

press more nearly my own views than either of the amendments now before it.

Mr. MACDONALD (Huron). I crave the indulgence of this honorable House for a short time while I express my opinion on the great question now under discussion. I am not an Irishman, but I sympathise very largely with the Irish people in their present and past distress. I feel as a Canadian as if I could wish that all people in the world could have that form of government that we have, and could enjoy the same rights to manage their own affairs that we enjoy. I was very highly gratified when the hon. member for Montreal Centre brought forward this resolution, and made, in my opinion, a very excellent speech, setting forth the claims Irishmen had on the sympathy and influence of this country. I was not so well pleased with the speech of the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Davin) when he spoke of the political parties from whom Coercion Bills came. It matters very little to us as Canadians, and less to the Irish people, from what sources the Coercion Bills came. They suffered largely and long under those Coercion Bills, and it did not matter whether a Liberal Government or a Conservative Government in England was the author of them. It is our duty, and our privilege, to express our sympathy and give our aid, as far as we possibly can, to those who are in distress. My hon. friend from Assiniboia thought we were departing from the business of this country when we engaged the attention of this large House for so long a time in the consideration of Irish affairs. The Irish people look across the ocean to us as people enjoying the privileges of constitutional government, and they say to us: "Come over and help us." If we cannot go over personally to help them, we can at least place on paper the sympathy of the great Canadian people with them in their present difficulties. In that way we can not only help them to gain what they desire, but we can strengthen the hands of the great Liberal party in England which is attempting to extend to Ireland the right of constitutional government. When we consider the number of Coercion Bills passed since the union, it is perfectly astonishing that the Irish people have remained as loyal as they have. From the time of the union in 1800 to 1833, there were eleven years during which the Statute books of England were free from Coercion Bills, and twenty-one years during which Coercion Bills were imposed upon the Irish people. During the last fifty-three years there were only two years in which the Statute-books of England did not contain some measure of a repressive character in regard to Ireland. Need we expect anything else than the hearts of the Irish people will be alienated, to a great extent, from that loyalty and respect to the British Crown that we should like them to possess? Need we wonder that the population of that country has decreased from 8,000,000 in 1832 to 5,000,000 at the present time? Need we wonder that hundreds of thousands of the Irish people, driven from their own country by those harsh laws, and now living in foreign countries enjoying the liberties of constitutional government, will entertain a rancorous feeling in their hearts against the Government whose laws have driven them from their fair land and salubrious climate? I do not know that crimes are so rampant in Ireland that the present Coercion Bill is absolutely necessary for peace and harmony there. If we contrast the criminal statistics of the year 1832 with those of 1885, we find that in 1832 there were 248 homicides and in 1885 there were only 65; in 1832 there were 209 attempts to kill, and in 1885 there were only 65; in 1832 the total number of serious crimes committed was 6,014, and in 1885 there were only 1,057; and in the criminal calendar of the country the total number of criminal cases in 1832 is given as 14,000, and in 1885 only 2,644. Now, it is said that these Coercion Bills are highly necessary, and

Mr. DAVIN.

I agree with those who said it is important that as much order should be restored in that country as possible. But when they are putting into force Coercion Acts for the purpose of suppressing disorder, why do not the British Government at the same time bring forward some measure of Home Rule which we believe will be found a bulwark against disturbance and crime in that unhappy island? We, as others, regret those crimes. We are not here for the purpose of defending them. But we say that the British Government has tried coercion for the last 87 years, and that it is a failure, and we ask, why not give those people that measure of Home Rule which will before many years restore order in the country? As Canadians, we can deeply sympathise with these people, because we, ourselves, at one time were almost in the same position as they. Our fathers remember well the time when we had not responsible government, and when those who were working in the cause of responsible government were pointed out as opposed to British connection, as disloyal and disobedient to the Throne. We were said to be rebels, we were said to be agitating for the separation of this country from the Mother Country, we were charged with seeking to dismember the Empire. But our claims were granted, and what has been the result? The sequel proves that all those charges were false, that we became more loyal, that we esteemed our Queen in a higher degree, that our allegiance to the Throne became deeper and broader than ever before. We received responsible government, we legislated for ourselves, and the result was that, in appreciation of that gift, our love for our Queen and our loyalty to the Throne became vastly increased. So it will be with Ireland when she obtains her Home Rule. In having the right to manage her own affairs, to establish her own schools and universities, to build her own railways and bridges, and to do everything relating to her own local wants, Ireland will become as loyal and devoted to the Crown as the most enthusiastic lover of the British Empire could desire. The sentiments of her children, who, for years, have been forced to leave her shores, would become changed. Do you suppose it at all probable that these men who have been driven to the United States and elsewhere can, when their thoughts revert to their own land, harbor any feeling of friendship for the system that drove them away; but grant Ireland Home Rule, and I will warrant the assertion that in the future the Irish people who leave their country will look back longingly to their own green isle, with its beautiful climate and fertile soil, and instead of seeing her shores through the haze of enmity will view them with feelings of love and loyalty to the Empire. These people are now menacing Canada, because they are trying to strike Great Britain through Canada; but only accede to their just demands, and we will have peace, order and prosperity both here and at home. Therefore, it is our duty, even if in doing it we depart from the business of the day, to consider this great question, and assist as far as we can by our influence and our talents, if necessary, this long-suffering people to acquire what they are entitled to, the management of their own affairs. We are told by the hon. member for Muskoka (Mr. O'Brien) that the minority in Ireland would not submit to Home Rule. Surely the hon. gentleman is wrong. Surely the minority in Ireland are not rebels. Surely these supra-loyal men would not rebel against the British Throne because the majority in Ireland rule. Why, the majority in every country must rule. No; I have a higher appreciation of the minority. I know that the Protestant minority would not rebel, but would fall into line, and I am sure the majority would show the tolerant spirit that was shown by the Protestant minority in the old Irish Parliament when they extended to Irish Catholics the right to hold office under the Crown. The Irish Catholics were emancipated in Ireland even before the English emancipated them. The Roman Catho-