist Committee being organised by George Goschen.¹⁴ In his election address to his constituents in 1885, Bright had

Fig 1. 'Et tu, Brighté!' *Punch*, 1 May 1886





not mentioned the Irish Question at all. When asked to offer support for Hartington when he faced his own constituents at Rawtenstall, Bright did write a letter which was reprinted in *The Times* and which was subsequently widely quoted by opponents of the Home Rule Bills (see fig. 1). Bright described Hartington's opposition to the Home Rule Bills as 'consistent and courageous'. And further, he stated that the recent election had not been fought on the issue:

It would be a calamity for this country if measures of this transcendent magnitude were to be accepted on the authority of a leader of a party ... to accept this system would be to betray the value [of constituencies] in the working of representative institutions.¹⁵

Bright himself had not even mentioned the issue of Irish Home Rule in his election address in 1885.¹⁶

Although Bright played no direct role in the desperate lobbying that took place as the rival leaders of the Liberal Party fought to secure their preferred outcome for the Irish Home Rule Bills, he inadvertently influenced the final

Fig. 2. 'Johnny and Joey: or, the friend in need' (*Punch*, 12 June 1886)

Fig. 3. Gladstone defeated on the first Home Rule Bill (*St Stephen's Review*, 12 June 1886)

outcome. While most of the more moderate Liberals supported the Whig leader, Hartington, the position of the radical faction, who looked to Joseph Chamberlain for guidance, was the crucial factor in the result in the Commons lobby. Although many radicals regarded home rule as a distraction from the 'unauthorised programme' of social reform that they had endorsed in 1885, the idea of joining forces with the Whigs, the moderates and, worst of all, the Tories, had made many radicals waver in their opposition to the bills.

When a meeting of fifty-two radical Unionist MPs was held on 31 May at committee room 15 in the Palace of Westminster, Joseph Chamberlain resorted to a desperate stratagem in order to stem the haemorrhage of his supporters which had begun once Gladstone had announced his willingness to delay the third reading of the Home Rule Bills.¹⁷ In order to retain his credibility with the radicals in the audience, Chamberlain implied that personally he would prefer to abstain on the vote and claimed that he would simply follow whatever choice the meeting made. But he had, on William Caine's advice, written to Bright, imploring him

to attend the meeting. Bright had refused, stating that 'I am not willing to take the responsibility of advising others as to their course' but he sent a letter stating his position.¹⁸ As Chamberlain's lieutenant, Joseph Powell Williams commented, 'Old Bright's letter is queer but full of usefulness from what it implies.'¹⁹ Therefore although Bright clearly did not want the letter to be used in this fashion, Chamberlain then proceeded to read out Bright's letter, with its unequivocal decision to vote against the second reading, to the meeting.²⁰ Chamberlain suddenly announced he *would* vote against the bill and those at the meeting opposed to the bill then voted by forty-eight to four against merely abstaining.²¹ Caine made sure that the press received the version of the meeting that stressed Chamberlain's (and his) reluctance to take such a step: 'We did our best ... to induce them to abstain ... If we could have got thirty who would pledge themselves to abstain we were prepared to have recommended that course, but we could not.'²²

Unsurprisingly, Bright was alarmed that his letter had been used in a fashion that virtually guaranteed the defeat of the Home

Rule Bill. He wrote to Chamberlain the next day.

If I had thought I should do harm, I should have said something more or less. Even now, if it is not too late, I could join you in abstaining if we could save the House and country from a dissolution which may for the Liberal party turn out a catastrophe the magnitude of which cannot be measured.²³

Of course, Chamberlain had managed to hang onto his radical credentials through his misuse of Bright's letter and so had no intention of meeting with the old radical at this stage (fig. 2). Parnell, for one, was not however fooled by Chamberlain's public protestations and careful management of his opposition. On seeing Chamberlain after the bill's defeat by thirty votes, Parnell remarked, 'there goes the man who killed Home Rule.'²⁴ Gladstone, too, realised that the events in committee room 15 had condemned his bill,²⁵ but the press saw it rather differently (fig. 3).

If Bright was actually far less sure of his opposition to the Home Rule Bill, his mind was made up by the decision of Gladstone to dissolve the House after the defeat on the second reading on 8 June. Bright knew that the split over the issue of home rule would become unbridgeable once Gladstonians and Liberal Unionists were forced to compete against one another on the hustings. When the opportunity to state his opinions to his electors came on 24 June 1886, Bright gave an address in central Birmingham, in which he stated that 'the experience of the past three months does not increase my confidence in the wisdom of [Gladstone's] Administration or of their policy with respect to the future government of Ireland.' He went on to stress that he opposed home rule on strictly Liberal lines, quoting the famous letter he had written in 1872. He concluded:

I cannot trust the peace and interests of Ireland, north and south, to the Irish Parliamentary Party.

