

take either position. I object to admitting that we have not the right to petition. Granting the right of petition, I object to taking the ground that, because they would not hear us before, we will not speak to them now, when they are willing to hear us. And I must refer—although it has been already referred to—to the remarks of Mr. Gladstone in his late manifesto and elsewhere. They have been presented to the House, but they do not seem to have made any impression on the mind of the hon. gentleman who moved the amendment. I hope they may now sink into his mind. Mr. Gladstone writes to the Legislative Assembly of Quebec:

"I am deeply grateful for the resolution adopted by your honorable body. It is my belief that the people of England, who have partial responsibility for the old misdeeds of the British Government, and the people of Scotland who have really none, will concur in the wise and liberal view entertained by the Quebec Assembly."

There is a distinct expression of thanks for an expression of opinion, not from the Dominion Parliament but from the Parliament of one of the Provinces, whose right to address the Crown on such a matter must be even *prima facie* less than ours, if there is any difference in rights at all. To the Mayor of Boston, in answer to a resolution, he cabled:

"I feel that American opinion, allied as it is with a regard and affection for the Old Country, affords Her Majesty's Government a powerful moral support."

That is not addressed to a British Legislative Assembly of any kind, not to a body representing 5,000,000 of British subjects. It is addressed to the mayor of an American city, and he says that even American public opinion must afford the Government powerful moral support. What, then, would be the support afforded to that Government by an expression of opinion by this Parliament, known to be composed of representatives of all races and all creeds, a Parliament known to contain a very large Conservative majority, so far as Canadian politics are concerned? Would not such an expression of opinion serve to show that men, not only of all races and creeds, but men of both political parties, recognised the fairness of the principle of Home Rule as applied to Ireland, and afford the most powerful moral support possible to the man who is risking so much to carry out that principle? Then, again, in his address delivered a few days ago, known generally as the Gladstone manifesto—his address to his own constituents—he said:

"Never have I known an occasion when a parliamentary event so rang through the world as the introduction of this Bill, under the auspices of the British Government. From public meetings and from the highest authorities in the colonies, from capitals such as Washington, Cincinnati, Boston, Quebec, and from the remotest districts lying beyond the reach of all ordinary political excitement, I receive the conclusive assurance that kindred people regard it with warm and fraternal sympathy. Our present effort is to settle, on an adequate scale, and once for all, the long-veiled and troubled relations between England and Ireland, which exhibit to us the one and only conspicuous failure of the political genius of our race to confront and master a difficulty, and to obtain in a reasonable degree the main ends of civilised life."

What is the meaning of those words? Is it not a recognition that not only Quebec, a French Province living under British rule, filled now with British sympathy and love for British constitutional Government, not only a French Province like Quebec, but even States entirely severed from the Empire, are members of the great British family council, composed of the offspring that have come from the loins of that great nation? Is it not a recognition of our fellow-citizenship in the British Empire? I say it is. It is more than a recognition of our right to speak in that family council. It is an invitation to lay our opinions before the head of that family, with the assurance that those opinions will be accepted with gratitude and regarded with the favor and respect that their importance deserves. Now, whatever may have been the effect of the Kimberley message, whatever may have been the meaning of it, whatever may be our constitutional and technical right to petition the Throne, these acknowledgments, coming not merely from a Colonial

Secretary but from the Premier of Great Britain, take away utterly any effect that might be in that message tending to discourage colonial legislative bodies from expressing opinions on this great question. And if the Minister of Inland Revenue has nothing stronger to shelter himself behind, when he asks the House to depart from the usual constitutional method of addressing the Throne, and to express anxiety and great hopes and wishes to the skies and atmosphere, I say his defence is of the most flimsy character. Let me recall to your memory the fact that my hon. friend the proposer of this motion objected to the mutilated motion proposed by the hon. Minister on a former occasion: yet on that occasion my hon. friend accepted it because there was no opportunity of amending it, and because he did not wish to have any dissension in the House in connection with the matter. That conduct stands out in bold contrast to the conduct of hon. gentlemen opposite. They did not, it appears, altogether relish the form in which this motion was proposed on Tuesday. Instead of accepting it for the purpose of avoiding division in the House on this great non-political question, they took a course which must necessarily lead to difference of opinion; whether it leads to difference of vote or not will depend on the self-sacrifice of the members of the House who hold contrary opinions. The hon. leader of the Government sneered at the resolution, and threw cold water on the whole proposal. The hon. Minister of Inland Revenue, who has always posed as the leader of this movement, also threw cold water on it by asking for delay. He has thrown more cold water on it to-day by asking us to abdicate our constitutional right of petition, and to accept a wishy-washy proposal of vague hope and sympathy. This course stands out in bold contrast to the sacrifice of individual opinion displayed by my hon. friend on the former occasion. I hope yet that the hon. Minister of Inland Revenue, having screwed his courage up to the point of proposing a resolution in that form, will go still further, and have the courage to adopt the form of petition, which we adopted in 1882—what we had a right to do then, and what we have a right to do now. He says the matter of the amendment is identical with that of the motion. I cannot say whether it is or not, because I have not had the opportunity of carefully reading it. If it is, there is simply a difference of manner and not of matter, and if that is the case I think he must show stronger reasons for departing from the precedent we have already set ourselves than he has yet shown. If it were necessary, Sir, to discuss the question of Home Rule itself, to discuss whether Canadians should support some resolution sympathising with that principle, I could do so with great pleasure, and at a length which I am afraid would not be pleasing to the House. I do not intend to do so at any length; but being on my feet, I feel that I cannot sit down without saying a few words on that subject, even though it may not be necessary for the conviction of hon. members of this House. Though of Irish descent, and though proud of that descent, I hope I shall be able to discuss this question rather as a Canadian than as an Irishman. I hold that Home Rule is as much a principle of the Canadian people, is a sentiment as dear to the Canadian heart, as it is to that of the native Irishman; I mean Home Rule in the general sense, not merely as applied to Ireland, but as applied to all isolated communities who claim the right to manage their own affairs. I should be as ready to support a proposal of Home Rule for Scotland or for Wales, if the people of those countries demanded it with the same unanimity, as I am to support the proposal of Home Rule for Ireland. We, in Canada, have been living under Home Rule for the last nineteen years; we know its effects, and we are generally agreed that those effects are good. I mean that since that time we have had Provincial Home Rule. We have had Home Rule as colonies for a still