

ably said that after all there would be a few hundred or a few thousands to be disposed of; but those who know the landlords of Ireland and the agents of the absentee landlords felt they would do anything to facilitate a change beneficial to the tenantry, calculated to reduce their own incomes, or more than that, to remove the tenantry from a condition of bondage in which they were placed. It was not merely that the tenantry were intended to pay everything that could be abstracted from the land, save their own share of the coarsest of food, but landlords and agents would come into their families and prescribe how they should live and even the persons whom their children should marry. Even on the estate of the Marquis of Landsdown, who has been held up as a model landlord, it was absolutely the law that if a man allowed his son to get married without the permission of the agent he forfeited his right to the holding, and it is notorious that that penalty has been enforced. That was the condition from which it was hoped this Land Act would relieve the tenantry of Ireland. The hope, unfortunately, has proved unfounded. To-day there are 70,000 to 90,000 cases. The landlords are fighting those cases inch by inch and on the most trivial grounds appeal from the decisions of the Courts, and the tenants are absolutely unable to contest the appeals through lack of money to pay costs. Another point which the hon. member for West Durham pointed out was, this Act does not deal with the question of arrears. A year before it was introduced, the Government provided that no eviction should be permitted for arrears until the Act then in contemplation had been introduced and passed. The people, no matter how they sustained themselves, though in many cases they received relief from abroad, were unable to pay their rents, and arrears had accumulated which were not arrears of fair rents, as determined by the Courts, but arrears running forty to sixty per cent. above fair rents. In cases where an account was open for several years preceding, had a fair rent been charged the whole time, instead of the tenants being in arrears the landlords would be in their debt; yet although the House of Commons recognized the justice of such a provision and passed a Bill to that effect, dealing with arrears, which was rejected by the House of Lords, yet when the Land Act was passed it contained no provision whatever affecting those tenants. They could still be evicted for non-payment of those arrears. The right hon. First Minister should not find fault with anybody for simply saying that the Land Act had not proved beneficial. To-day that question is the burning question. There are many others that demand the attention of the Irish people and of the Government, but the land question overshadows them all. Last year the Parliament felt itself called on to vote \$100,000 towards the Irish people. We felt then we had a right to interfere in the affairs of the Old Country by generously voting that handsome sum of money. We have a right to-day to interpose in this behalf also by asking for such remedial legislation as will put an end to their sufferings and trials. At the time this land agitation began to attain its enormous proportions, Home Rule was placed in abeyance by the more active spirits of that movement, because they felt if the people were to be saved and Ireland remain a nation it was absolutely essential this land question should be settled. This very attempt of the British Parliament to deal with this question, and its deplorable failure, has revived the feeling that Home Rule alone is the true remedy, the drastic remedy, to use the expression of the hon. the First Minister, for the situation. The people of Ireland feel they are able to legislate for themselves, they have shown in their management of such local affairs as are entrusted to them—the Poor-law Unions and corporate bodies—a capacity for self-government that has rather surprised those who were formerly disposed to treat them as a people to be ruled and unfit to rule themselves. Mr. Gladstone deserves the credit of being the first, holding

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the high position he holds, that Ireland ought to be ruled by Irish ideas and feelings. It cannot be through an Imperial Parliament. That Parliament is over-weighted with work and even with the best possible disposition there is a want of information and sympathy in it that renders sound legislation for Ireland almost impossible. We have unfortunately in Ireland a governing class and a governed class, and the former has to a very great extent the sympathy of the ruling class in England. We know also that many of the landlord class hold land in both England and Ireland, and the landlord classes of the two countries are so bound together by alliances and by interests that the Irish landlords in the enforcement of their peculiar ideas, have always had the sympathy and the support of the English landlord class who are still the most influential class in the Legislature of that country. The conviction is growing that Home Rule is the only remedy for the evils and misfortunes of Ireland, and that if the Irish people were allowed to govern themselves according to their own ideas of what is right they would succeed in obtaining such a measure of happiness and prosperity as other people governing themselves have generally succeeded in obtaining. I have gone more at length into this question than I intended when I rose. Hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House have, with great unanimity, with great earnestness that is most gratifying, and indeed somewhat surprising, accepted the broad proposition that Ireland has been sadly misgoverned and is still misgoverned; that it is to-day in a deplorable condition for itself and a dangerous condition when we look at its relations towards the Empire at large. They have also admitted that Home Rule, such as we enjoy in this country, is the true remedy for that state of things. I join in the regret that these resolutions are not more direct and positive. I expressed the wish from the first that the resolutions, no matter by whom presented, should be so drafted as to give not the slightest umbrage to any member of this House, or hurt the prejudices, if any prejudices existed, of anybody belonging to any nationality or religion. I felt it was of the highest importance, if we moved in this matter at all that we should succeed in carrying with us the unanimous, or nearly the unanimous opinion of this House, and I felt that in order to do that, the resolutions ought to be drawn in the mildest possible manner, and that we ought to ask what we desired in such a way as to meet with the concurrence and the approval of all the hon. gentlemen in this House. Therefore, I have not the slightest objection that the resolutions prepared by a number of members of both Houses of Parliament should have been modified afterwards by the Prime Minister or any other hon. gentleman in this House, provided the modifications were evidently calculated to render the resolutions more acceptable to the House, and provided, at the same time, that they did not give expression or suggest anything that would be in itself objectionable. But I think they ought to have been, so far as they went, direct. They do not deal with the land question, and that is quite proper, perhaps, because Home Rule embraces the land question. Give the Irish people Home Rule and it is to be presumed you give them at once every remedial measure that it is possible they could obtain, because they would then have in their own hands the power to deal with all those matters relating to their internal affairs. But I think that if we thought they were entitled to Home Rule we should have asked for it directly and plainly without the "ifs" and the "ands" and conditions I find in the resolution. I quite agree in saying that we desire respectfully to suggest to Her Majesty that Canada and its inhabitants have prospered exceedingly under the Federal System, leaving to each Province of the Dominion considerable powers of self-government. That is the recital of a simple fact in which we all agree. When Mr. Gladstone chose, in that extraor-