

In a few years men learn to reason, the extreme violence of opinion subsides, hostile theories correct each other, the scattered elements of truth cease to contend and begin to coalesce, at length a system of justice and order is deduced out of chaos. Many politicians of our time are in the habit of setting it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story who would not go into the water until he learned to swim. If nations are to wait for liberty until they grow wise and good in slavery they may well wait for ever."

I think there are unmistakable signs that the dark night for Ireland is passed and that the hour of deliverance is at hand. It appears to me that English statesmen and people are at last aroused to the necessities of the situation. Lord Beaconsfield said that while they had not listened to earthquake and lightning, the still small voice would reach the conscience of England. I think that before long the English Parliament and the English people will concede those rights which they claim for themselves. It may be said that this is a question which will create dissensions among our people. I do not believe that this is the case. Protestants and Catholics alike are interested in the solution of this great problem. I am assured that Irishmen and their descendants all over the world would like to see the same rights given to Ireland which are enjoyed by other portions of Her Majesty's Dominions. Mr. Foster, at the close of a long and eloquent speech which he delivered in Ireland, concluded by making use of the form of words appended to all revolutionary documents, namely, "God Save Ireland," and I am certain that every generous heart throughout the world will earnestly and devoutly repeat that prayer. We trust that the prostrate from so long bowed in the dust may at last stand erect in all the dignity of freedom; that the people of Ireland may be as happy and prosperous in the future as they have been unfortunate in the past; that there may be the most perfect union amongst all classes of her people and that they may be guided by wise counsels and just judgment; that they may be saved from their own fierce passions and those outrages which disgrace a noble cause and a gallant and generous people; that they may be saved from the wiles of desperate demagogues, and that at no distant period Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland be as happy, loyal and contented as Her Majesty's subjects were in Canada. And that the Irish land may belong to the Irish people, and with her own free Parliament she may prove the glory and pride, the strength and bulwark of England, instead of being, as she now is, the weakness, the menace, and the abomination of desolation of the Empire.