

MR. McCARTHY'S SPEECH

AGAINST MR. CURRAN'S HOME RULE RESOLUTIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. McCARTHY. This discussion has taken so wide a range, it may be well, perhaps, to recall the attention of the House to the matter upon which we shall bye-and-bye, and before very long, I trust, have to vote. I desire, in the statement I am about to make, to be free as possible from making any imputation upon the motives of any hon. gentleman who has addressed the House. I desire to treat this matter in as calm and judicial a spirit as under the circumstance it can be dealt with, and I ask that the house be recalled to the position in which we stand here, and the powers with which we are invested and the rights we possess here as representatives of the Canadian people. We have been on other occasions invited to vote, and on one occasion we almost unanimously did vote, in favor of the general principle of the establishment of Home Rule for Ireland, and on a more recent occasion, though perhaps not with such unanimity, we also recorded and reaffirmed our former opinion in favor of that general principle. But it has always been to me a matter of some doubt, and that doubt was not lessened by the rebuke with which our first reso-

lution was received, whether we had not stepped beyond our sphere, whether we had not gone beyond our right and function as a parliament or as an assembly to advise Her Majesty as to how this question between Great Britain and Ireland should be dealt with. Now, we sit here as a parliament it is true—as I believe, the greatest parliament under the British Empire, except the imperial parliament itself, and with larger and wider powers, with that exception than any other legislative body under the Crown of England, But after all we hold here but a delegated power. We have but the right which is conferred upon us under the charter enabling us as a Canadian people to govern ourselves, in the distribution of the power between the local legislative assemblies and this Parliament of Canada; and it is merely within that power and as far as that power goes, that, as it appears to me, we are sent here by the people of Canada to express their opinions. For my part, I do not know and I do not feel that I have any right here to express the opinions of my constituents on this question of Home Rule—upon the