And he stressed the position of the Protestants of Ireland in a devolved Irish state:

Right:

Fig 4. [Signs above the figures read: 'Dixon: very easy-natured, so anything for a quiet life'; 'Bright: aged, grumpy!'; 'J.C.: uncertain temper, just divorced!'] (*The Dart*, 2 July 1886)

Fig 5. 'A dumb dog (Mr BRIGHT has not addressed his constituents for more than twelve months.)' (*The Dart* 25 February 1887)

At least 2 millions of [the Irish people] are as loyal as the population of your town, and I will be no party to a measure which will thrust them from the generosity and justice of the United and Imperial Parliament.²⁶

In early July, Bright made a further contribution to the radical rebellion against Gladstone that was spreading across Lancashire, Cornwall, East Anglia, Scotland and the West Midlands. In a speech at Birmingham Town Hall, he claimed that the Irish lacked the political maturity which the northern English working class had demonstrated during the 'cotton famine' of the 1860s.

They [the Irish supporters of home rule] are less instructed, they are less politically informed, they are less wealthy, they are less industrious ... and they have the disadvantage of the sad, the melancholy and the wicked teaching of this conspiracy during the last six or seven years.²⁷

Unlike the Conservatives, radical Unionists like Bright believed that a nuanced combination of coercion and reform (chiefly land purchase) could improve the Irish character so that some degree of self-government would be possible in the distant future. But they shared a dislike of the Nationalists and their anti-English supporters in the United States.

Of course, many Liberal Unionists differentiated between the humble Irish cottager and the Fenian terrorist. Since 1882 and the murder of Cavendish and Burke in Phoenix Park and the Maamtrasna massacre, many Liberals had accepted that there must be no concessions to violence and threats of disorder, otherwise the rule of law itself might be in jeopardy. As George Trevelyan had put it in 1883, when Chief Secretary for Ireland, if British rule was abandoned in Ireland, 'we should have a mutual massacre.'²⁸ There was also the belief that there was no strong popular support for the 'land war' despite Gladstone and the Nationalists' claims, as only 2–4% of the tenant farmers joined the 'Plan of Campaign.' It was also widely believed that intimidation and

corruption explained the massive Nationalist majorities in rural Ireland of 1885.²⁹

Such was Bright's influence over the electorate, not least among Nonconformist voters in and around Birmingham, that Gladstone wrote a letter rebutting Bright's charges which was published in *The Times* the day after Bright's speech was reported.³⁰ Bright replied more in sadness than in anger, describing Gladstone's behaviour as 'a puzzle' and protesting, rather disingenuously, that 'I have not urged any man in Parliament, or out of it, to vote against you.'³¹ His reply to a correspondent later in the month could hardly be misinterpreted, though:

The concessions to and the liberal and, I hope, the wise legislation for Ireland by the united Parliament since the year 1866 are enough to convince any reasonable man that the interests of the United Kingdom may be left to the Parliament of Westminster.³²

In the general election, all the Liberal seats in Birmingham became Unionist and Bright's influence was recognised by George Dixon, when he was questioned by the philosopher Henry Sidgwick:

I asked for an explanation of the Unionist phalanx in Birmingham ... He [Dixon] thought it was half an accident, the party was really divided here as elsewhere, just below the top, but that Bright and Chamberlain and himself ... happened to coincide on this question; and they, I gathered were the three recognised leaders. Bright by being the old time-honoured, political chief; Chamberlain the established 'boss' in the industrial action of the municipality and Dixon the educational boss.³³ (fig. 4)

Unlike most other Liberal caucuses, the Birmingham Liberal Association endorsed the Unionists' position and they fought the general election with the full support of the local party apparatus. This meant that Chamberlain, Bright and the other Unionist radicals did not have to rely on the grudging assistance of the Conservatives, which was

demanding after W. H. Smith and Lord Hartington verbally agreed an electoral 'compact'. Elsewhere in the election of 1886, at least 800,000 working class Liberal voters, faced with the choice between Bright and Gladstone, abstained and handed victory to the antithesis of both men, the Hotel Cecil.³⁴

