

SIR DOMINIC CORRIGAN (1802-1880):
DOCTOR AND PARLIAMENTARIAN

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Dominic John Corrigan was born in his father's hardware shop in Thomas Street in the Liberties of Dublin in 1802. The family was strongly catholic, and Dominic was sent to the Lay College at Maynooth for his general education. Having chosen medicine for a career he attended lectures at the Peter Street School and Trinity College in Dublin and at Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital. He later went to Edinburgh where he qualified M.D. in 1825 with his famous contemporary William Stokes. He returned to Dublin determined to achieve distinction in medicine, a daunting task for a catholic in those days. He was appointed to the Sick-Poor Institution in Meath Street and by careful study of the diseases affecting his patients he was able to publish valuable observations on fever and heart disease. His most important paper on rheumatic disease of the aortic valve appeared in 1832, and was ultimately to earn him eponymous recognition. He was appointed physician to The Charitable Infirmary in Jervis Street and later to The House of Industry Hospitals. Success did not always come easily, and in 1847 he was black-beaned for honorary fellowship of the Kings and Queen's College of Physicians in Ireland, ostensibly because of the stance he took in the controversial five-shilling-a-day award to dispensary doctors during the famine, but Corrigan attributed this ignominious rebuttal by his colleagues to sectarian motives. However, he humbly took the College licentiate examination, after which he was entitled to fellowship. He then became President for five successive years a feat not since equalled. During his term of office he provided the College with its hall in Kildare Street. The Government showed its gratitude for his work in the Great Famine by making him physician-in-ordinary to Queen Victoria, and in 1866 he was created a Baronet of the Empire, both unusual distinctions for a catholic.

Corrigan excelled not only in the study of medical science; he was a dominant force in medical education at home, and in London as a member of the General Medical Council: he was outspoken in his efforts to achieve a uniform standard of training for doctors. At the age of 66 when most men of his achievement might look to a well-earned retirement Corrigan decided to seek a seat at Westminster. The medical profession had long lamented its inadequate representation in Parliament, and Corrigan expressing willingness to fulfil this deficiency put himself forward as a candidate in the Liberal cause when Sir Benjamin

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Lee Guinness's seat became vacant on his death in 1868. He was defeated, but was successful in 1870. The backing of the medical profession was probably essential to his success but a study of Corrigan's parliamentary speeches shows that he sought more to further the cause of Irish Catholics than that of his mainly Protestant colleagues.

Corrigan's political thoughts are evident in a speech made in the year before his election to parliament. The occasion is a meeting in John's Lane Chapel to raise funds for the completion of the new church of the Augustinian Fathers in Thomas Street. On the platform were among others, The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor, Mr Edward Fottrell, the Very Rev. Monsignor Woodlock, Rector of the Catholic University, and many prominent members of the judiciary, business and professions. His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop, Cardinal Cullen, was in the chair. The church was packed to capacity and as Sir Dominic Corrigan came forward to address the meeting, he was greeted with 'loud cheers, again and again renewed'. He began his address on a nostalgic note:¹

Standing in this old church so many memories crowd back on my mind that I cannot refrain from trespassing on you, I hope for only a few moments. I may address you now by the title of fellow-parishioners (applause). There are some of you here too young to recollect what claim I have to that title, but I have that claim in reality, and it is a claim I will never surrender — you are my fellow-parishioners (renewed applause). Within a few yards of the spot on which I now stand I drew my first breath. I was born on the spot where now rises that grand porch and tower raising its head to heaven, on the summit of which will soon appear aloft the cross, the symbol of our redemption and of Catholic worship (hear, hear). I never forget that. I hope never to forget this place — the place of my birth, nor have you forgotten me (hear, hear). It is not very long since you gathered around me and cheered me in another place (applause, and cries of 'we will again'), and I hope it will not be long before we meet again on the same platform (hear, hear, and applause), which, although not so holy as this, is at all events useful to our country (applause).

He goes on to recall the phases of Catholic struggle in Ireland — first, the Penal Laws —

and when we lay prostrate — when we could only lift up our eyes and supplicate for mercy what was the reply of our persecutors? They spurned us (hear, hear). But in a few years there came a rumble of wars on the continent — thrones and nations shook to their centre — the wave of war rolled towards us, and then they released our fetters — not for justice sakes, but because they could not help it (hear, hear, and applause). We owe them no gratitude, but we have never practised revenge (hear, hear). We have forgiven those who injured us (hear, hear). Then half a century passed over us, and brought another phase; when liberated from our fetters with bended necks and outstretched arms we asked for equal rights. What was the reply then —

When millions then knelt humbly down
To ask of thousands for their own,
The thousands proudly turned away,
And to the millions answered — nay.

