

what will be the effect, commercially, if this measure should pass? One of the great troubles of Ireland is that it is a poor country, but where has the money come from which has been employed in that country during the last century in the promotion of public works? It has come from England, and is it to be supposed that if this measure should pass and a great shock be given to the constitution of the country—is it to be supposed that if the Government of Ireland should be handed over to the 86 men who follow Mr. Parnell, English capital will continue to flow into Ireland? It is more than likely on the contrary it will flow out. This is a consideration that ought to weigh with those who profess, and no doubt honestly feel, an interest in the welfare of Ireland. It is a consideration which ought to make us pause, and which is well worth the consideration of those who desire, however earnestly, Home Rule. I think that a measure forced upon a man against his convictions, because it is only a few months ago that Mr. Gladstone, speaking of Mr. Parnell, said he was marching through rapine to dismemberment and disintegration, can hardly be said to be an honest, well considered measure. The humiliation of the country, by reducing it from the position of an integral governing part of a great Empire to that of a province, is one that ought to come home to men like my hon. friend from Montreal Centre (Mr. Curran), who, if in Ireland, would hardly be satisfied to occupy the position of a mere provincial. I heard the hon. gentleman's eloquent speech which we all admire and few can imitate, and I ask if men like him in Ireland would not feel very cheap if their abilities had to be restricted to parish politics.

Mr. CURRAN. I am a Home Ruler to the mast head.

Mr. O'BRIEN. The hon. gentleman is no doubt patriotic, and may to some extent be self-sacrificing. What would be the effect on English politics had Home Rule been granted half a century ago? How many Irishmen whose names are illustrious in the annals of the Empire would have been heard of? How many mute and inglorious Miltons would have gone down to obscure graves? What would have become of Lalor Shiel, Daniel O'Connell himself, Burke, Sheridan, Grattan, and a host of others? Those men would have had no voice in the British Parliament, and would have been compelled, I will not say to waste their sweetness on the desert air, but to waste their eloquence on the quarrels of the small, miserable factions such as existed in Ireland before the Union. What would have been the loss to the country had such a state of things been brought about half a century ago? The commercial question alone is one of serious moment, because we cannot believe that, if the revolutionary measures proposed by Mr. Gladstone be carried, English capital will continue to flow into Ireland. Talk of the country not being prosperous; will anyone who has read about the condition of Ireland half a century ago, and who has travelled through Ireland in these days, fail to recognise that it is a greatly improved country? There has, no doubt, been suffering there; so there has been everywhere else, but there has also been decided improvement in its condition. The people are not so poor, as many people would lead us to believe, great material progress has been made; and are we now to lose all chance of further progress? Are we to gratify the wishes of what I honestly believe to be nothing more than a faction, who have sincerity, no doubt, but are actuated by motives that fall short of anything like true patriotism. Holding these views, believing as I do that this measure is one that ought not to pass the Imperial Parliament, I raise my voice here in protest against it; and, as far as voting upon the resolutions now before the House is concerned, I shall vote for the amendment of Mr. Costigan, simply on this ground—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. O'BRIEN. Hon. gentlemen may cheer, but let me finish my sentence—simply that it is just the one resolution of all the three that I think is likely to have the least effect.

Mr. LANDERKIN. I desire to address a few words to the House on this very important matter. The question of the government of Ireland is one that has engaged the attention of the greatest statesmen that have lived in Britain during the last half century. The minds of those statesmen have been engaged in striving to solve the problem for the better government of Ireland. It is well known that Ireland has been oppressed; it is well known that a system of landlordism has prevailed in Ireland that has disturbed the peace and marred the happiness and tranquillity that otherwise would have existed there. Various expedients have been thought of; various expedients have been devised with a view of ameliorating this condition and giving to Ireland control of her own affairs. Ireland has asked and sought for this, but she has always asked and sought in vain. A short time ago, you will remember that, when it was announced that that distinguished statesman who leads the Government of the British Empire, the Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone, was about to propose a measure for the amelioration of this condition of affairs in Ireland, that he had a measure to propose that he thought would bring about peace, would relieve the distress, and stay the crime that had marked itself in Ireland for the past half century or more, the nations of the world stood as it were on tip-toe anxiously awaiting the utterances of that distinguished statesman. No question introduced in the Parliament of Britain in the last century has moved the hearts of the people of the civilised world as much as that which has been proposed by the distinguished Premier of Britain; and when we read the oration which he delivered on that occasion, an oration which at once stamps him as a God-like man and a statesman without a peer in the civilised world to-day, the hearts of the people of Canada—not only the Irish hearts, but the Canadian hearts and the heart of every other true loyal Briton—went up in the refrain that Ireland might be reclaimed from the bondage under which she had suffered by the measures handed to the House by the distinguished Premier of Britain. And it is not to be wondered at. Ireland is great in many respects; she is renowned for her statesmen, her orators and her poets; she has a climate that is salubrious; she has vegetation that surpasses almost anything in the world, and the generous hearted people that inhabit Ireland have been oppressed and have sought for relief. Well, if they felt they were oppressed, had they not a right to say so, and, if they were misgoverned, had they not a right to amend this condition of things? Why, it is but the natural outcome, and crime is but the result of the misgovernment. It is not a trait of the Irish character, and the crimes that have been committed have not been committed by the Irish people themselves. They have been but a result of misgovernment and oppression. No wonder that there was a distinguished O'Connell, a Burke, a Curran and a Grattan, who rose up; but it was the times, to a great extent, that made these men; it was the oppression that rankled in their hearts that led them to stand forth as the champions of liberty and of freedom, and their names to-day are dear to Irishmen, and to every lover of liberty to whatever nation he belongs. Well, the nations of the world were moved when it was announced that Gladstone was to speak, and we read that speech, a speech distinguished for its statesmanship and its brilliancy, a speech that was unequalled in the British House of Parliament, with a measure that was generous and just. The hon. member for Muskoka (Mr. O'Brien) seems to think that every condition in the measure proposed is vital and essential. The Premier says, with regard to the representation in the Imperial Parliament, that it is not a vital principle,