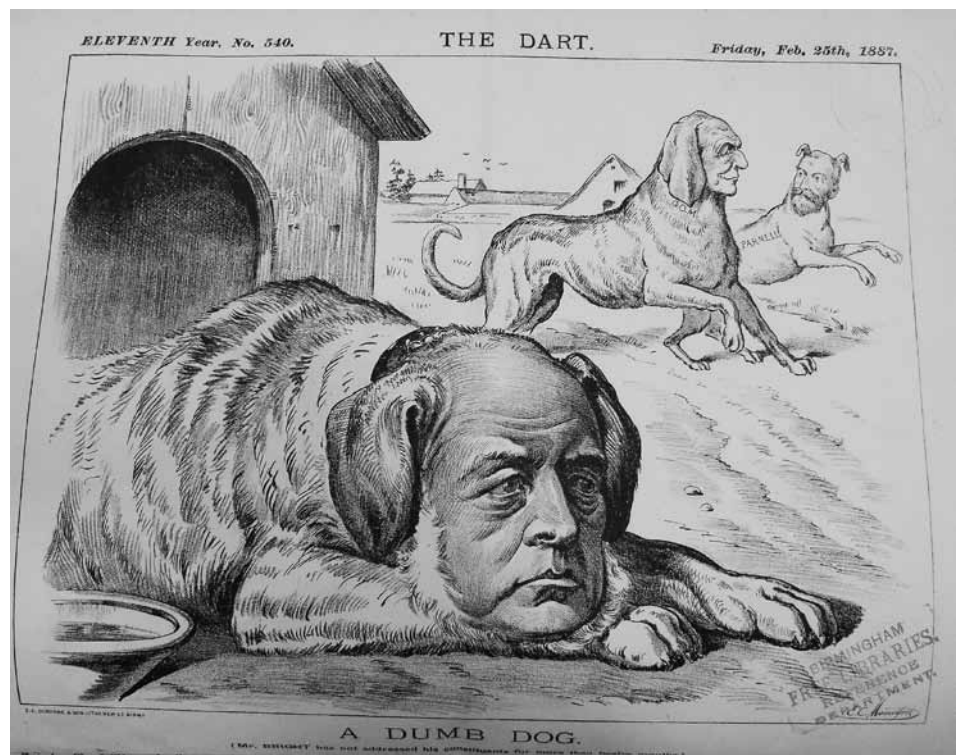
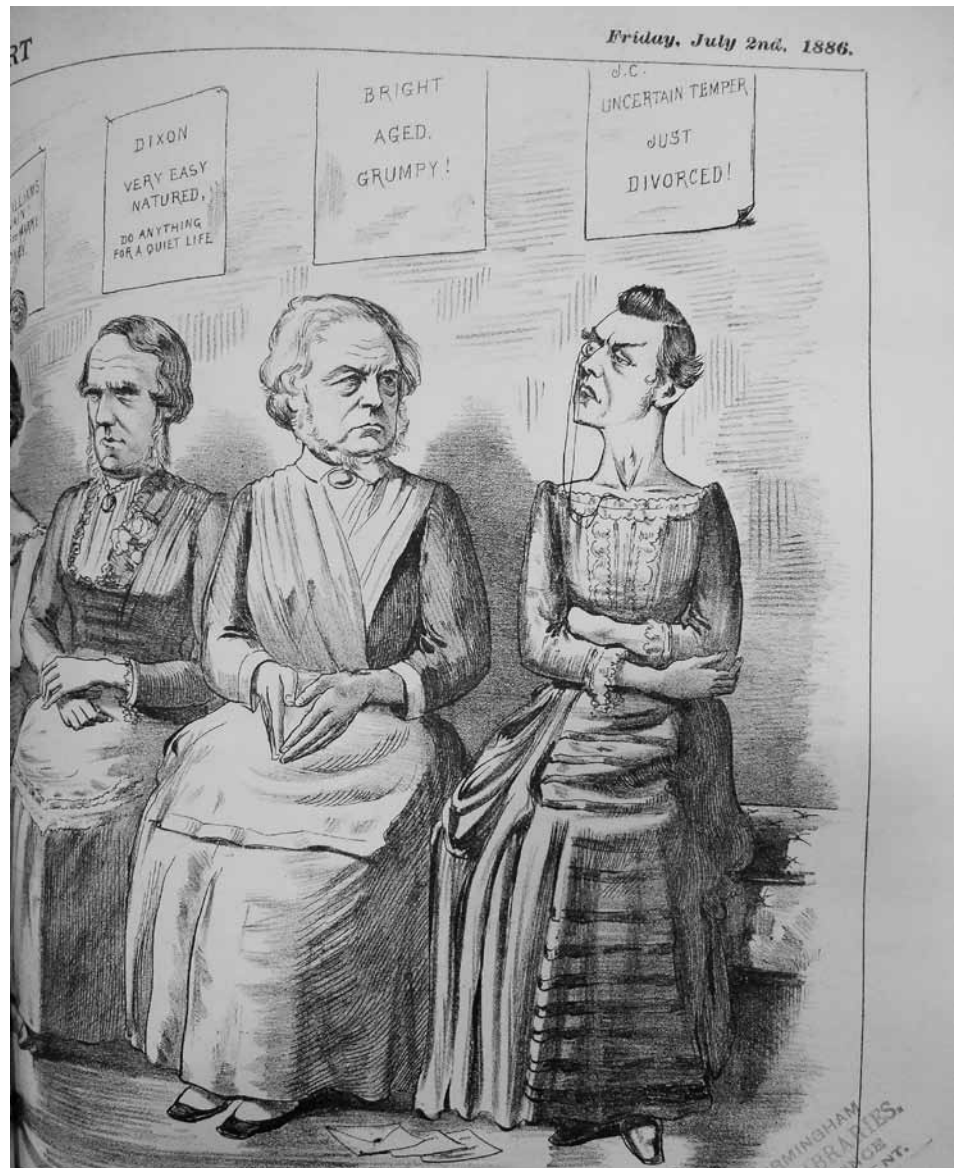
After the dust had settled, the Liberal Unionists took the decision not to sit with the Tory government, so Bright and Chamberlain sat alongside Gladstone and Morley on the opposition benches. This was a deliberate statement by the new party that they, not the 'separatists' (as *The Times* now called the Gladstonian Liberals), were the true inheritors of the legacy of Mill, Seeley and Green. Alexander Craig Sellar urged Hartington not to associate with W. H. Smith and Arthur Balfour, referring to the Liberal Unionists as 'the true church of Liberalism.'³⁵ Colonel Hozier, the first secretary of the Liberal Unionist Association, expressed this attitude more fully when he addressed the West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association in October 1886.

