

mark its words. You will find them important in dealing with this question to-day. It declared to the Queen that the Commons of Canada had observed with feelings of profound regret and concern the distress and discontent which had for some time prevailed in Ireland; that the Irishmen of Canada were amongst the most loyal and most prosperous and most contented of her Majesty's subjects; the Dominion which offered the greatest advantages and attractions for fellow-subjects, did not receive its fair proportion of immigrants from Ireland, and that this was largely due to feelings of estrangement towards the Imperial Government, and was undesirable in the interests of the Dominion and of the empire; that Canada and Canadians had prospered exceedingly under the Federal system allowing to each Province of the Dominion considerable power of self-government, and it expressed hope that if consistent with the integrity and well-being of the empire, and if the rights and status of the minority were fully protected and secure, some means might be found of meeting the expressed desire of so many Irish subjects in that regard, and that Irishmen might become a source of strength to the empire, and that Irishmen at home and abroad might feel the same pride in the greatness of the empire, the same veneration for the justice of the Queen's rule, the same devotion to and affection for the common flag as are now felt by all classes in the Dominion. It also asked for clemency for the political prisoners then lodged as suspects at Kilmainham. I do not pretend that the language of that address altogether pleased me. Then, as on all subsequent occasions, I would have preferred a more decided tone, but I state that now historically only, not controversially, because I am well aware that there were difficulties in the way of Mr. Costigan and his friends, of which they were better judges than I could be. Such as the address was I supported it with all my might. I felt that it was a great help to the cause, and I assisted in its passage. Mr. Gladstone did not think the question was at that time one of

PRACTICAL POLITICS, but I believe that our action was one of the many forces that were bringing it into the realm of practical politics,—(hear, hear, and applause)—and I believe, at any rate, that it was well for Canada that she should show, as she did show, a deep interest in this Imperial concern, which so closely touched the interests and the honor of the empire, and the welfare of Canada herself. (Cheers.) Time passed, the Irish masses obtained popular representation, and as a result four-fifths of the Irish seats were taken by Nationalist representatives. (Applause.) Mr. Gladstone acted, and in 1886, in a Parliament not elected on the question, and in a condition of public opinion—ripened for action upon it, he brought in the bill of that year. I could not give my assent to some of the provisions of that bill, notably to that which excluded the Irish from the Westminster Parliament—(hear, hear and applause)—and many British Liberals were of the same opinion. But Mr. Gladstone's offer as to the term upon which he asked the second reading before acceding to the supporters of Home Rule was that it should be taken as a simple agreement to the general principle of an efficient measure of local government for Ireland, reserving all details, including that very important detail of the question of representation at Westminster. The question, notwithstanding, hung in the balance. The decision of those who later became, as they called themselves, Liberal Unionists, but as I believe, dis-Unionists and Separatists—(hear, hear, and applause)—was at that time still uncertain. I thought the occasion critical and our help morally important. A new Canadian Parliament had in the meantime been chosen. I moved accordingly, and my friend, Mr. Costigan, who had since the former occasion succeeded to Ministerial honors, carried an amendment—not, I once again confess, an improvement. I dare say I was a little partial to the child of my own brains, but he carried what he called an amendment. That having been carried, I voted for the proposition as so amended with the whole House that voted at all, save only six recorded votes. One of them voted against the resolution, not because he was not a friend of Home Rule, but because he thought the amended resolution was not strong enough. That was my friend Mr. Mitchell, who is on the platform here. (Laughter and applause.) The other five I am afraid did not vote for that reason, and I fancy the most of them belonged to the association to which I have referred—(laughter)—though, on the other hand, I am glad to say that many prominent members of that association voted with the majority on that occasion. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Thus, by a practically unanimous resolution, in the year 1886 we restated and reaffirmed our resolution of 1882, and thus a second Canadian House of Commons spoke in the same sense, with all the advantage given by four years' confederation, by a fresh election, by the advance that the question had made throughout the world meantime and by the circumstance that an Imperial bill was on the carpet. During that debate I took occasion to state my principle of action on this question, and I quote it to you now so that you may see how early it has been guarded since I said this:—

