

country. There are many local wants that can only be dealt with by those possessing local knowledge, and to which the Imperial Parliament gives no attention. It is just as necessary in the interest of the Irish people that they should have a local Parliament as that we should have a local Parliament for Canada. What would be our condition if you were to abolish this Parliament and the Local Legislatures, and give the people of this country in proportion to their numbers representation in the Imperial Parliament. Our local interests would be wholly neglected. The important public questions which present themselves to the attention of the Imperial Parliament would be first considered. The external relations of the Empire or the relations between one foreign country and another which might affect the welfare of the Empire would be considered to the exclusion of our local interests. Such a consideration of things would cause the very same dissatisfaction here, that is exhibited by the people of Ireland. When we look at the subject of Federal organization we see that it grows out of the local circumstances of the population. I will venture to say that it would be impossible to establish a single Legislature for the Dominion of Canada that would give this country the satisfaction obtained under our present system. We have many distinct Provinces. How was it that the whole of British North America was not under our Government from the beginning? It was because such a Parliament could not properly deal with the local interests and wants of the population. What interest could we have in Ontario with the local wants of the people of British Columbia or Nova Scotia, or New Brunswick. Serious abuses might occur in the local administration of affairs for want of the necessary local legislation, which would not in the slightest degree affect other portions of the Dominion. We wisely, in my opinion, created local Legislatures to take charge of those local matters. In a country possessing upwards of 5,000,000 people, as Ireland does, there can be no doubt it is just as necessary that a local Parliament should exist for the purpose of dealing with local matters. I was rather surprised to hear the hon. First Minister speak in the manner he did with regard to the resolution submitted to this House by the hon. member for Victoria. It seems to me that that resolution is not at all so decided in the expression of opinion as it ought to be, coming from this Legislature. I do not, myself, feel disposed to ask the Imperial Parliament, as a matter of grace, to set free those who are confined in Ireland for political offences. This resolution does not refer to parties guilty of murder or who have gone about as midnight marauders destroying the property of their neighbors. This does not ask that Her Majesty shall extend her clemency towards them, but it asks that Her Majesty shall extend her clemency toward those who are guilty of differing in opinion from the Administration and from the ordinary Opposition in the two Houses of Parliament. I do not think that to say that the Land Act does not go far enough, or, to use the words of the hon. the First Minister, that it is not drastic enough, is to be guilty of an offence that should be punished by deprivation of liberty. They are not asking for clemency, they are asking for justice, and it seems to me that if this House is to speak on the subject at all, it is a pity it should ask for clemency for those who do not need it. If they are fairly dealt with they do not need the clemency of Her Majesty, but only the ordinary rights and privileges accorded to British subjects in other portions of the Empire. The hon. member for West Durham said the Land Act of last Session did not go as far as it ought to have gone. I think, in all probability, that it went as far as Mr. Gladstone felt he could safely go, and that if he had gone further he could not have succeeded in getting his measure through Parliament. We have a right to say, if we think so, that that measure was not sufficiently com-

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prehensive. We know that for several years there has been a failure of the crops, and the Irish peasant was unable to pay his rent. We know that exorbitant rents were charged, and the consequence was that when his crops failed he was unable to pay his rent, and the measure of last year did not deal with the cases of thousands who were in this position and it left them to the tender mercies of the landlords. The hon. the First Minister said that he supported this motion and that he opposed the proposition relative to the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church because it was a mischievous proposition, calculated to set Irish Protestant against Irish Catholic. I believe the hon. gentleman is wholly mistaken. I believe that nine-tenths of the Irish Protestants who may have been in favor of the State Church have after residing in this country become satisfied that the Disestablishment and Disendowment Act was a beneficial one. There is no analogy between the position of the Roman Catholic Church in Quebec and the Protestant Church in Ireland. The latter was the church of the minority, and the former is that of the majority. The Protestant Church in Ireland was supported by those who are not members of it—by the poorest class of the population, who, in consequence of their zeal for their own church, supported it out of their poverty, and who were compelled besides to support the church of those who possessed the wealth of the entire country and were in a minority in that country. I do not know an instance where the Roman Catholic Church of the Province of Quebec has called upon the Protestants of that Province to contribute towards the support of that church. In what instances, under what circumstances, have the Roman Catholics of Quebec undertaken to deal with the minority as the Established Church in Ireland dealt with the great majority of the population? Sir, there was no danger to the Roman Catholic Church of the Province of Quebec, in consequence of any action that the Parliament of this country might have taken upon the proposition submitted to it some years ago by the late Mr. Holton. Now, the First Minister said that my hon. friend from West Durham was all wrong in what he said with reference to Mr. Gladstone's observations on Home Rule. But he misrepresented the position taken by the hon. member for West Durham. What is the position of Mr. Gladstone? Does he say it is a doubtful question? Does he say, "I do not know whether Home Rule is a proper measure or not, but when you submit your proposition I will consider it?" No, Sir, he says that he is convinced that a measure of Home Rule is necessary not only for Ireland, but for Scotland, England and Wales. He says Parliament is altogether overweighted, that there are many questions requiring to be dealt with that there is no time to deal with; that the country is suffering in consequence of a large accumulation of work in the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It seems to me, therefore, that the hon. member for West Durham took a consistent position in saying that if you admit that Home Rule is necessary, that Parliament is unequal to the work it has in hand; that when you are in power it is your business to provide a remedy; it is your business to give effect to the convictions you entertain and to grant the means of relief which you believe will remove the serious evils that exist at the present time. The hon. Premier says the hon. member for West Durham delivered a long lecture on the evils of landlordism, Now, he did nothing of the sort, but he did point out that serious evils grew out of absenteeism in Ireland, and there can be no doubt of that. Anyone who has read Mr. Taine's book on the ancient *regime* of France will remember that before the revolution he describes a condition of things existing in France almost precisely like that which has existed in Ireland for many years past. The landlords resided in Paris, there was famine and suffering, and the people were unable to pay their rents, and many abandoned their holdings and took to the wayside. According to his