For a moment we stood aghast but not for long, for then up rose O'Connell (tremendous cheers). I knew there was still magic in that name; you will never forget it (cries of 'never'). One of the last times I ever saw him was when he sat on the steps of that altar, and when I sat with him, and when Father Matthew preached from the pulpit behind me, and when after the ceremonies he came with me to the old Castle of St. John, beside where I was born and with me mounted the old round stairs to the top of the Castle of St John (cheers). To return, uprose O'Connell with 30,000 men of Clare as his bodyguard, and with all Ireland at his back stood before the portals of the House of Commons, and demanded that the barriers should be broke down which kept us from our civil rights. Who opposed him? The conqueror of Napoleon and the Prime Minister of England. Who won? O'Connell (cheers and cries of bravo). How did he win? Mark me now — I wish his teachings had never been forgotten — he did not win by bloodshed or by violence (hear, hear). Over and over again, when I listened to him as a child, I heard him say — keep within the law. Every man that commits a crime gives strength to the enemy, and is an enemy to his country. (hear, hear). Then came the second phase. We had relieved ourselves from the fetters of the penal laws — we had obtained what is called Emancipation; and although some object to the word I hope it never will be forgotten, for its meaning is release from servitude. Then came the third phase. It was not half a century ago — it is only half a year ago — since we stood together to demand religious equality. When we sought to be relieved from penal laws we were fettered and prostrate. When we sought to be emancipated we were obliged to beg for our rights. On the last occasion it was not so. I stood on a platform not far from this. You stood around me — and we stood like men who knew our rights, and daring to maintain them (applause), and our words then were 'we demand religious equality and who dare refuse it' (loud applause). We may consider that battle was won, or nearly won — but won or not we dare them to keep it back. We never can hope for our country unless man of every creed meets his brother man as his equal, and there can be no equality in the country so long as there is religious inequality (hear, hear, and loud applause). There can be no friendship among men, there can be no nationality unless there is religious equality . . . We have not celebrated the relaxation of the penal laws, we have not celebrated Catholic Emancipation by an anniversary that might seem a triumph over our fellow-men, and I wish that some of those who act differently would follow our example. We are satisfied to be on equality with our fellow-men . . . When we have established equality then we shall look for the regeneration of Ireland . . . We desire that while we worship God in our own churches erected by us at our own expense, they will worship God in churches not built with our money (applause). We hope that before long one common banner shall float over us all and that there shall be inscribed on it 'God and our native land' (loud applause).¹

On February 21st 1871 Sir Dominic Corrigan made his Maiden Speech to the House at Westminster in a debate on Parliamentary and Municipal Elections. He stated that he had the gratification of being with both parties of the House — the minority party who he thought with, and the majority party who thought with him. In discussing a criticism of the matter under debate as being 'un-English', he said —

Not long since it was considered very un-English and un-Irish too (laughter) to have an election without big stones and brickbats. He hoped after the last hustings reminiscences of this kind would be deposited in the British Museum — he believed it was a piece of limestone which had been adroitly seized by an hon. member who had not long since come into the House (renewed laughter). It was not very long since a number of gentlemen had united in a well-known borough to form themselves into a joint-stock company for the purpose of returning certain members. It was not very long since an election would have been considered un-English which had not been characterised by bribery.² Did the honourable members sense the cool draft that would in time develop into a gale?

At home the papers waxed enthusiastically about the performances of the new parliamentarian from Dublin:

The Parliamentary *debut* of our distinguished representative, we learn from various sources was a complete success. He was listened to with marked attention, applauded with much heartiness, and keenly appreciated by all present. His delivery was very happy. Calm and deliberate, without labour or affectation, he evolved his arguments with clearness and point, but never sought to erect a superstructure of wearying detail or to enforce his opinions by reiteration, while in his illustration he was delicately humorous and most apposite.³

Corrigan's parliamentary career was to last less than four years and in this time acting in the Liberal interest he directed his attention to three issues — university education, religious freedom in education and the temperance cause. He was, moreover, ever vigilant in pleading for the rights of his countrymen, particularly when it seemed that Britain was likely to use force to impose her will on the Irish.

