

that I won't name to-night; somewithin and some without its ranks being opponents through honest fear and misapprehension, and others through long-continued prejudice and aversion. But, making all allowances, we are as a people favorable to Home Rule for Ireland. (Cheers.)

I think it important, ladies and gentlemen, at the very opening of my remarks, important under any circumstances, but specially important in view of the tone and attitude taken in certain quarters in this city in reference to this event, to recall to your recollection the course of proceedings on the subject of Home Rule in your national Assembly, in the Canadian House of Commons. In that Assembly three different Parliaments, elected upon three several occasions, have at different times during the past ten years spoken upon this question.

The Parliament elected in 1878 spoke in 1882, upon an address moved by Mr. Costigan, now present, supported by Sir John Macdonald, then the leader of the Government and of the Conservative party, and also supported by myself, at that time leader of the Liberal party. (Applause.) That address was carried with substantial unanimity. A couple of the members of the association to which I have referred did, indeed, dissent in speech; some more may, perhaps, have dissented in spirit; none dissented by vote. (Applause.) What was that utterance? I wish you to mark its words. You will find them important in dealing with this question to-day. It declared to the Queen that the Commons of Canada had observed with feelings of profound regret and concern the distress and discontent which had for some time prevailed in Ireland; that the Irishmen of Canada were amongst the most loyal and most prosperous and most contented of her Majesty's subjects; that the Dominion, which offered the greatest advantages and attractions for fellow-subjects, did not receive its fair proportion of immigrants from Ireland, and that this

was largely due to feelings of estrangement towards the Imperial Government, and was undesirable in the interests of the Dominion and of the empire; that Canada and Canadians had prospered exceedingly under the Federal system allowing to each Province of the Dominion considerable powers of self government; and it expressed the hope that, if consistent with the integrity and well being of the Empire, and if the rights and status of the minority were fully protected and secured, some means might be found of meeting the expressed desire of so many Irish subjects in that regard; so that Irishmen might become a source of strength to the Empire, and that Irishmen at home and abroad might feel the same pride in the greatness of the Empire, the same veneration for the justice of the Queen's rule, the same devotion to and affection for the common flag as are now felt by all classes in the Dominion. It also asked for clemency for the political prisoners then lodged as suspects at Kilmainham.

I do not pretend that the language of that address altogether pleased me. Then, as on all subsequent occasions, I would have preferred a more decided tone. But I state that now historically only, not controversially; because I am well aware that there were difficulties in the way of Mr. Costigan and his friends, of which they were better judges than I could be. Such as the address was I supported it with all my might. I felt that it was a great help to the cause, and I assisted in its passage. Mr. Gladstone did not think the question was at that time one of practical politics; but I believe that our action was one of the many forces that were bringing it into the realm of practical politics—(hear, hear, and applause)—and I believe, that at any rate, it was well for Canada that she should show, as she did show, a deep interest in this Imperial concern, which so closely touched the interests and the honor of the Empire,

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