

the union continues, and a common parliament and executive will still act. (Hear, hear.)

All the Irish people claim is the local management of their local affairs. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Doubtless, Mr. Chairman, these affairs will be managed on popular principles. Doubtless the present centralized and autocratic system, under which important county business is done by Castle authorities and by sheriffs and grand juries, chosen not by the people, will be modified—(hear, hear)—doubtless the people will gain control of their own affairs. Doubtless there will be, but doubtless also there ought to be some change in this direction; and this, though naturally not agreeable to the present ruling minority in these concerns, seems just to us. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) We would not tolerate in Canada for 24 hours the condition that obtains in this regard in Ireland. (Loud cheers.)

They say there will be oppression. How? By whom? In what? There have been oppression and ascendancy in times past; and those who now express these fears were the supporters of that system. (Hear, hear, and applause.) But I have shown you that in the points dreaded precautions are taken, and I ask that we should be shown any tangible, reasonable ground of apprehension, and I for one am prepared to make the effort to meet it. But the bottom of it all is this, and it is not unnatural—it is the lower side of human nature, but it is human nature still—the bottom of it all is the reluctance of the minority to allow the majority to rule. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

I am not for a divided Ireland in local concerns. I am against that, more, if I am to make a distinction at all, in the interest of the Protestants than of the Roman Catholics. I am against it in the common interest. I am convinced that the true interests of Ireland, and of each of the classes, creeds—races so to speak—which there

exist, will best be served by the common local concerns of that country being managed under a common Parliament and a common executive. (Hear, hear.) In truth I am bound to say that although northeast Ulster speaks loud and strong, although she expresses her apprehensions with great freedom and force, she does not ask for separation from the rest of Ireland. That would be a cowardly thing to ask; because if there were reality in the local apprehensions, if Ulster were likely really to suffer, if strong northeast Ulster, with its popular power, with its intellectual power, with its material power, were likely to suffer, what would become of the scattered and small minorities of Protestants through the rest of Ireland? (Hear, hear.) For shame's sake they could not, if they would, ask to be separated. But they say:—"We who are so strong, who can manage our own affairs as we please, who control Belfast and the neighboring municipalities—and who manage them according to the well-understood principles of Protestant ascendancy—we are so afraid that we may be treated pretty much as we used to treat the others—(cheers and laughter)—that there must be no Home Rule for Ireland at all."

Now, I maintain that these apprehensions are wholly imaginary. (Hear, hear.) But I hold it to be important under any circumstances, and most important having regard to these allegations, that we should give, as your address suggests we should give, all the guarantees, securities and restraints against injustice that can be reasonably devised. But removing, as we can do, as the Bill proposes that we shall do, the question of religion from the political arena, I want to know what it is in respect of which oppression is to come in. I want to know what it is in respect of which injustice is to be done. I want to know how Protestant as distinguished from Catholic is to be injured. And I want to know whether it is reasonable that the men

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