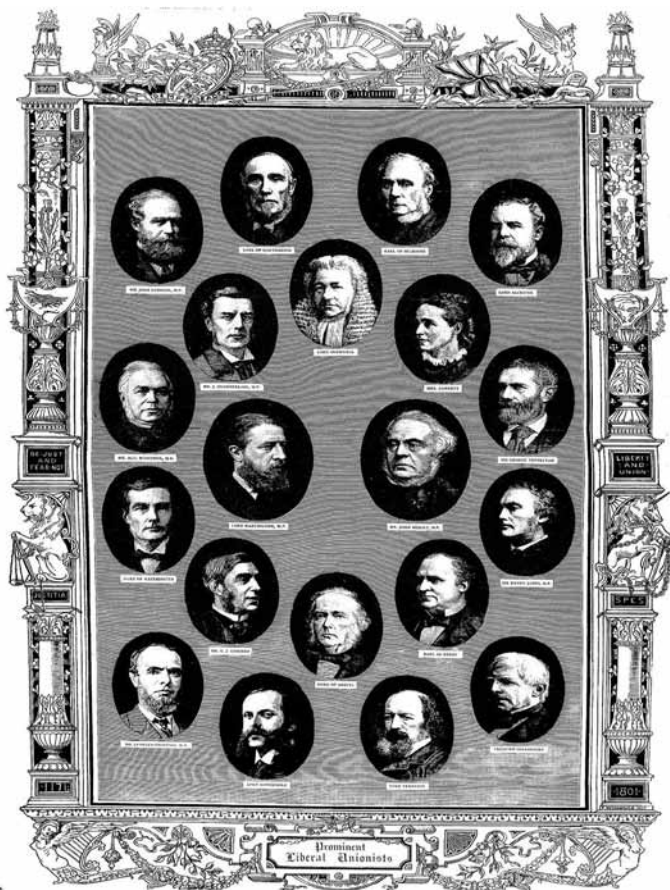
They were not dissenters, they were the True Church. He claimed that they held those noble Liberal principles that had been handed down from generation to generation of Liberals to all Liberal statesmen since the great Reform Act.³⁶

As early as December 1885, Edward Watkin had claimed that home rule was a perversion of 'true Liberalism'.³⁷ William Cartwright, campaigning in Northamptonshire had denied being 'a seceder from my political principles'.³⁸ Edward Heneage had expressed the sentiment most fully, writing to his agent in January 1887:

I deny that we are Dissident Liberals; we are consistent Liberals and Unionists; the others are Radicals and Home Rulers who dissent on every part of the Bills among themselves and include Unionists like Herschell and Rosebery and Separatists like Parnell and Labouchere in their ranks.³⁹

Bright also offered his support at a crucial test for the new Liberal





Unionist Party over the issue of the Arthur Balfour's Crimes Bill which reintroduced coercion to Ireland in 1887. He wrote to the party's chief whip, Lord Wolmer, that he did so on the grounds that 'Mr Gladstone ought to have suppressed the Land League five years ago.'³⁰ For many radical Unionists, such as Arthur Winterbotham, coercion was too much to bear and they returned, reluctantly, to Gladstone's party. Bright's presence in the government lobby in 1887 was probably crucial in retaining the support of the bulk of the radicals and in keeping the Liberal Unionists united. For them, coercion was necessary, as it was 'paving the way for the introduction of remedial measures [including] very wide measure of self-government.'³¹ By clearing this hurdle, Bright had significantly assisted the Liberal Unionists in taking the first steps towards forming a formal party with central structures and local organisations which would survive until the Liberal Unionists eventually coalesced with the Conservatives in May 1912.

With the issue of coercion successfully resolved, and the Conservative minority government firmly backed by all branches of

Liberal Unionism, Bright retreated back into 'sorrowful silence' at One Ash, Rochdale – his quietude remarked on by the Birmingham satirical journal, *The Dart* (fig. 5). Bright's main significance between 1886 and 1889 was as a symbol, shamelessly paraded by Unionists for propaganda purposes in the first age of mass visual political campaigning (fig. 6). That many Conservatives, including Lord Salisbury, personally opposed Bright's views, especially on free trade, was a frequent subject in Liberal periodicals in this period, as the two branches of Liberalism fought to claim his inheritance (fig. 7). The Nonconformist Unionist Association appointed Bright its honorary president, without even consulting him. Bright, reluctant to work with the party in any fashion, was unable to prevent his name being splashed across the party's literature (a party poster was made up with his face and that of the popular Baptist speaker Charles Spurgeon).⁴² Such was his status among Liberals, despite the caesura of 1886, that Gladstone made it clear that he sought no quarrel with Bright and stated in 1888 that the Liberals would not contest Central Birmingham in the event of a general

