

failure would be falsified and the scheme carried out in a spirit of toleration and good fellowship. Sir George White (*Norfolk, N.W.*), speaking for the Nonconformists, said they were friendly to Irish higher education and Home Rule, and had therefore been comparatively little disposed to argue about first principles; they had done their best, not very successfully, to preserve the undenominational character of the Bill, but they thought too much had been conceded to the Roman Catholic priesthood. Mr. Balfour endorsed Mr. Redmond's congratulations to the Chief Secretary. The measure was clearly denominational, for, were the Belfast and Dublin governing bodies under it transposed, Catholics and Presbyterians alike would be shocked. But he did not complain because it was denominational, but because the arrangements regarding Maynooth might bring Dublin University under clerical control. The value of university life was less in the teaching than in free discussion among the students, and with this the Roman Church claimed to interfere. The civic and County Council element on the governing bodies of the constituent colleges was too large, and threatened academic freedom. But, on the whole, he cordially approved the measure. Mr. Birrell ridiculed the contention that the university in Dublin would be denominational, and remarked that Maynooth graduates in any case could only elect eight members in a Senate of thirty-five. As to the civic element, it was necessary to secure local sympathy.

After other speeches, Mr. Butcher's especially emphasising the need of residential provisions, the third reading was carried by 207 to 19.

The Bill was read a second time in the House of Lords on July 27, the Earl of Camperdown complaining that it was being hurried through. It was generally accepted; its denominational character, however, was again insisted on by Lord Ashbourne and the Marquess of Lansdowne; and Lord Macdonnell, the ex-Under-Secretary for Ireland, regretted that Trinity College had not come in. In Committee (July 30) a Government amendment was inserted prohibiting tests for Professors, the Marquess of Lansdowne, however, remarking that it was merely decorative; and an amendment allowing the erection of chapels, within or without the precincts, by private benefaction (a provision struck out in Grand Committee) was reinstated by 32 to 31, but this was struck out in the Commons by 142 to 40, and was not insisted on by the peers. The Bill became law on July 31.

The Old Age Pensions Bill passed through Committee in the House of Lords on July 28. Before the clauses were considered the Earl of Rosebery protested against sharing the responsibility for the measure by considering any amendments at all. He would have preferred to refer it to the country, but the *referendum* could not thus be indirectly adopted by that House. The Bill (he said) was objected to as non-contributory,

as financially inopportune, and as threatening the reserve of resources on which the country relied for defence. But in those respects that House could not amend it, and though he favoured the Earl of Cromer's amendment making it provisional, he did not think this would be accepted by the Commons. He had now delivered his soul and cleared himself of responsibility. The Lord Chancellor, who rose next, warned the House that this was part of the Budget and distinctly a money Bill, and that any amendments, except possibly those dealing with its machinery, would be regarded by the Commons as a breach of privilege. The Marquess of Lansdowne, however, said that the Peers had to think of the privileges of their own House. There was a tendency to restrict them; and owing to the guillotine, a Bill might come up in great part undiscussed. He quoted precedents of 1838, 1849, 1891, and 1906 to show that it had been either asserted by Ministers, declared by the House of Lords, or ruled by the Speaker (ANNUAL REGISTER, 1906, p. 243) that the House had the right to amend Bills which were only partly money Bills. It was the duty of the House to suggest amendments, leaving to the Commons the responsibility of rejecting them. In 1838 Mr. Speaker Abercromby had said that the Commons' privilege could best be secured by not pressing it too hard. The Earl of Halsbury added that the question of privilege only arose after discussion of the amendments; and, after a few words from the Earl of Crewe, the Earl of Cromer moved an amendment, limiting the operation of the Bill to December 1, 1915. He explained that another amendment would prevent any pensioner being deprived of his pension by the limitation, and argued in effect that it would give time for fuller consideration of the Bill and for reform of the poor law. After Viscount Wolverhampton had quoted a precedent of 1897, when the Earl of Halsbury as Lord Chancellor had ruled out of order an amendment to the Voluntary Schools Bill as a breach of Commons' privilege, the amendment was carried by 77 to 45. Other amendments were dealt with relating to the machinery of the Bill, and the discussion was described in *The Times'* summary as long and business-like. It had, however, no ultimate effect. A few more amendments were dealt with on Report, two being Ministerial; and on July 30 the Bill was read a third time without debate. Next day, on its return to the Commons as amended, the Speaker ruled that Lord Cromer's amendments to clause 1 were a breach of privilege, and these were disagreed with, as were others, either as breaches of privilege or *per se*. One, fixing the term of imprisonment disqualifying for a pension at not less than a month, led to a division and an attack by Mr. Balfour on the Government for refusing to accept what was clearly an improvement. But one, enacting penalties for false statements in connection with pensions, was accepted, Mr. Balfour noting that it would discourage the interference of political organisations to procure

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pensions, of which there were already signs, and which Mr. Asquith agreed was a grave danger. Later in the afternoon when the Bill was returned to the Lords, that House decided not to insist on its amendments. The Earl of Cromer formally though regretfully abandoned his own; the Marquess of Lansdowne said that the Government had accepted an extreme view of privilege, which would prevent the House discussing any social reform measure which might involve charges on the Exchequer; and, after the amendments had been dealt with *seriatim*, he moved a resolution declaring that the House, though not insisting on its amendments, did not accept the reasons offered by the Commons or consent to their being hereafter drawn into a precedent, and laying stress on the character of the measure as not purely a money Bill. The motion was carried, after some discussion, by 37 to 23. Throughout the proceedings there were vigorous protests against the alleged restriction of the Lords' privileges by the Commons.

It may be mentioned that Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) replied derisively to the Earl of Cromer's amendment by giving notice of a motion (July 29) that the pension voted to that nobleman should terminate on January 1, 1915.

The second reading of the Finance Bill in the House of Lords (July 29) had given Viscount St. Aldwyn an opportunity to deliver a severe criticism on Liberal finance. As the Government had only slightly reduced expenditure in the previous year and had since increased it, the charge of extravagance against their predecessors should be disposed of. But they would also have to increase expenditure on various civil objects, on the Territorial Army, and on the Navy, and the work at Rosyth should be hastened. All this would add several millions to the Estimates, and there was the Old Age Pensions Bill. Seven millions of taxation, however, had been remitted, but the sugar and coal duties had not been seriously burdensome. It was one thing to talk of a free breakfast-table when expenditure was comparatively small, and quite another thing to do so when we were spending 111,000,000*l.* and the income tax was 1*s.* in the *£*. It was not sound finance that those members of the working classes who neither drank nor smoked should go untaxed. He defended his own policy in spending part of the Sinking Fund on public works when Consols were at 110. Consols were never so low as in 1907, and one cause was the force given by the policy of the Government to attacks on property. It was at this time that they cast a new burden of unknown extent on the country. They had tampered with what should be our principal resource in war time. Lord St. Davids, in a maiden speech, ascribed the fall of Consols to the prosperity of trade and the multiplication of trustee stocks, and hoped that war taxes would be such that the whole people would feel them. The Earl of Cromer endorsed Lord St. Aldwyn's warnings, declaring that at the Treasury the