The Eve of Conflict

When Norris returned to Nebraska in August, 1909, the prevailing sentiment in that state had become more progressive in response to national developments such as the insurgency revolt, to reform movements in other states such as Wisconsin, and to clamoring for further measures to protect citizens against banks and bosses. The legislature, controlled by the Democrats for the first time since statehood, enacted under Governor A. C. Shallenberger more liberal legislation than under Republican Governor George L. Sheldon. A bank guarantee law designed to protect depositors, an idea Norris had suggested in Congress, was the most important piece of new legislation. Other measures changed the primary from a closed to an open election, provided for the election of educational officers and judges on a nonpartisan ticket, and established the “Oregon Pledge Law,” requiring legislative candidates to state that if elected they would vote for the candidate for United States senator receiving the highest preferential vote. But the most important sign of increased progressivism to Norris was the widespread approval by Nebraskans of his course of action in Congress. Indeed, rumor had it that he would seek the senatorial nomination in 1910 in place of Senator E. J. Burkett, who was regarded as too conservative.

Norris was noncommittal regarding this nomination. He preferred to wait until party opposition to Burkett clearly crystallized and other candidates came forward. He claimed too that he was not particularly anxious to be a candidate for the Senate. Life in Washington presented “too many disappointments and too much opposition of a disagreeable and often of a dishonorable kind.”

The Norrises had planned to spend their summer traveling to the Pacific coast to visit relatives of Mrs. Norris. The special session of Congress, however, had forced them to abandon this idea. Instead, Norris made arrangements for several Chautauqua lectures beginning in September. Most of the talks were to be presented under the auspices
of the University of Nebraska's extension lecture program for very modest fees. Norris spoke on three topics: peace, the Panama Canal, and Cannnonism, with the last subject proving to be the most popular. His lecture, "The Dream of Peace," was an able presentation favoring the settlement of international disputes by a court of arbitration. Though most of the talks were delivered in churches, Norris' pacifism did not have a religious base or orientation. It emanated primarily from his experience as an American delegate to the Interparliamentary Union conference at Brussels in 1905. "Ever since then," he wrote in 1908, "I have been greatly interested in the subject." And the more he examined it, the more convinced he became that "the greatest disgrace of the present civilized age is that war is in any case and under any condition a possibility."  

He suggested that if the United States and England took the lead and settled all disputes by arbitration, "All the world would doubtless follow in their footsteps." He favored a vast network of separate treaties rather than a single treaty to which all nations would agree. And he thought the men appointed as arbitrators should be granted a long term so that they could make a careful study of international law and the administration of international justice. Then, too, with long terms jurors could rise above national prejudice and decide questions purely on their merits. Thus when a controversy arose the machinery to cope with it would be immediately available. Norris also coupled these lectures with a plea for a smaller navy, claiming the reason the peace forces in America were divided was that they could not agree on naval policy. While he favored curtailing naval expenditures, other peace advocates held that the best way to obtain peace was to be prepared for war. Accepting the necessity of maintaining an army and a navy and claiming that from 60 to 70 per cent of the nation's revenues were spent for war or the preparation for war, Norris, nevertheless, hoped that these expenditures could be curtailed as the civilized world began "to shake off the shackles of barbarism." Since war was a frightful reminder of the "barbarous ages" he considered it a disgrace "to the present civilized age" that any nation think of waging war with any other civilized nation, "when the difficulty could so easily be settled by arbitration."  

In his lecture on the Panama Canal, Norris hoped to communicate some knowledge of what the government was doing there so that his constituents could comprehend, for example, some of the difficulties encountered by the engineers in charge of the project. Though audi-
ences listened attentively to the address, none received it enthusiastically.