Fig. 6. Prominent Liberal Unionists (*The Graphic*, 15 January 1887)

Fig. 7. 'The New Flag. John Bright: "And that's the rag I'm obliged to fight under! Shade of Cobden, that I should have come to this!"' (*The Dart*, 2 December 1887)

election (fig. 8). When Bright died in 1889, the *Liberal Unionist* newspaper was printed with a black border on its front page.⁴³

Apart from the propaganda value of his name, which continued to be exploited until the twentieth century, Bright's immediate legacy to the Liberal Unionist Party was the dispute which broke out over the vacancy in the seat of Central Birmingham. Joseph Chamberlain claimed that the seat should be given to another Liberal Unionist, under the terms of the electoral 'compact' between the Liberal Unionists and the Conservatives. The local Conservatives, bitter enemies of the radical Chamberlain in both local and national affairs, had long eyed the seat for themselves (fig. 9). When Bright died, they attempted to bring forward their own candidate by interesting the maverick Lord Randolph Churchill in the constituency (fig. 10). The leaders of the Conservative Party wanted, at all costs, to avoid rival candidates splitting the Unionist vote, so called the local Tories to heel and Albert Bright, John Bright's son was allowed to contest the seat, which he won with a comfortable majority.⁴⁴ Har- tington and Salisbury took this as

a warning and finally committed the Conservative–Liberal Unionist 'compact' to paper, which probably contributed to the long-term survival of the Unionist alliance.⁴⁵

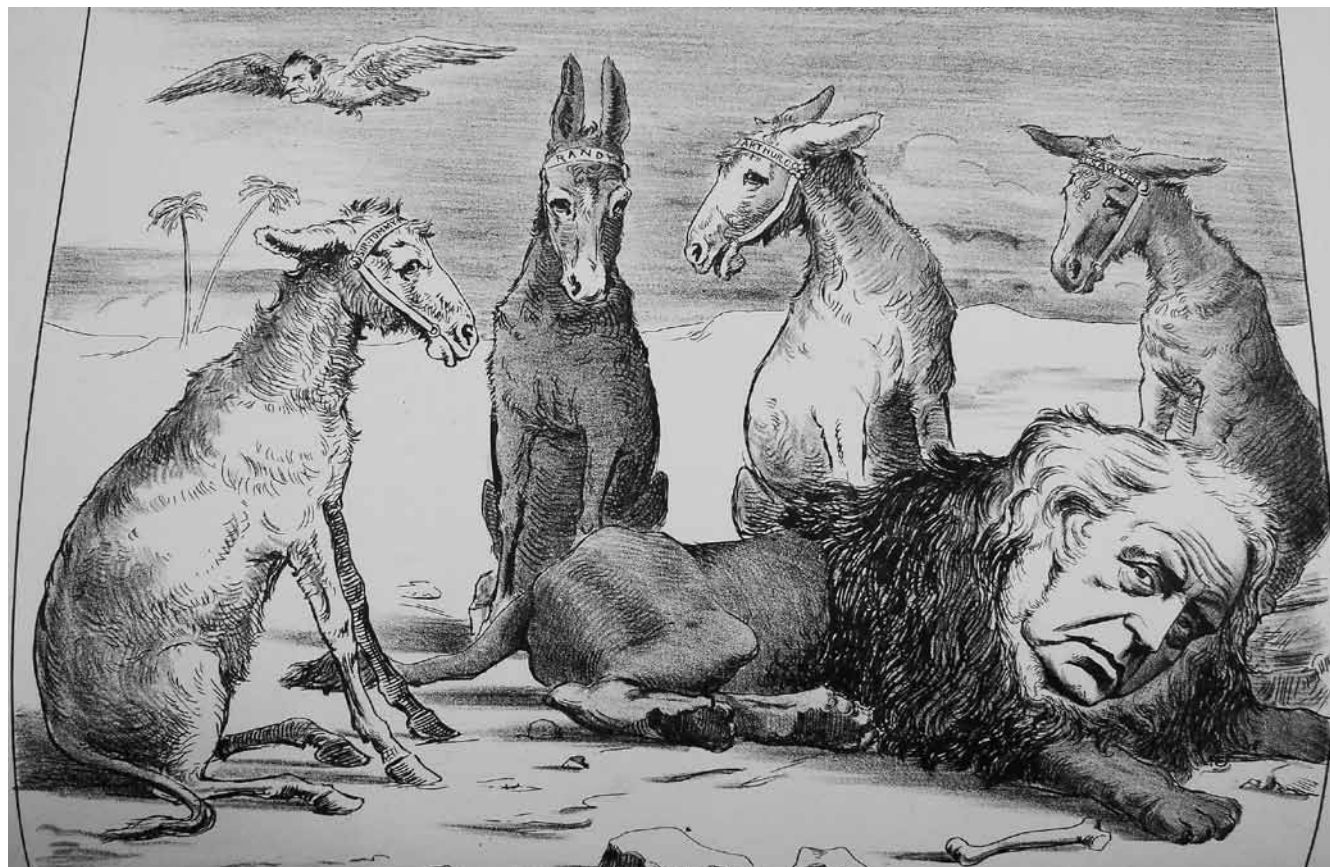
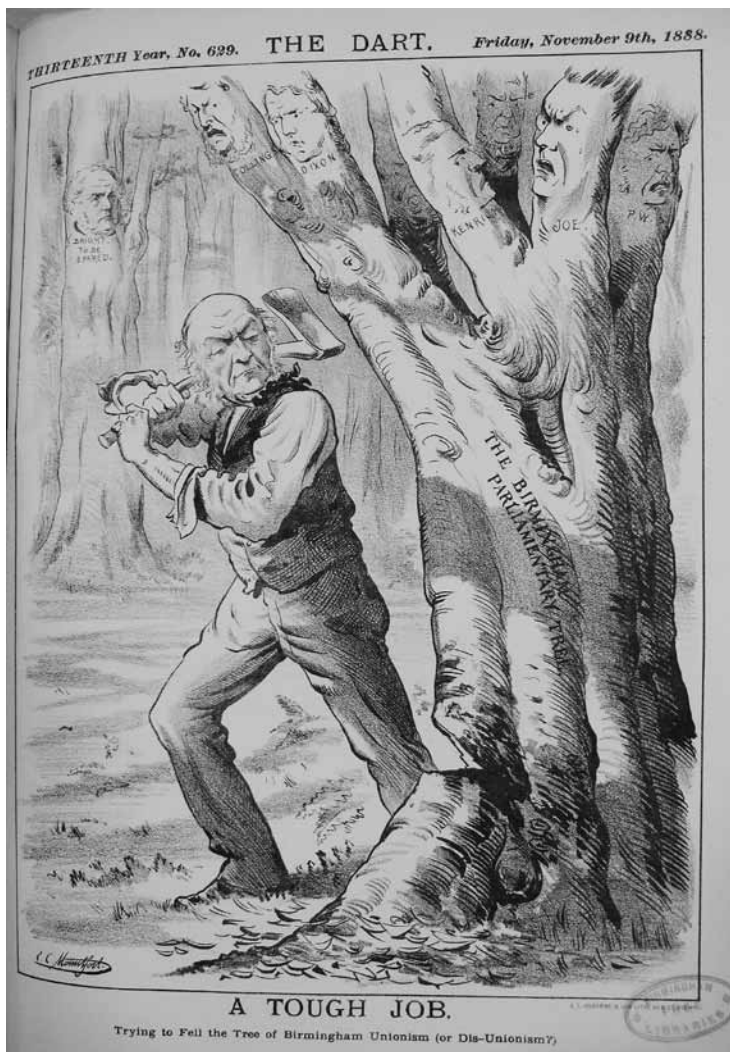
Bright was a liberal in his economics, a radical in his religious views and a defender of democratic principles. For him, as for so many other Victorians, this was not, however, incompatible with a deep patriotism which was offended by what he saw as Gladstone's surrender to the forces of corruption, bigotry and violence in 1886. As he put it in a private letter to the GOM at the height of the home rule crisis:

