

which every free man has a right to expect. The same results would follow concessions to Ireland. You can make Ireland faithful. Irishmen have been as faithful as Englishmen in every great battle and in every great undertaking for adding glory and lustre to the British flag. If you deal with Irishmen as with other intelligent beings—if you admit that they are created by the same God, and are entitled to the same rights as other men, and give them a measure of self-government—give them the rights that every man has a right to expect, you will find them, like Canadians, loyal and true, ready and willing to support that Empire which would shelter and not crush them. I think that argument is one that will shortly disappear. I am satisfied it has no great force. I am not one of those who generally feel angry at expressions that I may consider declared by prejudice to my country or creed. I entertain a very different feeling when any such attack is made. I experience a sense of pain rather than anger—a sense of pain to know that any fellow man who should treat me as a brother, should refuse to concede to me the same rights and liberties that I would concede to him. And I am a firm believer in that broad principle that actuates every right thinking man, in every country, that we are all necessary to one another, and that we cannot do too much to discharge the duties we owe each other, and that every thing we can do to promote the harmony and well-being of that society of which we are all component parts, we should do, to discharge our duty as fellow citizens. I might turn to the pages of history, and suit the ear and taste of any man in this audience by selecting different authors to show the cruelty and oppression that has been dealt out to the people of Ireland under the land system that exists and has existed for centuries. But I will not undertake that. I do not appear here to-day with the view of making a brilliant and effective speech. I think hon. gentlemen who have sat in this House for fifteen years will acquit me of any vanity of that kind. I have never troubled the House except when I felt it my duty to speak, and then I have felt how weak I was and how far short I fell in discharging the duty I desired. But my only desire is, if I can in my humble way, with my humble abilities, state my case in such a way as it may recommend itself to the hon. members of this House, and enlist the aid of those of our friends who are more eloquent, to give me the benefit of their eloquence. Should I succeed, I shall feel that I have discharged my duty in a humble manner. I will not read the reports or call the attention of the House to facts and pictures which members have often seen respecting the harsh and cruel tragedies often enacted in Ireland, in the turning out of their little huts, or if you will call them homes, men and women who have in them reared their families and earned their humble livelihood. In many cases it is a painful and dreary livelihood they have earned; but the places wear the sacred character of home, and if you could go with me in imagination and see the landlord with his bailiffs and police turn out from those little huts an aged father or grandfather, on his dying bed, to leave him on the roadside to die without shelter and without covering, your deepest feelings of pity would be stirred. This is no fancy, but a true picture, and one of the results of the land system against which the people of Ireland have long cried aloud. I will say what has been often said of the Irish people, that neither poverty nor oppression could beat them down nor crush out those feelings of nationality by which they have been so long animated. They feel they have the rights; but it has taken a long time to convince their rulers that a better and wiser policy should be adopted towards them. Let me give you the words of a British statesman, spoken in the House of Commons, with reference to landlordism in Ireland:

“Sir Robert Peel had a general horror of exterminating landlords, though he had not adequate courage to restrain them by law. A

few years later, speaking in Parliament of the extermination in Clare, he said: ‘I must say, I do not think the records of any country, civilized or barbarous, ever presented such a statement as that which has been presented to the House in a letter by Mr. Kennedy. This gentleman—an officer, I believe, in Her Majesty’s service—I presume of unquestionable veracity, states this fact, that in one union, at a time of famine, within one year 1,500 persons have been driven from their homes; and that within the last month, 1,200 more persons have had their houses levelled to the ground. I know not, Sir, if it be possible for the law to apply a remedy to that system, but in the House of Commons, at least, it provokes the expression of our deepest indignation.’”

I would like to call the attention of the House to the opinion of a Protestant writer, who has written an extended history of the difficulties in Ireland, on this question. With regard to the cry raised in Ireland to divide and separate the Irish people, he says:

“The dread that the Catholics would usurp all the power of the State were concessions made to them is a phantom. No such danger exists. An increase of their power is much more to be apprehended from a continuance of their restraints. Their accumulation of numbers alone must in time render them formidable; but, before that period arrives the voice of wisdom will be heard, and we shall then see in what consists our danger. How often was it repeated in the House of Commons, during the discussions on the slave trade, that the suppression of the slave trade, that the suppression of that detestable traffic, would sign the death warrant of the few white inhabitants in our West Indian Islands? Events have falsified the predictions. And are not the negro slaves as tractable and obedient as before that memorable Act, which has shown them that the British Legislature is alive to humanity and justice? If the prophecies of interested men, respecting the West Indian negroes, have been falsified by events, is there not the same reason to believe that the pretended dread, that the Roman Catholics, if admitted to a full enjoyment of their rights, would seek an undue superiority over the Protestants, and in their turn become the oppressors, is entirely void of foundation.”

In moving this resolution at this stage of the Session, to trespass one moment longer on the patience of the House than I might be justified in doing, would, I think, be committing a great mistake. I know, perhaps, how disappointed many of my friends may feel. I know what those hon. gentlemen who sympathize with me in this movement may think, that I might have done more in the discharge of my duty in introducing these resolutions. But if I am deficient in those qualities which constitute an able applicant in introducing a measure to the attention of an intelligent body like this, it is my fault, and it is their misfortune. But I hope that any deficiency in the arguments I have tried to use in the feeble manner I have introduced these resolutions, may be supplied by the good will of those hon. gentlemen with whom I have sat so long, though I am far from asking that they should decide as a mere question of sympathy with myself or my friends. No; I ask them to decide on this question on higher considerations, but I ask them to give me any favor in the discharge of my duty, which this sympathy will prompt. I mention this, because, in moving my resolutions, as I am forced to do at a time when, if the ordinary rules of debate were strictly applied, I would not be allowed to move it. I feel that I am under an obligation to the House and knowing the anxiety of hon. members to get through with the labors of a long Session, I will bring my remarks, at present, to a close, and ask their indulgence for a few words at the close of the debate. I thank the House for the attention they have given my remarks, and beg to move the following resolutions:—

That an humble Address be presented to the Queen’s Most Excellent Majesty, in the following words:—

*Most Gracious Sovereign:*

We, Your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, desire most earnestly, in our own name, and on behalf of the people whom we represent, to renew the expression of our unswerving loyalty and devotion to Your Majesty’s person and Government.

1. We have observed, may it please Your Majesty, with feelings of profound regret and concern, the distress and discontent which have prevailed for some time among Your Majesty’s subjects in Ireland.

2. We would respectfully represent to Your Majesty that your Irish subjects in the Dominion of Canada are among the most loyal, most prosperous, and most contented of Your Majesty’s subjects.