

landlords, and the establishment of a peasant proprietary, self-rule and emigration from over-populated districts to Canada. He asked me as to the condition of the Irish people who settled in Canada. I was happy to be able to inform him that they were just as happy, contented, prosperous and loyal as any other portion of Her Majesty's subjects. That the Irish people were men of marked ability, energy, and enterprise. They had secured by their sterling qualities some of the finest positions in the country. They have become Ministers of the Crown, Members of Parliament, Judges, eminent Lawyers, Wardens and Mayors, and are prominent as successful agriculturists. These men were succeeded by another class of emigrants, the survivors of the Irish famine. These also have been successful under discouraging circumstances. I recollect a visit I made to a newly-settled township. Our meeting was in the open air, in the very heart of the forest. I was much struck by the appearance of the settlers as they came to the place of meeting; some were suffering with fever and privation, and were most unhappy. They looked as if they had escaped from some beleaguered city, where plague, pestilence, and famine had done their deadly work. They were imbued with an awful hatred of the English name, and every man had his tale of wrong oppression, misrule and outrage to tell. A few years after I revisited this scene; it was transformed as if by magic. The dauntless valor, the patient perseverance of the exiles had done their work. The forest had been replaced by broad fields covered with waving grain. The tall pines had given place to pleasant farm-houses. The pallid looks and wasted forms had been replaced by the hues of health and the strength of manhood. Stalwart sons and blooming daughters gathered about the hearthstone, and altogether they were as contented and happy a population as ever the sun shone on. If to-day Her Majesty's throne was attacked, among the first to rally round the English flag would be the gallant exiles and their descendants. We have been told that the Irish are malcontent, and will never be satisfied, we have been told that they are unable to govern themselves, and we are pointed to the outrages so frequently occurring that disgrace a noble cause, and a gallant and generous people. It is admitted by every right-thinking man that these outrages should be sternly suppressed. No country is worth living in where life and property are not protected. It is a proof of what Lord Beaconsfield calls the great misgovernment, that life and property are not protected in Ireland. It is likewise a proof that there is something radically wrong when a Government is unable to perform its natural and legitimate functions. I think that Lord Macaulay has considered a similar state of things in terms which are singularly applicable to the Ireland of to-day. He refers to the outrages that occurred during the great English rebellion:

"We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which makes us to differ from the serfs who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils are, no doubt, produced by civil war, they are the price of liberty. Is the acquisition worth the sacrifice; it is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which it leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less terrible than the struggles of the tremendous exertion. If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty, half the objections to despotic power would be removed; we should in that case be compelled to acknowledge that it produced no pernicious effects. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolution, but the more violent the outrages, the more we feel that a revolution was necessary; the violence of those outrages will be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people, and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. The Government had prohibited free discussion and had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was only natural. If the rulers suffered from popular ignorance it was because they had taken away the key of knowledge, if they were assailed with a blind fury it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission; there is only one cure for the evils which acquired freedom produces, and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day. The remedy is not to remand him to his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of

Mr. WRIGHT.

liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder the nations accustomed to the house of bondage, let them gaze on and they will be soon able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason, the extreme violence of opinion subsides, hostile theories correct each other, the scattered elements of truth cease to contend and begin to coalesce, at length a system of justice and order is educed out of chaos. Many politicians of our time are in the habit of setting it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story who would not go into the water until he had learned to swim. If nations are to wait for liberty until they grow wise and good in slavery they may well wait for ever."

I think there are unmistakable signs that the dark night for Ireland is passed and that the hour of deliverance is at hand. It appears to me that English statesmen and people are at last aroused to the necessities of the situation. Lord Beaconsfield said that while they had not listened to earthquake and lightning, that the still small voice would reach the conscience of England. I think that before long the English Parliament and the English people will concede those rights which they claim for themselves. It may be said that this is a question which will create dissensions among our people. I do not believe that this is the case. Protestants and Catholics alike are interested in the solution of this great problem. I am assured that Irishmen and their descendants all over the world would like to see the same rights given to Ireland which are enjoyed by other portions of Her Majesty's dominions. Mr. Forster, at the close of a long and eloquent speech which he delivered in Ireland, concluded by making use of the form of words appended to all revolutionary documents, namely, "God Save Ireland," and I am certain that every generous heart throughout the world will earnestly and devoutly repeat that prayer. We trust that the prostrate form so long bowed in the dust may at last stand erect in all the dignity of freedom; that the people of Ireland may be as happy and prosperous in the future as they have been unfortunate in the past; that there may be the most perfect union among all classes of her people and that they may be guided by wise counsels and just judgment; that they may be saved from their own fierce passions and those outrages which disgrace a noble cause and a gallant and generous people; that they may be saved from the wiles of desperate demagogues, and that at no distant period Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland be as happy, loyal and contented as Her Majesty's subjects in Canada. And that the Irish land may belong to the Irish people, and that with her own free Parliament she may prove the glory and pride, the strength and bulwark of England, instead of being, as she now is, the weakness, the menace, and the abomination of desolation of the Empire.

Mr. COURSOL. It will be my pleasing duty to vote for the resolutions which have been submitted to this House. This duty will be the more pleasant to me as I have had in the course of my life to express on many occasions the sentiments contained in those resolutions. I have lived in a city where the Irish population is numerous, and where we have had ample opportunity to appreciate the qualities of that noble race. On many occasions they have proved themselves worthy citizens, and loyal to their Queen and country. Notwithstanding the grievances of which they have had to complain in Ireland, they have nobly done their duty in this country in circumstances where a different course on their part would not have been surprising. But I sympathise with the Irish people in their desire for a greater share of self-government. I speak from the standpoint of the experience of my own countrymen; no people can be subjugated by measures of coercion. They may be temporarily subdued by the force of arms, but only temporarily; we have had an example of this in Lower Canada. The French Canadians claimed a right of self-government, which claim was resisted by the Imperial authorities, and many of my countrymen were shot down, imprisoned and exiled, but they persisted in their demand, and finally a sense of justice of the Imperial Govern-

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