At the end of the second lecture when the audience was about to be dismissed, somebody called out: “Before you go, Mr. Norris, tell us about the Cannon fight; that’s what we want to know about.” Whereupon Norris, unprepared for another lecture the same evening, talked for an hour and aroused the first real enthusiasm of the evening. Thus it quickly developed that the lecture “Cannonism and the Remedy” was the most popular of the three.9

In these talks, during the question period when the audience reverted to politics, Norris replied that it was too early to say anything definite about his senatorial candidacy, though he did claim that he could not afford to make the race. In doing this he presented a basic criticism of the direct primary system.10 In the formal lecture he discussed the rules, the tariff fight, and the injustice of Speaker Cannon in depriving insurgents of their standing on committees, in refusing to recognize them in the House chamber or to speak to them in the corridors. Obviously, there was no need to prepare this lecture; it was delivered extemporaneously. Its structure varied with each delivery but its contents remained the same. When the series ended, Norris, evaluating his experience on the platform, said his audiences were of but one opinion on the matter; namely, “They are all insurgents.”11

With lecturing concluded, he made plans to return to Washington for the second session of the Sixty-first Congress, which was to open on December 6. Mrs. Norris and the children had left McCook in mid-September so that the girls might enter Washington schools at the beginning of the school year. The family rented quarters in the North East section of the city. McCarl again remained in McCook, devoting whatever time he could to acting as Norris’ secretary. And Norris, on his part, renewed arrangements with Polk, the Washington attorney who had proven so helpful, and hired a stenographer for his office, Room 214 of the House Office Building.12

Since rules for this Congress were already in effect, there was no open fight when the second session got under way. The situation continued as in the previous session: the House of Representatives conducted its business in its usual way, while an undercurrent of insurgent discontent revealed members who sought an opportunity to force the issue of the rules to a vote. Rumors were rampant and Norris learned that Cannon thought a fight should be made against every insurgent seeking re-election. While many Republicans hoped for an insurgent victory, Norris knew that few would dare to vote with them. On the
other hand, he realized that there were many Democrats who would have liked to see the insurgents defeated but who would not dare to vote against them.\textsuperscript{13}

Thus it was in an atmosphere of anxiety and tension that he prepared to examine and execute the nation's business. His removal to what were for all intents and purposes nonexistent committees meant that he would have more time to investigate issues. While prohibition was not a significant issue before the Congress, the people of Nebraska considered it of great political importance. Norris was very cautious and refused to consider it from any but a legal point of view: He said that while prohibition was a state and local issue, the federal government had done much to regulate and curtail abuses in the interstate shipment of liquor.\textsuperscript{14}

On the equally explosive issue of woman suffrage, Norris took a somewhat stronger position. He claimed that suffrage was a state function, and that Nebraska, or any other state, could provide for universal suffrage. He admitted that he was not opposed to woman suffrage if the state desired it. But he would not champion the cause until he became convinced that women desired the franchise.\textsuperscript{15}

Of more immediate importance were the issues of taxes and postal rates. Businessmen, particularly in Lincoln and Omaha, were concerned about the corporation tax, while those in the Fifth Congressional District, along with many of Norris' rural constituents, were concerned about postal rates. Norris, seeing no possibility of repealing the controversial tax, focused his attention on the postal situation. He believed that the administration had not considered both sides of the proposition. For example, the president claimed that it cost the government nine cents per pound to transport second class mail, especially magazines. To Norris such information indicated not that rates should be increased but that the government was paying too much for carrying the mail. He noted that express companies, competing for business, were still profitably carrying second, third, and fourth class mail for less than a penny a pound, primarily on short hauls. In most instances they left the unprofitable long hauls to the government. Therefore, he argued, "If the express companies can carry mail for less than a cent a pound, we ought not to pay the railroads nine cents per pound for carrying it."\textsuperscript{16}

The Post Office Department, he suggested, could profitably carry most mail under a zone system charging more for long than for short hauls. The express companies operated on such a basis and the government would do well to follow their example. Thus the solution necessitated no increase in postage on newspapers and magazines but
required reduction of the amount paid to railroads for carrying this mail. Furthermore, as Norris understood it, the government had a monopoly on mail matters. If its power were enforced, express companies could be prohibited from carrying second class mail, thereby securing to the government the benefit of profitable short hauls. Unless he could be convinced of the error of his reasoning, Norris announced that he intended to vote against any postal rate increase.¹⁷

Along with postal matters, Norris also gave careful consideration to legislation pertaining to land and internal improvements. Homesteaders called attention to financial difficulties in the North Platte irrigation project. The project, which incidentally was not in Norris' district, benefited from the Pathfinder Dam in Wyoming, constructed under the terms of the Reclamation Act. The settlers had originally been told that water rights would cost them no more than thirty-five dollars per acre. The price had since been raised to forty-five dollars per acre plus maintenance, and the inhabitants now found it impossible to meet their payments, support their families, and maintain adequate school facilities. Having traveled over this country, Norris was convinced that the law needed amendment. The financial burden would defeat the government's purpose, making it difficult if not impossible for the farmers to get their lands into full production and meet their payments too.¹⁸