"What is required is the assurance, not one, but of all classes; not of a section, but of the people; not of a Minister of the Crown, but of the

Commons of Canada; not of the Irish Catholic members, but of the French and English, Scotch, Irish and German, of all creeds and of all nationalities. * * * I therefore speak, but not as a Reformer or as a party leader; I speak as a Canadian and a citizen of the empire to brother Canadians and fellow-citizens of the empire. This is not a Protestant or Catholic question; they are enemies of their country who would make it so. It should not be, in Canada at all events, a Conservative or Reform measure. I regard those as enemies of their country who would try to make it so. I hope that we may, by our own action this day, show ourselves united in the redress of wrongs and in the advancement of the cause of liberty."

THE DARK TIMES. So, substantially, we did act, though with less decision than I, for one, could have wished, but Mr. Gladstone was beaten by thirty votes. The times looked dark indeed. Our Parliament about the same time was also dissolved, and a new House fresh from the people met in both countries, and in England the deplorable Crimes Bill was introduced. Seeing its introduction Mr. Curran, a Canadian Conservative, moved in the Canadian House of Commons a resolution looking to the re-affirmance by the new House of the resolution already expressed twice as to local government for Ireland, but mainly directed against the Crimes or Coercion Bill then pending.

There was a division of opinion as to the propriety of moving against the Crimes Bill. Mr. McNeill proposed an amendment, which declined to deal with the Crimes Bill and re-affirmed the expression of the former House as to Home rule. Mr. McCarthy proposed an amendment, which, without any such re-affirmance, declined to express an opinion on the Crimes Bill. These amendments were defeated by overwhelming majorities. Then Mr. Davin moved an amendment, expressing the regret of the House at learning that it was considered necessary to pass a coercive measure for Ireland; and re-affirming the conviction, as expressed in the resolutions of 1882 and 1886, that a plan of local government for Ireland, which would leave unimpaired the links connecting Ireland with the British Empire and guard the rights of the minority, would be conducive to the prosperity of Ireland and the stability of the Empire. To this amendment Sir John Thompson lent his powerful support. It numbered, however, only 60 votes, while against it were no less than 128.

I had pointed out early in the debate some improvements which I thought might be made in Mr. Curran's resolution. These he adopted, and his resolution was carried by 100 to 47. But mark this, that majority is imposing, but it was not the real feeling of the House in favor of home rule, for the adverse minority was opposed only to dealing with the Crimes Bill; out of the 47 who voted in the minority, no less than 44 were present and voted for Mr. Davin's amendment, which was in favor of home rule, and thus proclaimed their continued adherence to home rule for Ireland, so that once again there was continued unanimity in the last of the three Canadian Houses in favor of home rule. Now, what was this last expression, so far as it relates to the only presently material question, home rule? After referring to the former resolutions it says:—

"The House again expresses the hope that there may speedily be granted to Ireland a substantial measure of home rule which, while 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."

These hopes were not realised. The jubilee year was not so crowned. The odious Crimes Bill was passed. The efforts of Lord Salisbury to deal with Ireland on anti-home rule lines lasted for six weary years. The Irish people on the whole, though with exceptions, showed during that time great patience and moderation. (Applause.) Feelings born of a new emotion, that of hope in a great English party, of hope in the British democracy, of hope in the moral force of the opinion of the world, restrained them. (Cheers.) The blessed work of healing and reconciliation went on. Belief that Britain would ultimately be just and generous, knowledge that British statesmen and British masses were looking at Ireland for themselves, and were determined to heal the sore if possible, soothed and sustained the Irish people. The great work of popular education went on in Britain; its progress became manifest; everything pointed to a decisive victory. Then came the discovery of Mr. Parnell's fault, his lamentable fall, with all the unhappy episodes and divisions that accompanied it. Thus for a time all energies seemed paralysed, all hopes blighted. The prospects of the election were seriously affected, and no doubt, anticipating for the moment, but for this and certain other minor divisions, the majority actually obtained in the end would have been largely increased. As that election approached, under those difficult circumstances, I received the call, my acceptance of which is the occasion of this demonstration. (Prolonged applause.) The objection has been taken to my course that every man owes a first duty to his own land,