He had long regarded the Irish drinking habits as a cause for grave concern. He had seen the effects of excessive drinking among the poor of the city, and was constantly seeking a remedy to this Irish affliction. He had, some years earlier, strongly advocated a pure water supply for the city in the hope that this would reduce the consumption of whisky which he believed was being drunk to purify the water. In Parliament he turned his attention towards legislative methods of restricting the sales of alcohol. There was before Parliament at the time of Corrigan's election a Sunday Trading Bill⁴ which sought to forbid the sale of all goods except pastries on Sundays. Although this bill would have had the effect of prohibiting the sale of alcohol on Sundays, Corrigan did not favour it because of the religious inferences in the bill—

He did not believe that by legislation people could be made either moral or religious, or that anything in the New Testament imposed upon society such Sabbath observances as were contained in the Bill. Furthermore he believed the bill would encourage Sunday drinking. He told the story of an enthusiastic friend who like all enthusiasts got a little carried away with his own self righteousness — His friend told him he would not take a cab to go to church, and never employed his servants in cooking on Sundays, for he always dined upon cold meat. 'Well then', said he to his friend, 'you need never ask me to

dine with you on Sunday, for I don't like cold potatoes.' 'Oh, but' said his friend, 'we always have potatoes boiled'.

Corrigan believed that prohibition of the sale of alcohol on Sundays would do much to reduce intemperance in Ireland, and in 1872 he moved the Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill⁵ for a second reading. This Bill sought to establish that which had been in operation for fourteen years in Scotland, namely, the prohibition of the sale of beer and spiritous liquors on Sundays except in hotels. Corrigan brought to the attention of the house an unique aspect of the Irish drinking habit – 'The effect of the drinking habits in Ireland under the custom of what was called 'rounds' was peculiarly pernicious; and they led, not only to the ruin of the men themselves, but also to the great waste of their wages which received on the Saturdays, were too often dissipated in whisky on Sundays.' The sadness and the misery caused by whisky drinking were, Corrigan told the House, difficult to imagine. To emphasize his point he quoted from the *Freemans Journal*⁶ – 'The police courts presented a frightful appearance this (Monday) morning. A great majority of those in attendance bore the marks of violence, such as black eyes and broken heads. In the northern division there were 140 cases; and in the southern 114. A person looking at the crowd without knowing the cause would think a great battle had taken place.' An aside from a member that happily such instances did not occur in England touched a sensitive point in the Dubliner who retorted 'I have not quoted, as I might have done, abundantly from English newspapers for in them I find cases of drunken navvies dashing out the brains of their paramours and murdering their children on Sundays.'

The Sunday Closing Bill as it became known did not pass Parliament and Corrigan then sought to have the Act relating to the sale of alcohol amended.⁷ This Act stated: 'It shall not be lawful for any person to sell, or expose for sale, or to open, or to keep open any premises for the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday, or any day appointed for a public fast or thanksgiving *after nine o'clock at night within any city or town population of which according to the last Parliamentary Census shall exceed five thousand, nor elsewhere after seven o'clock at night on such days, and on other days after ten o'clock at night.*' Corrigan's amendment proposed to delete the underlined portion, the effect of which would be to prohibit the sale of alcohol on Sundays and holy days.

The vintners in Dublin and elsewhere were becoming distinctly alarmed at the persistent efforts of Sir Dominic to restrict their livelihood. Fully aware of this Corrigan informed the house that he wished to dispel the notion held by some that his move was 'an attempt to interfere with a supposed immemorial right of the trade.'⁷ He traced the history of the licensing laws and pointed out that the sale of alcohol