Norris believed that the settlers should be relieved of their payment obligations for the first two years, allowing them to direct all their efforts toward cultivating the land. Once the land was workable, payments would begin. Norris wanted to amend the Reclamation Act to improve its usefulness, since he regarded it "as one of the most wholesome laws that was ever passed, for the West and, in fact, for the entire country." ¹⁹

Despite this praise, Norris criticized section nine, which provided that money allocated for reclamation be equalized every ten years among the public land states in proportion to the funds different states had furnished by the sale of public lands. This section "was the worst feature of the act" and accounted for projects that had been commenced without due consideration. He did not believe that public lands belonged to any particular state or that money from their sale should go back to the particular localities from which it originated. Such beliefs, he thought, could "make a failure of the reclamation business." Officials ought to be permitted to use the money where it would yield the best returns, thus benefiting all who desired to settle in the West and removing almost all political considerations.²⁰

Along with irrigation, dry farming represented another technique
for developing portions of the West. Both methods offered opportunities for the utilization of millions of acres that heretofore had been considered useless for agricultural purposes. Hardy W. Campbell first developed the technique of dry farming and had demonstrated it throughout the West. Campbell's work, however, was done outside of government service, and Norris wanted to increase the Department of Agriculture's appropriation bill so that it could encourage his method.\textsuperscript{21}

Norris also offered an amendment granting twenty-five thousand dollars to encourage experimentation with artesian wells for irrigation purposes in localities where farmers could not obtain sufficient water from streams. He did not expect the government to irrigate the land, but once artesian wells were shown to be feasible, people could then bore their own. He considered such an expenditure a valid use of public funds, one that would eventually enable large areas to raise crops and support prosperous farming communities.\textsuperscript{22} Norris' concern with agriculture was not limited to Nebraska. His remarks evinced his knowledge of the arid regions which, if intelligently worked along lines suggested during the Roosevelt administration, could fruitfully develop the vast inland empire of the United States.

When Norris showed his interest in the conservation of natural resources, he moved from issues of local and regional interest to a burning national question which was before the public in the form of a controversy between Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot and Secretary of the Interior Richard Ballinger. In the House of Representatives the controversy appeared as another phase of the struggle of the insurgents against the power of the Speaker.

Louis R. Glavis, a special agent in the land office in Seattle, dramatically charged that the secretary had connived with the Cunningham coal group, portrayed as a front for a Morgan-Guggenheim syndicate, to validate withdrawals from the public domain of choice Alaska coal lands. Pinchot backed Glavis in these assertions while Ballinger denied that he had been dishonest. Taft, in September, 1909, exonerated Ballinger and fired Glavis. And when Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver of Iowa, in January, 1910, read a letter on the Senate floor by Pinchot in defense of Glavis, Taft followed suit by removing Pinchot as chief forester. This row already had prompted Gilbert M. Hitchcock, a Nebraska Democrat, to introduce a resolution in the House of Representatives on December 6, 1909, providing for a committee to investigate the conduct of the General Land Office in the Department of the Interior. On December 21, Senator Frank P. Flint of California requested that the president transmit to Congress the information upon which he had acted in exonerating Ballinger of the Glavis charges.
On the same day Wesley L. Jones of Washington read on the Senate floor a letter from the secretary of the interior, in which Ballinger "courted the widest and fullest inquiry by Congress." He requested that the investigation include not only the General Land Office but the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Forestry as well. Norris agreed with Ballinger on this point and said that he would 'do all in his power to bring about a fair, honest, and searching investigation of the matter. But he was not certain that such an inquiry was possible, chiefly because the Speaker was not anxious to see too probing an investigation.23