and that I should instead of going to England have taken part in public life in Canada. I wholly agree as to the first duty of every citizen of a country to his own land, and I hope that in earlier years and more fortunate circumstances I have shown myself not wholly neglectful of that duty to my countrymen. (Cheers.) In pursuance of that view I have on all former occasions always-discountenanced and rejected flattering suggestions which have occasionally been made of my removal to what was thought a wider sphere. My own country was and is good enough for me—(tremendous cheers)—and I clung to her service while I could. But circumstances, which it is needless now to detail, had divorced me from that service, and after full consideration I had concluded that time must either settle or eliminate the difference of opinion which subsisted between me and those with whom I had acted, and upon all other than one question was still desirous to act in Canadian public life. (Cheers.) Thus it had happened that when this invitation reached me I had turned to those other spheres of usefulness which remained open to me, of our university, not far from here, and the Law Society, of which I was the head, and so giving to them the time which I had formerly devoted to politics. I had also engaged for a year or so in the pleasing task of making the acquaintance of my own family, which your service had prevented my accomplishing for twenty-five years before and of resuming some slight connection with the profession which your service had also divorced me from for a very long period. There were ties enough, then, of relationship and friendship, business and affairs, minor, but still important duties, to make me feel in every nerve and fibre the loss involved in acceptance; but I deny, for the reasons I have already given, that there existed that prior tie of political duty which has been invented by my critics, and I did not hesitate. Why? Because I thought that next to that supreme duty came my public duty to the country of my origin, and to the empire of which I was a humble citizen. (Cheers.) I believed that the election was

A CRITICAL ONE, in which even the slightest impulse might perhaps help. I saw the Irish cause in serious peril through unhappy divisions; I respected the judgment of the Irish leaders who called me; I did not choose upon my own unaided judgment to overrule it, and I believed that in some aspect, at any rate, my knowledge and experience in the practical working of Home Rule would enable me to give some help in instructing and expounding a scheme of Home Rule. I had a deep love and sympathy for the Irish race and an honest pride in the empire to which I belong, and I believed from my soul that Home Rule was essential to the well-being of both. (Continued applause.) Some have professed to read my mind and attributed to me as motives expectations of a lead in the Irish party, of a place in Mr. Gladstone's Government, of a judgeship or some particular honor. I might, I think, pretty safely appeal to my public career amongst you as the best evidence that I have never wished either lead or office, or honors. (Loud and continued cheering.) I have refused them as often as I could. I have accepted them as seldom as I could and I have resigned them as soon as I could. (Laughter and applause.) But the idea of slipping into the Irish lead over the heads of able and devoted men, familiar with the ground, who had fought the battles and suffered the loss and all but won the victory, is too preposterous for serious discussion. The idea of political office is even more absurd. The very foundation of that Irish party which I was asked to join was absolute independence, until home rule should be won, of all English political parties and refusal of all political office. (Hear, hear.) Judicial office was equally absurd, for I was not even a member of the bar. None of these things were attainable by me if I had desired them; nor were they desired had they been attainable. It was too late for me to open a new career in such a sphere. I might indeed lose. I was certainly risking an acquired reputation of which I thought I had some right to be proud, but I could not hope at my time of life, and under those circumstances, to gain a new one. And had all these things been otherwise with me

MY TIES TO HOME AND COUNTRY were too numerous and too strong for me to dream of severance. I have enlisted, indeed, for a campaign, but its most joyful day for me will be that which releases me to return to my own fireside. But there was, I will admit, a feeling which animated me which I have not yet stated. I make no profession, God forbid that I should, to be in any sense the delegate or representative of any Canadian interest or party, even of any single man, still less of this great country. I claim to have no title to speak in your name or on your behalf abroad, but I did think and hope that I was going to help to further a cause dear to the hearts of the great body of the Canadian people—a cause which had stirred their noblest feelings and which it would be pleasing to them that one of their own sons should, however slightly, promote. And now, forsooth, because you have been good enough to greet me on my return amongst you for a few weeks and to express your favor for home rule, I am told that I have done wrong in accepting this kindness at your hands and that I am responsible for bringing strife and division amongst you.