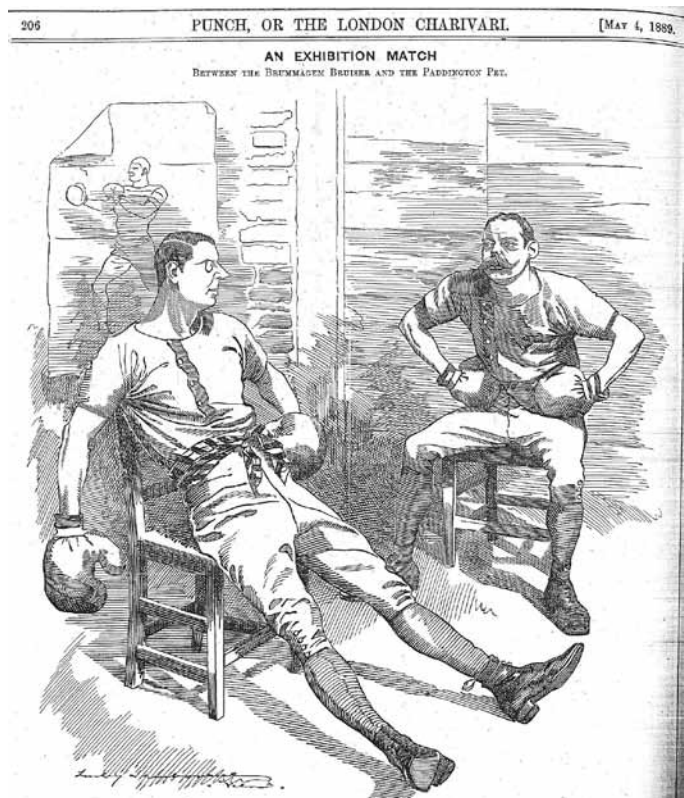
[A home rule parliament for Ireland] will be composed in effect of the men who for six years past have insulted the Queen, have torn down the national flag, have declared your lord lieutenant guilty of deliberate murder, and have made the imperial parliament totally unable to manage the legislative business.⁴⁶

