

I can also quote another high authority, Lord Dufferin, who, in speaking of Ireland, says :

"One by one each of her nascent industries was either strangled in its birth, or bound to the jealous custody of the rival interest in England, until at last every fountain of wealth was hermetically sealed."

Is local self-government a good thing? The best authorities who wrote on that subject all say, that when a country is inhabited by men of different creeds and different origins, we must resort to local self-government to secure the peace and tranquillity of such a country. Here is what De Maistre says of the constitution and of the laws which should be adopted to secure the welfare and prosperity of a people :

"Qu'est-ce qu'une constitution? N'est-ce pas la solution du problème suivant: Étant données la population, les mœurs, la religion, la situation géographique, les relations politiques, les bonnes et mauvaises qualités d'une certaine nation, trouver les lois qui lui conviennent?"

That is the reason why local self-government is necessary in order to have a good government. Every time that legislators have departed from the principles propounded by De Maistre, the nation thus legislated for has been unhappy. As long as the Hungarians were deprived of local self-governments there was no happiness for them. The Poles and the Irishmen have been unhappy because they had no local self-government. Moreover, the argumentation of the hon. member for North Bruce (Mr. McNeill) proves that local self-government is absolutely necessary in Ireland. He says that if Mr. Gladstone's scheme is adopted the Protestant minority, as to their religion and institutions, will have to suffer. Well, if that hon. gentleman thinks it is a bad thing to leave the Protestant minority of Ireland at the mercy of the Catholic majority of that country, yet he wishes to leave the Catholics of Ireland at the mercy of the Protestant majority of England. Such is the logic of the hon. member for North Bruce. If such reasoning was adopted by every legislator, I would despair seeing justice reigning in any country. But the hon. member for North Bruce said he was willing to grant some form of Home Rule for Ireland, and he spoke in favor of the Imperial federation scheme. I think that by that scheme we would give to the Imperial Parliament much more than we would receive from it. For my part I am completely opposed to that scheme, and to deprive ourselves of any powers we now possess. When we see how the present Ministers of England are treating Ireland—that they are adopting a Coercion Bill in order to force upon that country laws that do not suit it, I do not want Canadians to be ruled by the Imperial Parliament and to be exposed to any Coercion Act. I was not surprised to see the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) oppose the present Home Rule resolution. In pursuance of his antecedents, when we remember that he is the chief promoter in this country of the Imperial federation scheme, we might easily come to the conclusion that he was opposed to the passing of the resolutions proposed by the hon. member for Montreal Centre (Mr. Curran). We know that the member for North Simcoe is not very friendly to minorities, for we remember he said in his speech at Barrie that French Canadians would be a danger to the confederacy so long as they would remain French. What does that mean? The hon. gentleman wants French Canadians to forget their past, to give up the use of their language, to abandon their institutions, for otherwise, according to his opinion, they would be a danger to Confederation. I hope the present resolutions will have the good effect of assisting Irishmen in procuring Home Rule and self-government; but if they have not that good effect they will have had, at least, the advantage of making known the principles of certain members of this House. The merit or demerit of a political man or party consists of the principles proposed and supported by that man or by that political party,

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and we must trust or mistrust that man or that party according to the nature of those principles. I always understood that to be a Conservative it was not necessary to be a Tory; because, if I had thought that to be a Conservative it was necessary to be a Tory, I would never have followed the Conservative party. I hate toryism as much as I hate demagogism and radicalism. I know that fifty years ago Conservatives were Tories, that they then refused the minority the right to administer their own affairs, and to have its legitimate share in the administration of public affairs. I had thought that toryism could not be found any more in the ranks of the Conservative party; but I am sorry to see that some members of the Conservative party from Ontario have decided to be yet Tory and to follow a Tory policy. In his speech the other night, the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy), did violence to historical truth. He contended that the French Canadians were opposed to the Act of Union because they were opposed to responsible government.

Mr. McCARTHY. No, the hon. gentleman quite misunderstood me. I was answering the hon. member from Quebec Centre (Mr. Laurier), who said that they rejoiced in responsible government. My argument was that they obtained that responsible government by that Act of Union to which they were opposed.

Mr. GIGAULT. If we opposed the Act of Union it was not because it was granting us responsible government, but because it contained some unjust and arbitrary clauses; it was because, as Mr. O'Connell said in his speech in the House of Commons, the French Canadians were not put upon a footing of exact equality with the other inhabitants of the country, for they had not the number of representatives to which they were entitled by virtue of the number of their population, and the liabilities of Upper Canada were to be paid in such a way as to be an injustice to Lower Canada. I rejoice that Mr. O'Connell thought fit then to defend the French Canadians, and I am glad to say that almost all the French Canadians sympathise with the Irishmen in their efforts to obtain Home Rule. In doing so we are only paying a debt of gratitude to Mr. O'Connell, or rather to the people whom he represented; and I hope that sooner or later, we shall see local self-government in Ireland, that it will help to secure the satisfaction, the harmony and peace of that country, and will make the bonds between Ireland and England closer than they are to-day.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

Mr. CURRAN. In making the few remarks which I intend to offer, after the debate which has gone on for the last three or four days, I may be permitted in the first place to express the satisfaction I feel that the debate should have been conducted in a spirit so free from acrimony, considering how exciting the question was that has been under our consideration. I desire to thank hon. gentlemen on both sides of this House for their kindly allusions to myself and the manner in which I presented the case I had in hand, and to state that the tone of the present debate is certainly something upon which we may congratulate ourselves, if we look back to some of the circumstances that have surrounded like discussions in the past. We have, Sir, before us not merely the main motion that has been presented to this House by myself, seconded by the hon. member for Essex (Mr. Patterson), but we have presented to us two amendments, neither of which I believe can be acceptable to the vast majority of those who hold a seat in this Parliament. I may as well declare at the outset that it is my intention, with the permission of the House, to adopt the suggestions which have been made by my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, and