THE COUNTER DEMONSTRATION. I am told that Canada has nothing to do with home rule; that Canada does not in truth, favor home rule; that I am connected with a disgraced and failing cause; that some counter demonstration must be held at once to wipe out the stain of this reception and to signify to Britain the true opinion of Toronto and of Canada as to home rule. Sir, I think we may afford to treat this action with great good humor. (Applause.) We may differ indeed as to its taste, but apart from the question of taste it is not of very much import. I know, as I have told you, that Canada is not literally unanimous for home rule. I know that in this great city, where certain elements are so strong, it is the easiest thing in the world to gather a meeting against it. I know that many members of the association to which I have referred, and some others are opposed to home rule, but this I also know, that the Liberal party is very unanimously in favor of home rule. (Applause)—that of the Conservative party a very large majority are in favor of it, that in all more than four out of every five Canadians, as I said before, are in favor of Home Rule. Now, I have not the least objection in the world to the meeting of the small minority against us; I have not the least objection in the world to their resolutions and expressions of their views, but I respectfully decline to accept their verdict. (Cheers.) Why this disinclination to ventilate this question here: why this crying out about strife and division? You know it is because the objectors know that they are but an insignificant fraction of our whole people, and they don't want the decision of the Canadian people freely given. Sir, I appeal unto Caesar: I invite friends of Home Rule of whatever creed or race or party to take care that next session of the Canadian Parliament, in the fourth house elected since the question became a burning one that House shall, like its predecessors, give an expression of the opinion of the Canadian people upon this question. (Cheers.) I appeal from the murmurs of the Auditorium to the voice of the nation. (Renewed cheering.)

ZEAL MUST NOT SLACK. I invite all friends to take care that the cause suffers no damage from any insinuation that our zeal has grown slack or our opinions have changed. The battle is not yet won. Our cause, though not disgraced or failing, is yet in a critical condition. It has enormously advanced, but it must go further—we have much to cheer us—we have converted an anti-Home Rule house into a Home Rule house—(applause)—we have taken in an exhaustive poll a popular majority in Great Britain and Ireland three or four times as great as that of Lord Salisbury in the last House. We have installed by that vote of the members, of which I was permitted to be one, a Home Rule Government on an occasion which will be hereafter regarded as historic, when, out of 668 men who could have voted, 665 were present in their places and participated in the division. We have killed the Coercion Act—(cheers)—next February I have to assist in its funeral ceremonies, by which it shall be consigned to a dishonored grave. We expect with confidence a Home Rule Bill to be presented to that Parliament such as for ten years the Canadian Commons has asked. We hope to pass it through the English Commons, but we have to meet great difficulties of detail in its construction; we have to meet divisions in the Irish ranks; we have to repress extremists who may, for faction sake, put all in peril, hearten timid men, enlighten uninformed men, combat the desperate forces of religious prejudice and class ascendancy and grapple with a great load of other questions, and all this with a popular majority of only 40 and a hostile House of Lords. We need your help in Canada.

A voice—You have got it. Mr. Blake—And I claim with confidence from you that great moral support which you can afford from renewed expression of sympathy by Canadian people through their representatives addressed to the situation as it stands to-day. Let not whispers or intrigues of a baffled and beaten minority be potent to check or hush the voice of the nation, but speak your mind with freedom. I appeal to my old political friends to co-operate as they may lead them to co-operate with my old political opponents, and to see that Canada speaks again with a united and determined voice, as she spoke in the days gone by. (Hear, hear.)

THE POWER OF PUBLIC OPINION. These are days of public opinion and moral force. Do not underrate your power; do not neglect your solemn duty. So much I have said to my fellow-countrymen, to all creeds and races. To my fellow-countrymen of the Irish race I have to make a further appeal. While they and I ask for sympathy and moral support of all, we do not choose to beg of those of other races that material aid which we may freely claim from our own people. And you who are my fellow-countrymen in the sense in which I speak, you of the Irish race, to which I belong, will readily see that the consequences of the schism, including the detention of the large Paris fund, and the injurious effects at home and abroad, have greatly impaired the resources of the national federation. The demands on it for evicted tenants, pending inquiry into their cases, and the legislative action which we expect next session: the demands upon it for elections and protests, for organization and maintenance are heavy and urgent. I fear that the Irish crops are