Although in hindsight, Bright's stance on Home Rule may look like the reactionary behaviour of an old man, I would argue that if examined in context, it remained entirely consistent with his

Fig. 8. 'A tough job. Trying to fell the tree of Birmingham Unionism (or Dis-Unionism?)' (*The Dart*, 9 November 1888)

Fig. 9. 'Waiting for his skin!' (*The Dart*, 15 June 1888)





strong-held commitment to democratic principles. His obituary in the *Liberal Unionist* reveals the influence of his position on Liberals of all hues, from the Whiggest moderate to the committed radical:

The fact that the 'Tribune of the People' was utterly and unflinchingly opposed to the recent Irish policy of Mr Gladstone is in itself proof positive that such opposition was not the mere outcome of Tory prejudice. He was foremost amongst the advocates of full justice to Ireland, but on the question of the Union, he remained true to his principles.⁴⁷

John Bright, along with the rest of the Liberal Unionist Party, remained a passionate champion of free trade, despite his association with the protectionist Tories. He remained committed, as did Chamberlain and the other radical Unionists, to the disestablishment of the state church, to the avoidance of unnecessary foreign entanglements and to financial retrenchment. He continued to champion the equal rights and opportunities of all denominations, classes and ethnic groups, whether those were Wesleyans in Cornwall, Presbyterians in Belfast or Catholics in Glasgow.⁴⁸ In practice, as in political

manoeuvring, it was Bright's unique position as conscience of the nation that fatally undermined Gladstone's efforts to stir the liberals of Britain to support him in his attempt to settle the Irish question (fig. 11). That Bright's unforeseen legacy was that he taught the Conservatives how to successfully colonise the centre ground of British politics, while the Liberal Unionist leaders systematically betrayed all of his principles once he was dead, was not his fault. The unscrupulous and unprincipled actions of Joseph Chamberlain between 1895 and 1906 should not allow present-day commentators to claim Bright, even at the end of his life, as anything other than the epitome of radical Victorian Liberalism.

Ian Cawood is head of history at Newman University in Birmingham and author of The Liberal Unionist Party, 1886–1912: A History (I.B. Tauris, 2012), which was shortlisted for the Total Politics Political History Book of the Year and described by Vernon Bogdanor in the TLS as 'one of the most important works on the politics of the late Victorian era to have appeared in recent years'.

1 B. Cash, *John Bright: Statesman, Orator, Agitator* (London, 2011), p. 280.
2 R. A. J. Walling (ed.), *The Diaries of*

Fig 10. 'An exhibition match; between the Brummagem bruiser and the Paddington pet' (*Punch*, 4 May 1889)

Fig 11. 'John Bright cutting down the Gladstonian oak' (*Moonshine*, c. June 1886, reproduced in *Review of Reviews*, September 1898)

John Bright (London, 1930), p. 95.
3 D. Read, *Cobden and Bright: A Victorian Political Partnership* (London, 1967), pp. 191–5.
4 Bright speaking at Birmingham, 4 Feb. 1868. Quoted in W. Robertson, *The Life and Times of the Right Hon. John Bright*, vol. 3 (London, 1884), pp. 69–70.
5 Bright speaking in the House of Commons, 1 Apr. 1868. J. E. Thorold Rodgers (ed.), *Speeches on Questions of Public Policy by John Bright MP*, vol. 1 (London, 1868), p. 428.
6 Walling (ed.), *Diaries*, p. 535.
7 Bright speaking in Birmingham, 1 July 1886. *Birmingham Daily Post*, 2 July 1886.
8 Walling (ed.), *Diaries*, p. 96; C. H. D. Howard, 'Joseph Chamberlain, Parnell and the Irish "Central Board" Scheme, 1884–5', *Irish Historical Studies*, 32 (1953), pp. 324–361.
9 *Ibid.*, p. 540.
10 *Ibid.*, p. 536.
11 Bright to Caine, 22 June 1886; J. Newton, *W. S. Caine, M.P.* (London, 1907), p. 167.
12 T. A. Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy 1830–1886* (Basingstoke, 1994), p. 215.
13 A. Reid (ed.), *Why I am a Liberal* (London, 1885), p. 114.
14 Bright to James, 18 Feb. 1886, Henry James Papers, Herefordshire County Record Office, M45/165.
15 *The Annual Register*, 1886, p. 157.
16 Viscount Ebrington to Marquess of Hartington, 1 Mar. 1886, Devonshire