was forbidden on Sundays until 1833, when 'Perrins Act' made Sunday opening permissible. The time had come Corrigan said 'to have that bad Act repealed, for experience has convinced us that its effects have been most injurious to the morals, the comforts and the health of our people and of their families.' Corrigan then attempted to placate the publicans of Dublin, and on Friday, March 15th 1872, he spoke to a General Meeting of the Dublin Licensed Grocers and Vintners Association.⁸ He listed the promoters of his Bill – Mr. Pim, a large employer and manufacturer, Viscount Crichton, son of the Earl of Erne, member for Enniskillen, 'a strong conservative, opposed to Mr. Pim and myself in politics, and differing from each of us in religious persuasion as well as politics', Mr M'Clure member for Belfast, Mr William Johnston, of Ballykilbeg, Lord Claud Hamilton, member for Tyrone, and Mr Edmund Dease, member for Queen's County, who 'within the last few days has written to me to say that the voluntary closing of public houses on Sunday, which has only recently taken place in his own town, Ballybrittas, Queen's County, has been already attended with the most wonderfully good effects, in promoting the comfort and good conduct of the people.' Then there were the Catholic bishops who had little hesitation in supporting their baronet in moving a cause always close to their own hearts. The Most Rev. Dr Leahy, Archbishop of Cashel, in whose diocese a voluntary Sunday temperance law had been in operation for twelve years, with results wonderful to behold as the Bishop testified – 'A drunken man is to be rarely seen amongst us on Sundays. Rioting and blasphemy, the inevitable consequences of excessive drinking, which before the introduction of our law prevailed to a lamentable extent have ceased to desecrate the Sunday and to disgrace our towns . . . It has not, to my knowledge led even in a solitary instance to the setting up of unlicensed or shebeen houses'. The Most Rev. Dr Furlong, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ferns, had had similar gratifying results with voluntary Sunday closing in his diocese. The Most Rev. Dr Conaty, Bishop of Kilmore, gave his support stating – 'The Sabbath being a day of rest, the young and unwary assemble in the haunts of the idler, the plotter, and the drunkard. Here it is that wicked and designing men ply their victims with drink, and then engage them in societies alike subversive of order and religion'.

Corrigan had a petition signed by 235 grocers and vintners from his constituency petitioning for a total closing on Sunday, and he had also a protest from 3000 assistants in public houses in which they claimed that they worked long and unjust hours. He recalled an application from them 'to be admitted to visit the Gardens of the Royal Zoological Society in the Park on the forenoon of Sundays, as they had no leisure time on week days, and were obliged to be at their labours also on Sundays at two o'clock,' when the Gardens officially opened. This request the authorities regretfully refused as their attendants needed the mornings free for worship.⁸

The objections to Corrigan's Bill were that unlicensed premises would be opened and become an even greater evil, and that Sunday closing would legislate unfairly against the poor while the rich could continue drinking in their clubs. Corrigan answered these arguments by giving the experiences of the Bishops with voluntary Sunday closing; and he does not see any reason why the poor should not also have their clubs, and that if then the clubs for either rich or poor should present problems further legislation would have to be considered.

At Westminster he produced strong support for his Bill — His Eminence Cardinal Cullen, thirteen Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic Church, three Bishops, sixteen Deans, and twenty-one Archdeacons of the Protestant Church, the Heads of the Presbyterian Bodies and the Wesleyan Methodists and memorials signed by Justices of the Peace, and Governors of Gaols and Asylums, and more Bishops. Ireland he maintained needed stricter legislation on drinking than England — 'Beer is the general drink in England, beer taken to excess stupifies; whisky maddens . . . In England, each man drinks his beer in such quantity as he likes; in Ireland, in country parts especially, they drink in rounds in parties of five or six; each stands his round in turn, treating the party in glasses of whisky'.⁷ Corrigan's Bill was defeated by 33 votes and realizing that he could not hope to achieve total Sunday closing he supported the move for limited opening on Sundays as was being advocated for England, and accepted an amendment that was carried giving the law the power to close public houses on Sundays should a majority of citizens so **desire**.⁹

Corrigan believed that the English were inclined to over-react to events in Ireland, and that their handling of unrest in the country was at times more likely to incense rather than quell disturbance. 'He was sorry to see occurrences were occasionally passed over in Scotland and England which would bring down heavy censure on Ireland.'¹⁰ In 1871 a crowd gathered in the Phoenix Park to petition for the pardon of prisoners and the meeting ended in a riot with the police. The matter was debated at great length in Westminster and Corrigan did his best to persuade parliament to leave well alone and not add fuel to the fire with retaliatory arrests and trials. He said, 'The object of the meeting was legal, for surely it would be conceded that the people were entitled to meet to petition for the pardon of prisoners, whether the crime was treason or murder.' He assured the House that the number of injuries had been greatly exaggerated, and he warned that an inquiry would not arrive at the truth but only succeed in prolonging the whole business:

