

onial Secretary, which directly or indirectly seemed to indicate that this was none or little concern of ours, should be accepted as a bar against our assuming to ourselves the exercise of that right on all fitting occasions. However, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend upon this occasion—although I think the adoption of the different form which was used last Session has its inconveniences made plain in the resolutions which are before you—further to insist upon that question, whether you call it one of form or one of substance. But I say that that altered form has been the occasion, if not the cause, of some of the criticism which, from unfriendly lips, has proceeded with reference to the language of the hon. gentleman's resolutions. Now, I desire to attract the attention of the hon. gentleman to some of those criticisms in the hope that we may find him, and those who sympathise with him, disposed to address themselves, as I think all who favor this cause ought to address themselves, to the earnest effort to minimise all cause of objection and to produce as nearly as possible unanimity. In that sense and with that object, it is not my intention to move at this time any amendment to the hon. gentleman's motion, but rather simply to state across the floor the difficulties, more or less serious, which have been suggested from several quarters, and in which there appear to be some merit, in the hope that the hon. gentleman will find it consistent with the attitude which I am taking towards his motion, to seek with me some remedy for such of these objections as may be removed, and to make this resolution as accurate and as effective as possible. The statement which is made in the second paragraph of the resolution as to the character of the measure of Home Rule to which we gave our adhesion last Session, has been pointed out not to be, in its present form, accurate. It is so. The statement is that we ask for a measure of Home Rule satisfactory to the people of Ireland. That phrase is used in the resolution of last Session, but, as the hon. gentleman who made the criticism remarked, it is used with certain qualifications which are deemed to be of very considerable significance. Now, I think that in a historical statement of facts, it is our duty to attend to a criticism of that description, and to take care that the statement of facts is correct, which may be done by either omitting one of the descriptions of the character of the measure of Home Rule, that one which the hon. gentleman has given, or by inserting the whole of the description which was given in our resolution, so that it may just reappear here what we did agree to last Session. Then the language which is used in that portion of the resolution, the fourth paragraph, which deals with the question of the Coercion Bill, is the language of protest, and more than one hon. gentleman, I think, has pointed out to the hon. member that this is language which implies censure and condemnation. I myself am of opinion that it is language not the best calculated to promote the object which we both have at heart. I am of opinion that it would be much more suitable to adopt the language of hope and request, than the language of protest. You may protest against an accomplished wrong, but you are dealing with that which you deem to be a wrong, and which you hope to avert, and I think the expression of hope would be much more suitable to the occasion, and much less obnoxious to the criticisms, of some degree of weight, which have proceeded from the benches opposite. I, therefore, invite the hon. gentleman, in the spirit which I hope I have made sufficiently plain to him, to make a modification in that respect, and to indicate our hope with reference to the non-adoption of this Bill, rather than our protest against the measure. The hon. gentleman, when he proceeds to deal with the character of the measure of Home Rule, which he asks us to express a hope shall be granted to Ireland, as expressed in the fifth paragraph—that also is open to the criticism which was made from the

opposite benches. We have heretofore, and I think wisely, rather dealt in generalities with reference to the description of the measure of Home Rule to which we address our sympathies, and the proposal of the hon. gentleman is one which I do think,—I have no doubt, without intention—but which I do think is calculated to overload, and embarrass, and render difficult the acceptance of the resolution he asks us to adopt. The hon. gentleman proposes that by a single word, a single phrase, we should invite the Imperial Parliament to give a particular description of constitution to Ireland, namely, the Canadian Constitution. He says we should give the same measure of Home Rule, such a measure of Home Rule as is enjoyed in the Dominion of Canada. Well, now, it would take a long time, and I am sure it would be very needless, to engage in the discussion of what the difficulties are in applying the Canadian constitution to Ireland. But I would call the hon. gentleman's attention to the fact that one of the greatest difficulties which the measure of Mr. Gladstone met last Session was this: That it did not provide for continued representation in the Imperial Parliament of the Irish people, in respect of Imperial concerns. Looking at it from an English and Scotch point of view, it was not a question so much of what was given to the people of Ireland to be dealt with by the Parliament at Dublin, as it was the fact that large Imperial concerns were taken over to be dealt with absolutely by a Parliament, no longer of the United Kingdom, but by a Parliament of Great Britain, without any voice of the Irish people in the management of those concerns. The question, for instance, of the Customs and Excise, the question of the fiscal policy, all the questions of foreign relations, the question of defence both by sea and land—all these questions were to be disposed of for the Irish people, but not in any sense by the Irish people. And it was felt, too, that the danger was being run of a further separatist tendency in the ultimate development of that scheme, and that was one of the very great difficulties in the way of the adoption of the scheme by leading English and Scotch Liberals, and by the constituencies of Great Britain. Well, now, we are not here called upon to determine whether that was wise, or whether it was foolish, but is it wise for us—I appeal to the hon. gentleman, whether it is wise for us to undertake by a stroke of our pen, by three words of the English language—to define the precise character of the measure of Home Rule we desire to be given to the people of Ireland? I think not, and therefore I would propose to the hon. gentleman, rather to use once again some of the phrases which we have used before, or equipollent phrases, and not to engage in an excursion in this definition of terms as to the character of the measure of Home Rule which we think ought to be given. Sir, I feel that the Canadian Parliament intervening in this matter acts under a very grave responsibility, and I am anxious that we should not say a word in debate—I am still more anxious that we should record no solemn judgment—which we cannot defend before the Empire and before the world; and therefore I wish that we should be extremely careful as to the language in which we put our deliberate judgment upon this subject. If it were clear that we could cut and dry a constitution for Ireland, none would be better pleased than myself that we should undertake the task. But I do not think it is to be done in the brief deliberation and in the short space of words in which the hon. gentleman has attempted to do it by this short cut of proposing the Canadian scheme. Now, as I have said, if this had been an ordinary occasion, if we had been dealing with a question which is to be disposed of according to the ordinary method of parliamentary tactics, if even I had been adopting the position which was adopted towards myself last Session, I would have proposed before I sat down an amend-