After the Christmas recess Senator Jones offered a resolution providing for an investigation of the Department of the Interior by a joint committee of twelve members, half of whom were to be chosen by the vice president and half by the Speaker. On January 7, 1910, when the House of Representatives considered this proposition, Norris called for a broad, inclusive investigation which would have "the confidence and the faith of the American people." To bring this about, he suggested that the committee "ought to be elected by the House of Representatives and not appointed by the Speaker." He then offered an amendment "that the committee will be elected by the House of Representatives from the members of that body." The combined votes of the Democratic members and the Republican insurgents carried the resolution and thereby insured a fuller and fairer hearing than otherwise would have been possible. At the same time Cannon was administered a stinging and severe rebuff, his first in the battle against the insurgents.24

Cannon suffered defeat because one of his staunchest lieutenants, John Dalzell of Pennsylvania, made the mistake of yielding two minutes of his allotted time to Norris, who had been unable to gain recognition from the chair. The Rules Committee had previously agreed that the Senate resolution should be debated for six hours, three hours on each side. Any member who spoke would have a right to make a motion to amend, but all such motions would be voted on at the close of the debate. At that time, Norris and twenty-five other insurgents joined forces with the Democrats to carry the amendment with three votes to spare. More than thirty of Cannon's reliable Republicans were absent.25 Thus Cannon suffered his first defeat and undoubtedly realized that in Norris he had a foe whose understanding of parliamentary procedure and maneuvering rivaled his own. From this incident it should have become evident to Cannon that he would have to maintain eternal vigilance to prevent the insurgents from receiving another opportunity to gain the upper hand.
Norris' motion evoked a great consternation. Since the amendment provided no method by which the House could vote, it was decided to delay the choice of members on the investigating committee. The Republican machine and the Democrats each held caucuses, while the insurgents, who were now well organized, met at the spacious residence of Congressman William C. Lovering of Massachusetts. Here they decided to insist on naming at least one member of the committee. The Democrats would name two and the regular Republicans the remaining three members. They also decided that neither Payne nor Dalzell, Cannon's chief aides, should be allowed to sit on this committee. They were able to insist upon this arrangement only because the Democrats in their caucus accepted it, while Speaker Cannon undoubtedly did not want to force the issue and risk another rebuff.

Norris, though unanimously tendered the insurgent position on the committee, refused on the ground that critics would say he introduced the amendment to promote his own advantage. He suggested that Edmond H. Madison of Kansas be selected, and to this the group agreed. With Madison's appointment the twelve-man committee was not evenly divided; administration supporters chosen by the vice president and the Republican caucus in the House of Representatives still dominated it. But Madison's presence assured Glavis and Pinchot of at least one sympathetic member who would insist that their side be given a full hearing. Therefore, as a result of his amendment, Norris claimed, "A real investigation was had."

During the investigation, the attorneys for Pinchot and Glavis, though unable to prove their clients' assertions, were at least able to demonstrate that Ballinger had no enthusiasm for and little sympathy with the cause of conservation. Louis D. Brandeis impeached the integrity of the administration by showing that crucial documents offered as evidence against Glavis' charges had been predated. As a result of these and other findings, the investigation, launched as a gesture to political expediency, proved to be a considerable burden to the Republican party in the next presidential election.

Since Taft thought the charges leveled against his secretary of the interior were unjust, and since he regarded Pinchot "as a good deal of a radical and a good deal of a crank," he was none too happy about Norris' amendment. To Taft, Norris and the insurgents were committed to the cause of Pinchot and would be incapable of coming to a just verdict based on evidence if that evidence in any way threatened the policies and the friends of the previous administration.

On the other hand, Norris and his fellow insurgents believed that Taft had allied himself with the Republican old guard and was under-
mining the Roosevelt policies. Even worse, the president had sided with the Speaker in this controversy and with the cause against which the insurgents had been fighting. As a long-time, bitter foe of conservation, Cannon, in the eyes of the insurgents, had now won the administration to his point of view. The president, the insurgents were now convinced, would have to be regarded as a traitor to the Roosevelt policies and another bulwark in the system of privilege they were attacking. Taft's treatment of the insurgents, too, reassured them that they were correct in their evaluation.

