

CONSERVATIVE MEETING AT MIRFIELD.

A gathering of Conservatives was held last night, at the Mirfield Town Hall, to hear an address by the Hon. George N. Curzon, M.P. for the Southport Division. Mr. J. H. WHEATLEY presided, and he was supported by a large number of the leading Conservatives of the district.—After the Chairman had briefly opened the meeting, the Hon. G. N. CURZON moved a resolution of confidence in the Conservative Government, and expressed the hope that they might have a long term of office, in order to carry out the policy of the Union. In the course of his remarks he spoke of the present position of political parties, which he regretted to state was a phenomenal one, and marked the turning-point in the history of our country. He took a retrospect of the history of the Liberal party, which during the last 40 or 50 years had had almost a monopoly of power, due partly to a combination of circumstances and to the fact that they had had able and trusted leaders, but most of all because they had pushed forward beneficial reforms. (Cheers.) But from 1874 to 1880 the Conservative party were in power, led by a statesman who was now regarded, and always would be regarded, as the greatest genius of the age, but the policy of that statesman was arrested. After referring to the policy of the Liberal party from 1880 to 1885, he said the election of last November was thoroughly unsatisfactory, and settled nothing except the power of the "uncrowned King of Ireland." During the last session the Home Rule Bill, was thrashed out, and indignantly rejected by the House of Commons, and at the election which followed it received a more emphatic repudiation by the people. The net result of the election was that it had shivered and broken into pieces the once famous Liberal party. He wondered if the late Premier realised the tremendous and irretrievable disaster he had brought upon his party. The two sections of the party were each going about and saying that they, and they alone, were the real Liberal party. He then went on to contrast the leaders of the two sections of the party, greatly to the advantage of the Unionists. The country, he said, no longer trusted the Liberal party, believing that their strength and energy was gone, and that the machine of reform no longer exists. With regard to the policy of the Conservative party, he said the recent speeches of Lord Randolph Churchill furnished a clear and unmistakable programme of legislative reform, so that at present the country could be in no mistake about the policy of the Government. He then went on to defend the various points of the Conservative programme, and on the question of Ireland he contended that the political agitators led by Mr. Parnell were not a source of strength to Ireland, but a great curse, and that they could in no sense claim their movement to be a real national movement.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY, late Conservative candidate for the Shipley Division, seconded the motion, which was carried.

Other speakers followed.