He remembered a few years ago, when the College boys 'bonneted' the policeman's hats on their noses at College Green, Colonel Browne read the Riot Act and gave the order "In the name of the Queen, charge!" The charge took place, sabres flashed, and the police galloped into the courtyard. There

was said to have been a dreadful massacre, and an illustrated journal published a very fine drawing of the scene, of course after nature, and not the less true that it had previously done duty as a sketch of the charge of the Scots Greys at Waterloo. The whole city was kept in a turmoil for two or three months, and after a vexatious inquiry into the affair, Colonel Browne was put on his trial for the dreadful assault. No wounded men could be found to give evidence either among the students or the police. Colonel Browne was of course acquitted: and then the College Boys, who had subscribed for the prosecution carried him from the court-house in triumph.

He dismissed as ridiculous the suggestion that the meeting was particularly offensive because it was held near the Viceregal Lodge. The site of the fracas was, he pointed out, the same distance from the Lodge as was the Marble Arch from Buckingham Palace. As to the inference that the riots had been designed to interfere with the people's recreation, he asked if the members of parliament were aware of the size of the Phoenix Park. 'Kensington Park, Hyde Park, and St James's Park put in line would not equal in measurement half the length of the Phoenix Park'. There was no need, he assured the House to seek 'a mysterious Fenian plot' just because there had been large numbers of the populace present — in the People's Gardens on a Sunday there would be 5 - 6000 visitors of all classes, and in the Zoological Gardens another 6,000. He regretted that there was nowhere in Dublin suitable for a large meeting and he suggested that part of the Park should be set aside for such events. Corrigan ended his appeal by asking that the law which was the same for both lands should be administered in the same way in Dublin as in London. 'Ireland' he warned, 'was content to be the sister of England, but would not be her Cinderella . . . Let bygones be bygones. Let us look to amend the future, and try to forget the bitterness of the past'. Parliament listened, but did not heed him. Trials followed, and two years later there was little sign of a conclusion.

Corrigan took the same line in the debates following a Galway election in which there were twenty-four prosecutions for undue influence and intimidation. He pointed out that there was wrong on both sides and that the truth would never be determined. 'Leave Galway to itself, and all will be friends again — a consummation devoutly to be wished.'

Corrigan slowly gained a reputation of being bold and courageous in parliamentary debate. His style was fluent and impressive, his English simple but perfect, and he could marshal facts with great skill. But he had faults. One was an irritating tendency towards repetition in his efforts to clench the argument, and this may at times have alienated his supporters. His temper was 'easily discomposed', and he could interrupt on a point of order not always valid.¹² His reputation with the Catholics of Ireland reached its zenith at this time, but he was viewed with some apprehension by the Protestant stock:

For the people of Ireland he had a character of which, perhaps, he was not himself altogether conscious. They regarded his career with peculiar interest, and his success with gratified pride; because they saw in him evidence of a Catholic rising against all opposition to the highest position possible for him to acquire. This feeling was noway sectarian, it was rather racial and national; they felt that intellectual triumph was their best and noblest vindication against the contumely which had fallen on them, in consequence of the ignorance enforced upon the nation by the penal laws.¹³

Corrigan, although remaining on the Board of the Richmond Hospital and probably continuing some private practice, had effectively resigned from medicine when he was elected to Parliament. Nonetheless his influence remained a potent one in Irish medicine and abroad his reputation continued to grow. 'Fame has some of the attributes of Time; it withdraws its object from the ordinary level of humanity, and produces an effect of remoteness. Thus it happened that when, in recent years, the name of Corrigan was mentioned in medical society on the Continent it was a surprise to most to learn that he still survived, so thoroughly had his name been identified with the great masters of the past whom they were wont to revere.'¹³

In 1871, Corrigan's life-long interest in and efforts on behalf of education were recognized when he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Queen's University to succeed the late Right Honourable Sir Maziere Brady. In this role he felt himself well qualified to speak out boldly in Parliament on the injustices of catholic education in Ireland. He voiced his views strongly during the second reading of the University Education (Ireland) Bill, which he published later in a pamphlet.¹⁴ He explained to the House the anomalous position of the Queen's University, which many members might have supposed was intimately connected with the Queen's Colleges. Such was not the case — 'The Queen's University knows nothing whatever of the proceedings in the Colleges. It has no control over them. Catholic students may go from Carlow College, and from St Mary's College, Dublin, from St Patrick's College, Thurles, St Kyran's and from private tuition to London University; but they will not be admitted to the Queen's University, sitting in Dublin, unless they spend the whole time of the undergraduate course in one of the Queen's Colleges, in Belfast, Cork or Galway.' Corrigan favoured a great national University in Ireland to examine candidates regardless of whether they were educated in college, school, or at home. There must not, he insisted, be any religious favouritism in education. — 'The state should be equally impartial to all denominations, giving equal aid to all — to those who desire to have denominational education, and to those who do not. Those words, Sir, explain, I hope sufficiently, the character in which I rise — not as the advocate of mixed education, but as the advocate of a perfect freedom of education, giving equal facilities for education to all.'

