

natural that we, the representatives of an ancient nation, claiming here, though as yet failing to obtain, the recognition which is our due, should express our earnest good wishes for the unending duration and increasing magnitude and unmarred prosperity of that new nation which is to be recognised by the Act we are now passing. And we rejoice, we who some years ago accepted upon high invitation from this Island the federal system and principle as a plan for the settlement of the Irish question, as a plan for the substantial recognition of our nationality and freedom, consistently with the ideal of a united and reconciled Empire for common concerns—we, I say, who accepted that view, naturally rejoice upon every occasion on which, here or elsewhere, the federal principle receives striking exemplification and is successfully applied. We hope, indeed, that some day you will deal with Ireland, whose case is in some important aspects far easier, in the same spirit in which you have dealt with other communities. You have dealt with them in the full belief that local freedom means Imperial unity. One thing I regret. This moment has been called auspicious for Ireland because of the Royal visit and the ordered wearing of the green. This moment has been called auspicious for the Empire because it celebrates the inauguration of a new federal sister nation amongst the communities of the Empire in Australia—a nation founded by the wholesome process of long deliberation and popular consideration, and sanctioned by overwhelming majorities yonder and by unanimity here. This moment has been called auspicious by some authorities for the Empire because in another corner of it you believe you are laying the foundation, in an unhappy soil moistened by blood and tears, and shaken by force and arms in South Africa, of a new—shall I say?—of a federal sister nation in distant days to come. I regret that, at this auspicious moment, personages most conspicuous in the counsels of the party opposite should have thought it fitting to intermingle with these elements audacious travesties of the facts with reference to the terms and conditions of the Home Rule settlement, and of the sentiments, feelings, and pledges upon which that settlement was accepted by the Irish people. To mix small things with great, may I add one phrase of regret that at this moment, said to be auspicious, because you recognise the importance of

reorganising your Imperial tribunals of final judicature upon the principle of the representation here at home of the great communities abroad; when you are persuading and have ceased to coerce the people to try their cases here, you make the opportunity, for some trumpety purpose of mere Ministerial convenience, to deprive Ireland of the right granted by understanding and sanctioned by custom, the right which for several years she has enjoyed, of that same principle of representation in the Court of final judicature in which her concerns are to be determined. I pass from these subjects of regret with this word, that the great transaction in which we are engaged contains encouragement in all its elements far higher than those trivial causes of discouragement, and gives us heart to persevere in the effort to press upon the minds of those to whom we have to look for relief the conviction which we ourselves entertain, that it is not merely in Australia or Canada, or the remote corners of the earth, that the principles of liberty lead to Imperial unity, reconciliation, and common action. They would do so with even greater force at the heart and centre of the Empire. What is strong in those principles, though oceans may roll between, is strong also—aye, stronger still—if applied to the centre and core and heart, or what ought to be the heart, of this Imperial realm; and we shall yet hope that you may some day give liberty to Ireland in order that you may make that country reconciled to union upon the federal principle. May I touch one personal note? I feel it a great privilege to speak in this House to-day on this question. Colonial born myself, I have witnessed the birth of the Canadian, the first great federal constitution in the Empire. Engaged for thirty sessions in two legislatures, in Government and in Opposition, in working and developing, and making practical the paper forms in which the constitution is written, and that in both its provincial, federal, and imperial aspects, and for ten sessions here a humble labourer in pursuit of the recognition of the federal principle as a means of consolidating the Empire at home through justice and freedom to its parts, I rejoice to be able to say some words of cheer and congratulation to my fellow-colonists on the other side of the globe upon the work they have accomplished. The Colonial