On January 6, 1910, the day Dolliver read the Senate Pinchot's letter endorsing the Glavis position, Norris wrote the president:

There was published in the newspapers of January 5 an Associated Press dispatch to the effect that you had decided to deprive the "Insurgents" in Congress of all executive patronage. The article referred to purported to come direct from the White House and inasmuch as it had remained unchallenged and undisputed I feel warranted in assuming that it is true and has your approval. I am likewise led to this conclusion because the recent recommendations from "insurgent" Republican Congressmen have not received the favorable consideration by the heads of Departments formerly accorded.29

He explained to the chief executive what the insurgent members of the House were striving to do. He insisted that they had never made any attempt to influence votes "upon any proposition other than the rules of the House," and that they were loyal Republicans who believed in carrying out in good faith the pledges of the party. Moreover, he claimed the insurgents had taken "no stand against the present administration" even though the president at the outset of his term of office took a stand against them in their effort to change the rules.30 The president, of course, had the legal right to deprive any member of patronage if he so desired, but Norris thought that if a reason was given for this action, "common fairness and justice" demanded that the correct one be presented; namely, that the insurgents opposed the rules, and not, as had been suggested, that they were unworthy members of the Republican party.31

Previously, in December, 1909, as the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy moved toward a climax with the convening of Congress, Taft decided to use the patronage weapon against insurgent Republicans on the grounds that they were doing everything to bring the Democratic party into power. The president apparently took this position at the insistence of Cannon and other party leaders.32
When Taft responded to Norris on January 10, 1910, the day he dropped Pinchot from government service, he convinced Norris that he was being punished for his fight against the rules. Taft claimed Norris' letter contained "such misstatements that I must answer it." He denied Norris' charge that he had made any statement to the press and averred that he had taken no part in the fight over the House rules. Then he presented a forthright statement of his position:

What I declined to do was to join those who differed from a majority of the Republican Party and stayed out of the caucus, when as leader of the party I am dependent upon party actions to secure the legislation that has been promised. It did not then seem to me, as it does not now seem to me, that as titular leader of the party I should take sides with fifteen or twenty who refused to abide by the majority votes of the party, but that I should stand by whatever the party decides under the majority rule, whatever my views as to the wisdom of the rules, which are peculiarly a matter for settlement in the House itself. It has been a custom for a Republican administration to honor the recommendations of Republican Congressmen and Senators with respect to local appointments, subject, however, to the condition that the candidates recommended should be fit for the place. This custom has grown up with a view to securing a party solidarity in acting upon party questions. The only indication that I have given has been that with respect to legislation which I have recommended, there should be party action to discharge the promise of the party platform, and that those who feel no obligation in respect to it can not complain if their recommendations are not given customary weight.

The president, by refusing to accept Norris' thesis that the insurgents were loyal Republicans who were only challenging the rules, placed them in the position of opposing the Republican party. This created a dilemma for the insurgents, but they were too far committed to turn back or stop in their fight against Cannonism. The Ballinger-Pinchot controversy seemingly offered them a way out. They were loyal Republicans, loyal to the policies and principles of Theodore Roosevelt, while Taft, Cannon, and the old guard were destroying the very things that had made Roosevelt and the party so popular with the American people. Thus by 1910 the insurgency movement in the House of Representatives had become part of the conflict between progressive and standpat Republicans that was to tear the party asunder.

Norris, however, refused to accept Taft's statement as final. He felt
that the president, by stating in effect that he had taken no part in the fight over the rules of the House, had impeached his integrity. Norris thought it only fair, since he first made the statement, that he should present the evidence upon which it was based; namely, claims by insurgents that Taft labored to convince them to support the Speaker in his effort to adopt the old rules. "If you were taking no part in the fight," Norris wrote, "then you were most woefully misrepresented by some of your closest advisors." 34

Norris then listed all the measures wherein he had supported the president, while noting that the Speaker and his followers were opposed to practically all of them. He claimed that Cannon had made committee assignments so as to "prevent the enactment of many, if not all, of these measures." Thus Norris attempted to answer the charge that the insurgents were not good Republicans and, by presenting evidence that they supported many more planks than did the followers of Cannon, he implied that the insurgents had reason to complain that their patronage recommendations were being ignored. He wisely concluded that he was in no way "piqued or grieved" that executive patronage had been taken away from him. Whether it was returned or not he intended to do all in his power to help his party redeem in good faith the pledges it had made to the country. 55

