

punishment those who were deprived of their reason, with the hope that, by exercising such control over them, they would restore them to the possession of their faculties. It seems to me that the Government of the United Kingdom has been equally barbarous, and is open to an objection of precisely the same character. There is a want of rational adaptation of means to the end, and that irritation and all the evils which arise from irritation and misgovernment, are attributed to the mental defects of the population, instead of to the obvious fact that the people are being misgoverned. The hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) said in his speech that he did not know whether the Coercion Bill was wise or otherwise, and he was sure that every hon. member who had spoken on that subject knew even less on that subject than he did. Were it a Canadian statute, he could construe it and criticise it, but, being an Imperial Act, and dealing with a high question of State, he did not think himself competent to express an opinion upon it, and he thought the House would be acting wisely to abstain altogether from a discussion of the question; in fact, the hon. gentleman reminded us that we were all colonists, and that, being colonists, it was no part of our business to deal with any question of this sort. The hon. gentleman, it seemed to me, had brought himself to a proper state of loyal humility. It reminded me of the story told by Mr. Tims of an Irishman who was on trial, and was asked by the magistrate: "Don't you think you deserve to be hanged?" He said: "Your honor knows best; it is not for the likes of me to express an opinion upon so important a question;" and so the hon. gentleman thinks it is not for this House to express an opinion upon so important a subject as the question of local self-government in Ireland. I remember that, in the life of Sir John Eliot, by a distinguished writer, Mr. Forster, tells us a story of the towering passion into which King James I was put by a deputation of the House of Commons waiting upon him to remonstrate against the Spanish marriage. The King ordered stools to be brought in, he told the deputation to take seats, he recommended that dunce caps should be furnished them, he wanted to know at what sovereign's feet they had learned statecraft; and the hon. gentleman seems to think that, because here we are not possessed of sovereign authority, because in this country we have not the power to deal with the question of local self-government in Ireland and have not within our reach the legal remedies, we ought not to express any opinion on the subject. These views are not suited to this age. I do not think we are disqualified from doing what England did in the case of Denmark, in the case of Poland, in the case of Turkey, what she did in regard to the unification of Italy. I do not think we are precluded from expressing an opinion on a matter which affects the well-being of the Empire of which we form a part, when one sovereign State is not precluded from expressing an opinion and remonstrating against the conduct of another sovereign State. But the hon. gentleman said also that this Bill, called a Coercion Bill, was not a Coercion Bill, or, at least, in his opinion it was rather a Bill relating to criminal procedure, and that even such a Bill was not one with which we ought to interfere, that we had not the means of forming an opinion, and that we ought not to increase the difficulties of the parent State by expressing any opinion on the subject. He told us that the law in this case was aimed, not at the innocent, but at the guilty. Why, there never was an instance in which an arbitrary Government admitted that its conduct was intended to affect the innocent. There never was an instance in which those who exercised arbitrary authority admitted that they desired to do otherwise than to maintain law and order and to uphold legitimate authority. In fact, the most hateful acts of tyranny are acts having their origin in these principles of procedure of which the hon. gentleman has spoken. Does the hon.

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gentleman not know that this Bill of Mr. Balfour's, if carried, will seriously interfere with the liberty of the subject? Does he not know that it will seriously imperil free discussion? The hon. gentleman says that this is simply procedure, and therefore it is not a matter which specially concerns us. The observation of the hon. gentleman reminds me of a Boston literary man who, thirty years ago, was spending a few weeks in North Carolina. The people in the place where he was stopping were anxious to pay him some attentions and do him some honor. A deputation waited upon him and invited him to come to the town hall, where a public address would be presented to him. They waited upon him to accompany him there. On the way they were met by a southern fire-eater, who said, "Why, you are honoring an abolitionist; this man I met at an abolitionist meeting in Boston, and there I saw him and heard him speak against the return of a slave to his master; he is a man who would rob us of our property, and deprive us of what rightfully belongs to us." After a few moments' discussion, the mayor, who was leading the procession, said, "We will make a slight change in the programme; I think, instead of going to the town hall, we had better go to Col. Johnson's tar-kilns." There was only a slight change in the procedure, but it made all the difference in the world to the unfortunate man who was the subject of these attentions; and so the hon. gentleman, when he says that this Bill makes a slight change in the procedure, admits that it makes a change which is of immense consequence to the Irish people. It takes from him the ordinary means of trial which the common law gives him; it gives to his landlord an opportunity of exacting the last shilling that he can wring from him without his having an opportunity to combine with his fellows with a view to agitate for amelioration or reform. It means that all the minor securities which the law gives will be taken away. It means that what is not now a crime, may be made a crime, and that what is now a constitutional means of redress, may become a crime. It means that neither platform nor press may be used for the purpose of agitation, or for the purpose of securing the necessary reforms, except in so far as those who possess a controlling interest in the direction of public affairs, and whose interest it is to maintain things as they are, choose to permit him to do so. The hon. member says that there is nothing novel in this proposition, that there is a summary trial before two magistrates, that the right of trial by jury is taken away. Oh, but, he says, the hon. leader of the Opposition, in 1877, at the time of the strike on the Grand Trunk Railway, introduced a Bill doing precisely the same thing; he says that he introduced a Bill taking away the right of trial by jury and establishing a summary trial before two magistrates. The hon. gentleman referred to the Act. Now, I beg to say that the hon. gentleman misled the House, whether intentionally or not, upon that question. The hon. gentleman knows that the party who is accused and arrested under that law, cannot be tried by two magistrates without his consent. If he asks for a trial in the ordinary way, he is entitled to have it. The Act was not intended to promote the interest of a railway corporation, or any other powerful corporation; it was intended to furnish facilities for an innocent man to regain his freedom at an early day. The ordinary sittings of the court may have passed but a short time before. The man is arrested; he is a stranger; he may be a locomotive driver who came but a few weeks before from the continent of Europe, from the United Kingdom, or from the United States. He may have no acquaintances or friends, and be unable to get bail. If he was subjected to trial in the ordinary way, he might be compelled to remain in gaol for months. Now, the Bill of my hon. friend gave him an opportunity of being tried summarily and immediately before two magistrates, giving him an opportunity to regain his