

generation ; I do not speak of them. I am not insensible to the great exertions of the Government of the British nation to meet the tremendous crisis now existing ; nor would I speak otherwise than in heartfelt, enthusiastic sympathy of those huge manifestations of kindness in the British nation, which show forth those sublime charities, that vindicate the divine and God-imagined character of our nature. I will endeavor to review the whole system, of which the present distress is a part, and of which it is a result ; I will endeavor to seek out whence it has originated, and how it may be changed ; I will endeavor to trace some of its causes, and to indicate some of its remedies. I must, of course, confine myself to a few striking points, not alone by the limits of our time, but by the requirements of the occasion. The occasion is one, that will not tolerate much that admits greatly of dispute ; it is one that requires all the conciliation which truth can sanction. It will therefore be my desire, in analyzing causes, and in specifying remedies, to take as broad and common ground as, with my opinions, it is possible for me to take. It will be also my desire to give no candid or just man offence ; and though such a man may dispute my positions, I trust that he will have no complaint to make against my spirit, or against my temper.

The causes of Irish distress many find wholly in the character of the people. On this topic, we cannot afford to enlarge ; and that it may not stand in our way as we proceed, we will grant, for the sake of argument, that the character of the people is as idle and as reckless as these philosophers describe it, and still it will be seen that, to ascribe the state of Ireland to this cause alone, or to this cause mainly, is not only partial, but false ; at variance alike with any comprehensive grasp of sound logic or personal observation. The cause of any particular suffering in Ireland is seldom local or temporary, seldom to be found within itself