

HOME RULE FOR IRELAND.

Mr. CURRAN moved the following resolutions:—

That the Parliament of Canada in the year 1882 adopted a humble Address to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen expressing the hope that a just measure of Home Rule would be granted to the people of Ireland; and

That in the year 1886, by Resolution of the House of Commons, the sentiments of said Address to Her Most Gracious Majesty were earnestly reiterated and the hope again expressed that a measure of Home Rule satisfactory to the people of Ireland would be passed by the Imperial Parliament; and

That such measure of Home Rule has not been granted to the Irish people, but, on the contrary, there has been introduced into the Imperial House of Commons by Her Majesty's Government a Bill enacting the most stringent coercive measures for Ireland, by which the Irish people will be deprived of rights most dear to all British subjects.

That this House has learned with profound regret of the introduction into the Imperial House of Commons of the Coercion Bill above mentioned, and protests against its adoption, as being subversive of the rights and liberties of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland.

That this House again expresses the hope that there may speedily be granted to Ireland such a measure of Home Rule as is enjoyed in the Dominion of Canada, which, whilst satisfying the national aspirations of the people of Ireland for self-government, shall also be consistent with the integrity of the Empire as a whole.

That the granting of Home Rule to Ireland will fittingly crown the already glorious reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty as a constitutional sovereign, will come with special appropriateness in this her jubilee year and, if possible, render Her Majesty more dear to the hearts of her already devoted and loyal subjects.

That the present resolutions be forwarded to the Right Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, Prime Minister, to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., and Charles Stewart Parnell, M.P.

He said: Mr Speaker, The motion I have now the honor to lay before this House is one of very considerable importance, if we are to judge by the extended comment it has caused in the public press of the country since it first appeared on the Order paper. No doubt there have been very many opinions expressed as to the appropriateness or desirability or otherwise of bringing this question before our Parliament for discussion; but there is one thing that is exceedingly gratifying to me, and must be gratifying to all those who feel as I do on the question, that is, that throughout the length and breadth of this Dominion there has not been found one single paper that has come under my notice, no matter to what political party it belongs, or belonging to no political party at all, that has expressed anything but a desire that Home Rule should be granted to Ireland, and that at a very early date. Certain writers in the press have, no doubt, expressed themselves in very forcible terms against this motion. Some have gone so far as to call this motion a wild and insensate one. I think I shall recover very speedily from the effects of the strictures of such writers. For my part, I feel that I have no other apology to offer to this honorable House for bringing this subject forward than my own inability to deal with it in the manner in which it deserves. I feel that, in proposing this motion to-day, I am speaking the sentiments of at least 80 per cent. of the people of Canada. I make this appeal, Sir, not only in the name of an ancient race that has been oppressed for years, I may say for centuries, but I make it in the name of our common humanity; for, after all, as was said only a very few hours ago by a distinguished clergyman speaking at a public meeting on this subject, we are all members of the human family, and when one section of the family is oppressed or sought to be oppressed, the whole must feel a pang of suffering at witnessing such a sight. In the few observations I have to make to-day I shall not attempt any rhetorical effort. If eloquence could have saved the ancient Parliament of Ireland, the eloquence of Grattan certainly would have saved it from destruction. If eloquence could have revived that Parliament, the eloquence of O'Connell would have done so many years ago. But, Sir, that cause, the cause of a great nation, the cause of an ancient people, the cause of a people who have given to the world an exemplification of the truth, that the spirit of a nation never dieth—that

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cause has been spoken, and sung, and written of by the genius of Ireland's sons; and I feel that those great efforts having failed so far, although they have kept the spirit alive, although they have enabled the people to go on hoping almost against hope, it will be my duty to-day to confine myself principally to facts, to speak in the language of the greatest moderation, and to induce as many members of this honorable House as I can secure to waft across the Atlantic, to those who are favoring coercion and to those who are opposing it, the sentiments of the Canadian people upon this important subject. Now, Sir, I may be asked, how do I know what are the sentiments of the Canadian people on this question? I may be asked, can you rely upon the newspapers—can you take the press of this country as your guide in this matter? I say we have that already, but we have still more. The city of Montreal first gave the example of calling a large and unanimous meeting on this subject. Speaking of that meeting, a leading journal said:

"A great demonstration was held in the Queen's Hall to protest against coercion in Ireland. The meeting was one of the largest ever held in the city, and citizens of all classes attended. The proceedings were most enthusiastic. A prominent feature of the demonstration was that in addition to members of the Federal and Local Parliaments and leading gentlemen present, three ex-Mayors of the city, the Hon. Mr. Coursol, M.P., Dr. Hingston and Mr. Beaugrand spoke on the occasion."

On that occasion there was something more done than to protest against the measure of coercion that the Imperial Ministry now propose to impose on the Irish people. This resolution was passed:

"That as citizens of Montreal we call upon our representatives in the Parliament of Canada, the Legislature of Quebec, and the City Council of Montreal, to give fitting expression to the indignant feelings of the people of the Dominion, the Province and the city against the proposed measure, and their unwavering sympathy for Ireland in her aspirations for Home Rule."

Now, Sir, what was the expression of opinion with regard to that meeting by the leading English journal of the Province of Quebec? It said the next morning:

"If anything that can be said or done in Canada would advance the cause of Home Rule for Ireland, or stay the enactment of the very stringent Coercion Bill now under consideration in the British Parliament, it would be the moral force of such meetings as that held in the Queen's Hall last night. The unanimity in sentiment of the addresses delivered, and the manner of their reception, left no doubt of the earnest desire of the Irish people in Montreal to see their native land placed in a position towards the United Kingdom in which it would be a strength instead of a weakness to the Empire; when its own people would control its own affairs, and the cause of dissatisfaction being removed the excuse for coercion would cease. There was uttered no word to which the most loyal Imperialist could with reason object. What was desired was that Ireland should receive the same treatment, and the same rights of self-government, as have been accorded to Canada. If the people of Canada could grant this, or even aid in securing it, their voice and sympathy would be heartily accorded. As it is they can hope that before long the cause that has the past few years made such wonderfully rapid progress will soon be successful, and that a new era will open for the country that so many of their number remember with reverence as the home of their fathers."

That is the article of the *Montreal Gazette*. Now, Sir, in obedience to the instructions of that meeting, the City Council of Montreal met a few days afterwards—the day before the opening of this Parliament—and at that meeting it was proposed, not by an Irishman or the descendant of an Irishman, but by Mr. Grenier, a French Canadian of high social standing in Montreal and the leading member of the board of aldermen, and the resolution was adopted that:

"At the meeting of the City Council this afternoon Alds. Grenier and Donovan introduced the following resolution:—

"Whereas there has been introduced into the Imperial House of Commons by Her Majesty's Government a Bill enacting a most stringent coercive measure for Ireland:

"Whereas, the said Bill is calculated to deprive the Irish people of the rights most dear to all British subjects:

"Whereas, a public meeting of citizens of Montreal held on the sixth of April, instant, has protested against such legislation and called upon this council to express the feeling of the citizens against the proposed measure:

"Be it, therefore, resolved that this council has witnessed with regret the introduction in the Imperial House of Commons of the Bill above-mentioned, and desires, as representing the citizens of Montreal, to