He supported the Bill in so far as it set out to establish a National University, but he deplored the fact that certain Colleges were to be affiliated to the University, and given rights of representation not shared by other colleges, and that the University was to be a teaching as well as an examining body. 'If a University were to examine only those students who were educated within its walls, then I might have little objection to its both teaching and examining its own pupils, because there would be no room for partiality; but the case is totally different when there is to be a University established which is not only to teach and examine its own pupils, but the pupils of other Universities and Colleges'. He compared the proposed system to that which operated in Scotland where it was not the qualifications of the extern lecturer that concerned the University but rather that his fee should not be less than that which the University charged for its own course.

Corrigan criticized the proposed constitution of the Council of the University which was to be made up mainly of professors, a bad policy in his opinion, because each would seek to promote his own interest. He objected violently to the proposal that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland should be Chancellor to the University — 'I consider it an indignity little short of insult to do it, and that, if done, it will destroy the independence of science; and the conviction will be that the only way to University distinctions and emoluments under such Chancellorship, will be up the back stairs of the Castle.'

But the main purpose of Corrigan's stand in the House of Commons was to air the injustices in educational opportunity for Catholics in Ireland. He set about his task with a vehemence to which Westminster was not accustomed — 'There is no security whatever in the Bill for fair representation of the religious persuasions on the Council. The members may be all Catholics, or Protestants, or Presbyterians. The probability — nay, almost the certainty — will be, that for many years to come, one half the members of the Council will not be Catholic, and then even that minority will be at length weeded out.' The Government, he asserted, could not be relied upon to keep its promises. Good intentions were not enough; there must, he claimed, be safeguards in the Bill. 'In 1845 on the formation of the Queen's Colleges, the Roman Catholic Bishops presented a memorial to the Government, praying that a fair proportion of the Professors and other office-bearers in the new Colleges should be members of the Roman Catholic Church.' Legislation on this matter was declined by the government, but reassurance of adequate representation was given, and what happened — 'The Professors now number 60 in the three Queen's Colleges, and how many Catholic Professors in the whole of the three Colleges, including Arts and Professional Education? — only 9. . . This is called mixed education . . . I often remonstrated against this weeding out of Roman Catholics, but was met by the assurance that it could not be avoided, as the most

competent person was always appointed, and the most competent person happened to be — of course, by accident — nearly always a Protestant.’ Furthermore, when the Queen’s College was founded appointments were made by the Lord Lieutenant, but this was only to have been until the Senate was ready to take up the task — ‘and now, at the end of nearly 30 years after that solemn promise was given, there is seen in Ireland what is not seen in any other — even the most despotic — country in Europe, that Professors, 60 in number, of Arts and Sciences are the mere nominees of a Viceroy.’

Corrigan closed his diatribe by taking up the matter of endowment in education an area in which Catholics had fared very badly indeed. ‘But suppose’, he said, ‘all these defects I have observed upon were removed, there still remains the intolerable injury that will be felt deeply and more deeply everyday — that while Trinity College is left in possession of at least £50,000 a year wrung by oppression and confiscation from the Catholics; while Royal and endowed schools are scattered the length and breadth of the land all devoted exclusively to Protestants; Catholic Colleges and Catholic Schools derive nothing from the State’. He noted that the House did sanction a grant to the Presbyterian Church and to Maynooth College, but that the House objected to doing so to the Queen’s University on the grounds that it would be a denominational grant:

Is it fair not to give the Catholic laity for their University education a similar grant? Let a similar act of justice be done for them as has been done for the clergy. Let them have a fair start in this new educational competition. If they then fail in the competition for degrees, emoluments, and honour, they will not be able to say they have not had fair play; but if they fail under the proposed Bill, which leaves thousands on thousands with Protestant and Presbyterian Colleges, and gives nothing to them, they will attribute their failure to injustice; and every rejection of a Catholic candidate that will occur will be a never failing repetition of heat-burning, sectarian discord, and disaffection in Ireland.

