

prospects of self-government for Ireland? Would they not have hailed with joy the accession to their ranks of so potent a political power as was Mr. Blake at that time? But if these were their feelings they succeeded in disguising them most effectually. A government supporter was put up to propose an amendment which Mr. Blake could not vote for. His motives were impugned, he was inferentially stamped as a demagogue and in every way the attempt was made to belittle and misrepresent his advocacy of Ireland's cause. Finally his resolutions were voted down and another set adopted in their stead.

But this contumelious treatment by Irishmen who by their own account can scarcely sleep at nights because of their burning love for the land of their fathers, did not prompt Mr. Blake to retaliate. He has shown his readiness to support the principle of Home Rule no matter by whom proposed, or who it advantaged. When Mr. Costigan in 1882 proposed his resolutions, Mr. Blake gave his voice and his vote for them. When Mr. Curran proposed a series of resolutions in 1887, the Opposition leader was again to the fore and declared that although he might object to the form of the resolutions, he would on every opportunity afforded him, record his vote for the "vital principle of local self-government."

For this "vital principle" he has now forsaken all. To really estimate what he has forsaken, one must first realize who this man is. He has already refused the highest judicial position in the country, the Chief-justiceship of the Supreme Court of the Dominion. He has refused knighthood. He casts behind him the greatest law practice in Canada. He is easily first of Liberals, and demands have not been wanting for him to reassume the position that is his natural right. All this he has sacrificed for the purpose of immersing himself in a strife the outcome of

which is obscure indeed. He doubtless like a wise man, gave the call of the Nationalist leaders deep thought, before coming to a conclusion. He must have foreseen the many difficulties that crowd the path which lies between him and St. Stephens. The monster Ulster Convention had finished its sittings before his decision was made. The ominous words "civil war" were heard at that vast gathering of Protestant Ulster. It looks as if the programme which he is desirous of carrying out, cannot be had without endangering the peace of the Empire. In abolishing one set of grievances in Ireland it is possible another set may be established; in appeasing one section there is danger of creating irritation in another that is now loyal, peaceful, and content. Moreover he goes to a house divided against itself. He is the choice of one section of the Irish party; will he be *persona grata* to the other? Parnellite has more love for a Tory squire than for Anti-Parnellite. He goes to an assembly the most august and cultivated in the world. In it he will be a stranger, with all its ways to learn. It is an assemblage whose ear cannot be caught in a day; access to its gracious tolerance is a process of slow development. Truly it is a doubtful enterprise upon which he has adventured. What will the outcome be? Many of Mr. Blake's admirers have rushed to the conclusion that he is surely destined to be Mr. Parnell's successor in the leadership of the Irish party. It is well to call the attention of such sanguine personages to the fact that he will enter Parliament, merely as the member for South Longford. Mr. Blake himself to intimate friends has deprecated this assumption that he will step into any particularly prominent part in the councils of the Home Rule party. For ourselves, all we can say is that he will bring to his duties one of the best furnished minds in her Majesty's dominion, a