

his fellow-countrymen will feel that it is not from any fear of irritating the English or Irish landlords, or of hurting the feelings of Mr. Gladstone, that my hon. friend was so self-restrained in his advocacy of these resolutions. The hon. leader of the Government says that we ought to take a beseeching tone in approaching the Parliament of England, many of the members of which are Irish landlords; that we ought to go to them very much in the attitude of a poor tenant who is a year or two behind with his rent and begs not to be evicted. That is not the tone natural to an Irishman in conducting a discussion of this great national importance. They are not apt to take a beseeching tone when discussing something which they believe to be due to them, as a matter of right, and I hope that no Irishman will so far forget his dignity as to take such tone on any such question as this. I do not say that we should take a bullying tone. There is a medium between the two. We feel that we are asking something that belongs to us as a matter of right and justice. We should demand it firmly on grounds of principle and on grounds of principle alone, and it is just because the hon. leader of the Opposition has taken that tone and expressed that demand firmly and strongly, backed by the facts of history and by arguments drawn therefrom, that the hon. leader of the Government affects to find fault with his tone—because he did not adopt the beseeching tone, because he was not humble enough. He complains that the hon. leader of the Opposition has found fault with the whole of British legislation on the subject, and pointed out how utterly some of their measures had failed and how others came too late to be of any real value. If those measures had not failed, if all the evils which exist in Ireland had been overcome by wise legislation, there would have been no grounds for those resolutions, and no reason to demand Home Rule. But, Sir, if the right hon. leader of the Government had merely criticized the effectiveness with this House and with the Home Government, of the speech of the hon. leader of the Opposition, his remarks would have been unobjectionable, for that would have been within his right. But he went further. He imputed motives which I do not think occurred to any other hon. member of this House. He was the first to import into this discussion that feeling which it was the object of the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. Costigan) to exclude from it and which every other hon. member wished to exclude. He tried to do so, but I am glad to say without effect—because I notice in the discussion that two of his supporters have alluded to the speech of my hon. friend in the terms which it deserved, which they could not have done had they believed it was a party speech made from party motives; and I, Sir, as a humble follower of the gentleman, repudiate, on behalf of myself and others with whom I have conversed in this House, any intent to import a party feeling into this discussion at all. I think, Sir, that if anything could injure the prospects of the success of this Address when it is presented to the Home Government, it would be the fact that the leader of the Government had attempted to make it appear, perhaps successfully with the Home Government, that the support this resolution had received in this House was due to an intention to secure the Irish Roman Catholic vote of the Dominion. But, Sir, the hon. leader of the Government, in dealing with the resolutions, adopted by no means the same aggressive, active, fiery tone that he did in speaking of the address of the leader on this side of the House. He did not speak heartily or warmly in favor of the resolutions. In fact he did what he himself referred to in the course of his remarks—he damned with faint praise. He “hoped it would do some good;” and in that faint hope he advised his followers to support it. And, Sir, was it because he thought it was going to do some good he advised his followers to adopt it, or was it because, as he hinted himself, the Opposition were not going to catch

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him advising his followers to oppose anything which was known to be so popular as this resolution? He said we were disappointed at their not opposing it. We were anxious to have this resolution passed. If we were disappointed it was an agreeable disappointment, because we knew, as the hon. leader said, that without the assistance of the Ministerial majority it could not be carried. I do not know that we were disappointed in any sense, because we knew, as the hon. leader of the Opposition has said, that public opinion of all shades in this country is distinctly favorable to the principle involved in these resolutions, to the principle of Home Rule for each part of the British Empire that has interests peculiar to itself. Now, Sir, as to the question before the House, I do not intend to go into the state of Ireland or the remedy therefor in any detail; that has been done more eloquently than I fancy can be done by any other member of this House. I simply wish to say in general terms that it was evident, from the fact that the measures which have been hitherto introduced have not corrected the state of affairs there existing, that some new cure must be tried. It is clear that the cause of these evils does not lie in the nature of the Irish people themselves, because we all know that Irishmen who have the opportunity become industrious and prosperous members of the community, and have as great an aptitude for politics and the different professions and occupations as men of any other nationality. If, therefore, the man who succeeds everywhere else, stagnates, falls into mischievous idleness, becomes the prey of agitators, becomes almost uncivilized, in the home of his race, it is clear that there must be some cause outside of himself for his condition. It has been stated that that cause is landlordism, and there is no doubt that is the chief factor in the degradation of so many Irishmen; but it is not landlordism in the abstract. The hon. leader of the Government asks why we should attack landlords, and says that when we attack them we attack the rights of property; yet there may be rights of property apart from landlords, by the expropriation of land and its resale to the peasants. But there are landlords and landlords. It is the peculiar kind of landlord that exists in Ireland that has made that feature of the case so fatal in that country. Landlordism prevails in England, Scotland and other places; and yet in no place are the results of that system so bad as in Ireland. This is partly because the landlords are absentees, partly because they are aliens in race and religion from their tenants, unable to sympathize with them or take that paternal care of them that other landlords do; but I think it is also due to the fact that these landlords are the governing body of Ireland in all local affairs, and politically, too, as members of the British House of Commons; it is because the landlord is not only the landlord but the ruler, and in many cases the despotic ruler of his tenants, that landlordism has wrought such evil in Ireland. That is the sort of landlordism that could be done away with by introducing Home Rule in Ireland—a system of local government, which would enable them to look after their own municipal and provincial affairs. If it should be found impossible for one body to manage those affairs, if the orange and green could not pull together, there are natural divisions in Ireland which have existed from time immemorial, and each of these might have its own governing body if one was not found to work. If that peculiar phase of landlordism were to disappear, I believe Ireland would be no worse off than any other country where individuals own large estates and rent them out to tenants; and if nothing else were produced but a change in the current of landlordism, even though landlordism itself were not obliterated, I think it would be worth the while of the British Government to try the experiment of Home Rule for Ireland. With regard to the second of these resolutions, which relates to the release of the suspects—the men who are not charged with anything, but who are held in prison