Corrigan had made his case strongly to Westminster. He had not forgotten the great disability of being a Catholic in Ireland, and it was his wish that future generations would not have to struggle against the difficulties he had overcome. However well his performance may have appeared to Catholic Ireland, there were many to whom ‘his strictness gave deep offense.’¹²

He decided not to contest his seat in the election of 1874. His reasons for withdrawing were probably due more to his age than any other factor. He was now 72 years old and the frequent journeys between London and Dublin cannot have been easy for one even of Corrigan’s robust frame. It was common practice for him to leave London by the Friday night mail and drive directly from the terminus at Westland Row to the Zoological Gardens to breakfast with the Council on the Satur-

day morning.¹⁵ His advocacy of the temperance cause had 'raised a storm of opposition against him with a certain party of vast influence in election matters.'¹⁶ The Vintners' association were prepared to go to considerable lengths to see that he was **kept out of Parliament, and he** may not have been prepared to meet the expense of another election. He now began to enjoy a well-earned retirement. He continued to travel to London for the Meetings of the General Medical Council, and to see private patients at Merrion Square, but more of his time was given to sailing and tending to his aquarium at Inniscorrig, where in 1879 he suffered 'a slight threat of a paralytic seizure'. However, he recovered sufficiently to resume a little practice, but on December 30th 1879, he developed a paralysis of the left side in his house in Merrion Square, and was carried up to bed, which he never left alive. He was attended by Sir John Banks, and Francis Cruise, the latter sleeping in an adjoining room 'in readiness for any emergency', and the Very Reverend Dr Donnelly saw to his spiritual needs. 'Surrounded', as Cruise tells us,¹⁶ 'by his devoted loving wife, son and daughters and nursed to perfection by experts,' Corrigan lingered on for some weeks. 'With characteristic simplicity and courage he made his preparation for death, received the last rites of Holy Church, and patient and calm awaited his hour. He spoke of it to me with perfect resignation the day before he died. The end came most peacefully and happily' on Sunday morning, February 1st, 1880 in his 79th year.

The cortège was one of the largest the city had ever witnessed. Following the chief mourners were the carriages of the President and Fellows of the College of Physicians, and a carriage conveying the College Mace, draped in crepe, borne by the beadle. After leaving the house at Merrion Square the procession made a detour through Kildare Street, past the College of Physicians, opposite to which it halted for a few seconds and then proceeded round by St Stephen's Green and Merrion Square to St Andrew's Church in Westland Row, where on February 5th the remains were interred in the family vault beneath the building. The services were conducted by his brother-in-law the Most Reverend Dr Woodlock, Bishop of Ardagh.

The obituaries and tributes were many. Let us select one which says much — 'By the death of Sir Dominic Corrigan, the medical profession loses one of its most conspicuous members, the University of Edinburgh one of its most illustrious graduates, and the Irish race one of its finest specimens. Though a perfect Irishman, Sir Dominic was as much at home in London, as in Dublin, and though a Catholic in religion, he had too much humour and too much humanity in his constitution to be a bigot'.¹⁷

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7. *Ibid.* 1872. Vol. 213. p 492.
8. Speech of Sir Dominic Corrigan, Bart. MP. on 'Closing Public Houses in Ireland on Sundays'. At a General Meeting of the Dublin Licensed Grocers and Vintners Association. Published on behalf of the Irish Association for Closing Public Houses on Sundays. March, 1872.
9. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*. 1872. Vol. 213. p 494.
10. *Ibid.* 1871. Vol. 208. p 1800.
11. *Ibid.* 1872. Vol. 213. p 826.
12. Obituary. *British Medical Journal*. 1880. 1. 227.
13. Obituary. *Freeman's Journal*. 1880. Feb. 2nd.
14. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*. 1873. Vol. 214. p 1659.
15. Obituary. *Dublin Journal of Medical Science*. 1880. 69. 268.
16. Cruise, F. R. 'Catholic Men of Science. Sir Dominic Corrigan (1802-1880).' In *Twelve Catholic Men of Science*. ed. by Sir Bertram Windle. London. 1912.
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