- Papers, Chatsworth House, DP 340.1938–9.
- 17 I. Cawood, *The Liberal Unionist Party 1886–1912: A History* (London, 2012), p. 36.
- 18 Bright to Chamberlain, 31 May 1886, Joseph Chamberlain Papers, Cadbury Research Room, University of Birmingham, JC5/7/41.
- 19 Powell Williams to Chamberlain, 31 May 1886, JC5/72/3. Bright had refused to appear on a platform with Chamberlain ever since Bright's resignation over the bombardment of Alexandria in 1882, a policy which Chamberlain had supported. K. Robbins, *John Bright* (London, 1979), p. 247.
- 20 Bright's letter was destroyed by Caine shortly after the meeting. Newton, *Caine*, p. 154. It is quoted, in part, in Walling (ed.), *Diaries*, p. 542.
- 21 *The Times*, 1 June 1886; J. L. Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, vol. 2 (London, 1933), p. 245.
- 22 Quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*, 4 June 1886.
- 23 Bright to Chamberlain, 1 June 1886, quoted in Walling (ed.), *Diaries*, p. 547.
- 24 R. B. O'Brien, *The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell*, vol. 2 (2nd edn, London, 1899), p. 158.
- 25 A. B. Cooke and J. Vincent, *The Governing Passion: Cabinet Government and Party Politics in Britain, 1885–86* (Hassocks, 1974), p. 429.
- 26 Quoted in *The Standard*, 25 June 1886.
- 27 Quoted in *Birmingham Daily Post*, 2 July 1886.
- 28 Quoted in P. O'Farrell, *England and Ireland since 1800* (Oxford, 1975), p. 177.
- 29 E. F. Biagini, *British Democracy and Irish Nationalism 1876–1906* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 242.
- 30 'You state you are convinced it is my intention to thrust the Land Purchase Bill upon the House of Commons. If I am a man capable of such an intention I wonder you ever took office with one so ignorant of the spirit of the Constitution and so arbitrary in his character.' Quoted in *The Times*, 3 July 1886.
- 31 Quoted in *The Times*, 6 July 1886.
- 32 J. Bright to G. O. Sumner, 26 July 1886, printed in *Reynold's Newspaper*, 1 Aug. 1886.
- 33 A. Sidgwick and E. M. Sidgwick, *Henry Sidgwick: A Memoir* (London, 1906), p. 456.
- 34 J. M. Lawrence, *Electing Our Masters: The Hustings in British Politics from Hogarth to Blair* (Oxford, 2009), p. 73.
- 35 Craig Sellar to Hartington, 28 July 1886, DP 340.2029.
- 36 Quoted in *Glasgow Herald*, 21 Oct. 1886. See also Lubbock's address to the City of London, quoted in M. Patton, *Science, Politics and Business in the Work of Sir John Lubbock: A Man of Universal Mind* (Farnham, 2007), p. 215.
- 37 E. Watkin to Hartington, 25 Dec. 1885, DP 340.1871.
- 38 Cartwright's address to the electors of Mid-Northampton, 18 June 1886, Cartwright Papers, Northamptonshire Record Office, C(A)1 box 16, bundle 14.
- 39 E. Heneage to J. Wintringham, 2 Jan. 1887, Heneage Papers, Lincolnshire Record Office, 2HEN 5/14/1.
- 40 Bright to Viscount Wolmer, 24 Apr. 1887, Selborne Papers MS II (13) 28, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.
- 41 F. W. Maclean, 29 Mar. 1887. Hansard, 3rd series.
- 42 Cawood, *Liberal Unionist Party*, p. 154.
- 43 *Liberal Unionist*, 39, April 1889.
- 44 Cawood, *Liberal Unionist Party*, p. 86.
- 45 The only copy of the 'compact' survives at Chatsworth House archives: DP 340.2205A, quoted in full in Cawood, *Liberal Unionist Party*, pp. 253–4.
- 46 Quoted in J. Morley, *Life of W. E. Gladstone*, vol. 3 (London, 1911), p. 329.
- 47 *Liberal Unionist*, 39, April 1889. For a discussion of John Bright's reputation as a 'Tribune of the People' see P. Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The self and the social in nineteenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 142–4.
- 48 E. F. Biagini, 'Radicalism and Liberty' in P. Mandler (ed.), *Liberty and Authority in Victorian Britain* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 101–24.

The Lloyd George Society Weekend School

A fascinating mixture of history, politics and debate

14-15 February 2015

Hotel Commodore, Spa Rd, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5ER

Saturday 14 February

- Lloyd George and Joseph Chamberlain – **Dr Iain Sharpe**
- The career of William Wedgwood Benn, 1st Viscount Stansgate and how he changed the course of Liberal history – **Dr Alun Wyburn Powell**
- The importance of Emlyn Hooson – **Professor Dered Llywd Morgan**
- Re-establishing the Liberal tradition in Montgomeryshire – **Jane Dodds**
- Being Lloyd George – **Mark Lewis Jones**, who played LL.G in the TV drama *37 Days*
- Devolution and local government – **Michael Meadowcroft**
- Formal dinner with guest speaker **Mayor Dorothy Thornhill**, three times elected mayor of Watford

Sunday 15 February

- The prospects for the general election: an analysis of the state of the political parties ahead of May 2015 – **Dr Jonathan Kirkup**
- Panel session led by **Roger Williams CBE, MP** with **Baroness Joan Walmsley**, **Mayor Dorothy Thornhill** and **Bill Powell AM**

For prices and accommodation see the Society Website: <http://lloydgeorgesociety.org.uk/en>

or contact the Secretary, Graham Lippiatt on 0121 3018 5950 or email: lloydgeorgesociety@yahoo.com