Taft, unwilling to accept Norris' premise that he was a loyal Republican while administration men were violating party pledges, immediately responded. He claimed that his only interference in the rules fight in March, 1909, was to try to effect a compromise by suggesting to all congressmen who came to see him that majority rule must prevail if the legislative burdens assumed by the party in its platform were to be enacted. To Norris and the other insurgents, this statement was a validation of the charge that the president had used his power against them. Taft implied that he was withholding patronage from the insurgents because they chose to ignore the obligations of the Republican platform. He wanted only to prevent them from placing opponents of the administration in federal offices, thereby making it easier for the Democratic party to reassert itself. However, as of the date of this letter, January 11, 1910, Taft had withdrawn patronage from only four insurgents: William Cary and Irvine Lenroot, both of Wisconsin, Clarence B. Miller of Minnesota, and Norris. Soon others found that their recommendations were ignored. 56

The insurgents, of course, had reason to be bitter and to complain about their shabby treatment by the president. During the tariff fight, when old guard Republicans saddled Taft with what in many respects he considered an unsatisfactory arrangement, he never once threatened
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to use the patronage weapon against them.37 By exerting it against the insurgents, Taft neither strengthened the Republican party nor gained support of his legislative program since, as Norris pointed out, the insurgents were already giving him more support than the regular Republicans on most issues.

Once news of Taft's action reached the home districts of the affected members, public sentiment, already critical of the administration, became even more hostile. The president's action, based on the premise that the insurgents with their patronage were aiding the Democratic party, helped only to widen the growing breach in the Republican party and to convince the insurgents of Taft's betrayal of his predecessor's policies. It was a singular example of inept leadership which, against his own inclinations, forced Taft into a firm alliance with the old guard in the Republican party.

Thus, by January, 1910, the stage was set for the notable, dramatic, and historic battle that culminated the insurgency revolt against the power of the Speaker. Norris and his cohorts, deprived of their patronage and committee standing, ignored by their colleagues in the House of Representatives, branded as disloyal Republicans and avowed enemies of the administration, had everything to gain and nothing to lose by finding a legislative lever to open a wedge in the House rules.

Norris, as a result of his resolution calling for the election of members to the Ballinger-Pinchot investigating committee, had emerged as the insurgent leader.38 He had revealed himself as a skilful parliamentarian, equal or almost equal in knowledge and ability to Cannon himself. Though his position in Congress and his life in Washington were now unpleasant, he did not intend to deviate from his course under any circumstances. Letters from constituents approved his stand and helped convince him that popular support would continue even if patronage would not. A friend, sounding public sentiment, wrote:

Yesterday I was on the Street, and I sidled up to a group of men, who were talking about the Administration, and they agreed among themselves that they expected Taft would quit the office, as much a hated and despised man as ever Grover Cleveland was. I don't know how all this is going to end. Something will have to be done. People are not sticking by Party so closely as they were a few years ago, there is not nearly so much politics as in former years, people are wondering now, where they are at, and how they are going to remedy the wrong—that has its grip on the country today. Unless the insurgent movement wins out, there will be a Democratic President next time. Probably people are not always
going to stand for half a dozen men to rule. My business takes me in Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas, and as a matter of fact there don’t seem to be any parties any more among the common class, it is any thing now to clean up the machine.\textsuperscript{39}

Another more succinctly stated, “The West is warm over the fight you are having and satisfaction is expressed everywhere with the stand you have taken.” Both the Omaha Bee and the Nebraska State Journal were giving space and attention to Norris, claiming along with other papers that Taft was rapidly losing whatever popularity he had in the West. McCarl was convinced that loss of patronage would make Norris more popular than ever with the voters in the Fifth Congressional District and would improve his chances for the senatorial nomination. McCarl felt that no “standpatter” would have a chance against Norris in the 1910 primary, either congressional or senatorial, and that no Democrat, not even Fred Ashton, would be eager to oppose him in the election.\textsuperscript{40}

Thus Norris, heartened by public approval of his position, was convinced that the fight the insurgents were making was just and was based on sound principle. He was more than ever determined to continue it, regardless of the outcome. With patience and fortitude he awaited an opportunity to drive a wedge into the procedural block that Cannon and his chief lieutenants were utilizing to prevent the insurgent Republicans and the Democrats from administering him another defeat similar to the one already experienced in the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy. Norris hoped that it might come soon. If not, he would still be satisfied that he had helped to sow the seeds that would allow others to “reap an effective harvest for free and untrammelled representation in the House.” \textsuperscript{41} As it turned out, an opportunity was not long in forthcoming.