not so favorable or promising as they were a few weeks ago. The prices of cattle and sheep are desperately low, and this will affect the capacity of Ireland herself to help, as she helped according to her power in times gone by. Other sources of supply formerly available are not available now. I ask not only those in this gathering, but all those to whom my words may go through the press, the Irish race through Canada, to recognize this emergency, may still be protracted for two or three years, and help the cause. I am giving to the cause those two or three years of my life, and I may fairly ask you to give what you can. I should but ill discharge the duty which your kindness imposed upon me if I did not say a few words as to some of the objects and characteristics of the great measure we advocate. It is emphatically

NOT A MEASURE OF DISUNION or separation, or disintegration or decay, but a measure healing and restorative, creating for the first time a union worthy of the name. (Hear, hear.) It is a measure which will invigorate the empire, and will enable the Imperial Parliament to discharge all important imperial and common duties now utterly beyond its power properly to discharge. It is choked to-day with Irish and every other parish business. It will also confer great local advantages on Ireland. It will give speed, economy and efficiency in carrying into effect the popular will of the local Government of that country, and will, I firmly believe, amongst its blessings, pave the way for a demand for somewhat similar advantages in Scotland and Wales, and ultimately by England herself. Now, Mr. Chairman, it is no wonder I think that North America, enjoying the benefit throughout its wide extent of the great political invention of federalism, of union for common concerns, of local Governments for local affairs, should be very emphatically in favor of Home Rule applied to Ireland. We know its advantages. Here, as also in the States, we see local affairs managed by local legislatures, justice administered, property and civil rights disposed of, local and municipal institutions created and supervised, all local matters handled locally, while trade, commerce and navigation, customs and excise, militia and defence and other common concerns are dealt with by a central legislature and executive. We realize the efficiency thus obtained in each sphere, and we can see no insuperable difficulty in applying the principle to the case in hand. We here would not consent to legislation at Ottawa if it was without representation, and therefore we were opposed to the abandoned suggestion of Westminster legislation for unrepresented Ireland. We here see that practical and effective control by the Province of its own affairs can be reconciled with the effective reserved power elsewhere to be used in improbable, but still possible, emergencies. We here find no difficulty in law or restraints of constitution. We see that the machinery provided is fully adequate, that stipulations of the organic law are served and any inadvertent or intended attempt to violate them fails. We here see that stipulations in favor of minorities, as interpreted by the law, are obeyed. More, we see the very men who here most loudly cry out about the danger to minorities in Ireland complain most loudly of tampering and undue favoritism to minorities here—complain in effect that the Ontario majority does not get justice and equal rights because the Ontario minority is too strong for it.

FEARS AS TO RELIGIOUS MATTERS. Now as to the apprehension of oppression in matters of religion, including education, even those who do not share this apprehension agree that it should be relieved by express provision. That principle was contained in Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1886, and will doubtless reappear. Some talk with dread of the establishment and endowment of the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of the majority in Ireland. They are the very people who most loudly bewail the disestablishment and disendowment of the English Church, the church of the minority in Ireland. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Irish Roman Catholics are ready to secure for Ireland the true liberal principle that religion shall be between the conscience of the individual and his maker—(hear, hear)—to agree to the abstraction of all power to endow and establish a church; to agree to secure the advantages now possessed by religious and charitable corporations; to agree to provisions protecting the conscientious scruples of the minority in education. Let me quote the identical scruples clauses inserted in the Bill of 1886, which met hearty assent in Ireland then and meets that hearty assent to-day. This is the fourth clause of that Bill:—

"The Irish Legislature shall not make any law (1) respecting the establishment or endowment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or (2) imposing any disability, or conferring any privilege, on account of religious belief, or (3) abrogating or derogating from the right to establish or maintain any place of denominational education or any denominational institution or charity, or (4) prejudicially affecting the right of any child to attend a school receiving public money without attending the religious instruction at that school, or (5) impairing, without either the leave of her Majesty in Council first obtained on an address presented by

the legislative body of Ireland, or the consent of the corporation interested, the rights, property or privileges of any existing corporation incorporated by royal charter or local and general act of Parliament." (Applause.)

Now, these provisions may be argued to be inadequate. Let us discuss the objections when they are taken, and make them adequate if they appear inadequate. (Hear, hear.) At any rate, they show the principle which is agreed to. Again, the Irish people have agreed and the bill provides that they shall have no power to deal locally with trade, commerce or navigation, with customs or excise, with army, navy or militia, with peace, war, or foreign relations with the colonies and India, or with any other common and Imperial concerns. For all these, which are the true elements of union between Great Britain and Ireland, the union continues, and a common Parliament and executive will act still. (Hear, hear.) All they claim is the local management of their local affairs. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Doubtless, Mr. Chairman, these affairs will be managed on popular principles. Doubtless the present centralized and autocratic system, under which important county business is done by sheriffs and grand juries, chosen, not by the people and by Castle authorities, will be modified—(hear, hear)—the people will gain control of their own concerns. Doubtless there will be, but doubtless there ought to be a change in this direction, and this, though naturally not agreeable to the present ruling Ministry in these concerns, seems just to us. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) We would not tolerate in Canada for 24 hours the condition that obtains in this regard in Ireland. (Loud cheers.) They say there will be oppression. How? By whom? In what? There have been oppression and ascendancy, and those who now express these fears were the supporters of that system. (Hear, hear and applause.) But I have shown you that in the points dreaded precautions are taken, and I ask that we should be shown any tangible, reasonable ground of apprehension, and I for one am prepared to make the effort to meet it. But the bottom of it all is this, and it is not unnatural—it is the lower side of human nature, but it is human nature.

THE BOTTOM OF IT ALL is the reluctance of a minority to allow the majority to rule. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I am not for a divided Ireland on local concerns. I am not for that, more in the interest of the Protestants than the Roman Catholics, if I am to make a distinction, I am not for it in the common interest. I am convinced that the true interests of Ireland, and of each of the classes, creeds, races, so to speak, which there exist, will best be served by the common local concerns of that country being administered by a common Parliament and a common executive. (Hear, hear.) In truth, I am bound to say that although northeast Ulster speaks loud and strong, although she expresses her apprehensions with great freedom and force, she does ask for separation from the rest of Ireland. It would be a cowardly thing to do it, because if there were reality in the local apprehensions, if Ulster were likely really to suffer, if strong northeast Ulster, with its popular power, with its intellectual power, with its national power, were likely to suffer, what would become of the scattered and small minorities of Protestants through the rest of Ireland? (Hear, hear.) For shame sake they could not, if they would, ask to be separated. But they say: "We who are so strong, who can manage our own affairs, who control Belfast and the neighboring municipalities—and who manage them according to the well-understood principles of Protestant ascendancy—we are so afraid that we will be treated pretty much as we used to treat the others (cheers and laughter)—that there must be no Home Rule for Ireland at all." Now I maintain that these apprehensions are wholly imaginary. (Hear, hear.) I hold it to be important under any circumstances, and most important having regard to these allegations, that we should give, as your address suggests we should give, all the guarantees, securities and restraints against injustice that can be reasonably devised. But removing the question of religion from the political arena, as we can do, as the bill proposes to do, I want to know what it is in respect of which oppression is to come in. I want to know what it is in respect of injustice to be done. I want to know how Protestant as distinguished from Catholic is to be injured. And I want to know whether it is reasonable that the men who declare that they to-day constitute two-fifths of the people, and that they have wealth and intelligence and education and material power of the country in their hands, should be so very much afraid because what they declare to be so very small a numerical majority happen to be of another creed in the proposed common Parliament. That is the whole of it. I want to know whether our history and the history of other countries, with our notions of such matters, in these modern days, gives any reasonable color of truth to these apprehensions. My own opinion, which I have expressed in Ireland and in England, is that if they will but come in—I repeat the phrase which has been commented on—instead of being the oppressed, the Protestants will be the spoiled children of Ireland. (Loud cheers.) I shall not enter into any contrast, into which I might enter, as to the tolerance and liberality exhibited by the adherents of the two creeds in Ireland, in those matters in