

in this Parliament and before an election? It is not to be introduced again because we know that the House of Lords would reject it again in this Parliament on the ground just mentioned, and that the time spent in its rediscussion in the Commons would be time worse than wasted.

Why the Bill will not come up again in Parliament before Election.

It is quite true that the Tories and Liberal-Unionists hoped and believed that we Nationalists would insist upon this re-introduction. Their desire was that the Government should be forced by us to discuss nothing but Home Rule. They believed that our necessities, political and pecuniary, would constrain us to demand this course, and they rightly thought that from it they would derive much political gain. Listen to what Lord Randolph Churchill, one of their active leaders, said last summer:—

“The Opposition is a large Opposition. It is the largest since the days when the party of Pitt overcame that of Fox. The Opposition is a powerful one and has resolved to give Gladstone no quarter, no breathing time, not a moment in which he can design matters so as to play his tricks off on the House of Commons. What next will happen? The Home Rule Bill will be thrown out by the House of Lords by an enormous majority, and Mr. Gladstone will have all his wicked work to do over again. We have heard his boast and his threat that he will carry his bill through an autumn session. We take no account of this threat. The forces which are gathered together against him are absolutely irrepressible. They are not only the forces of men, they are the forces of time. To save the Union there is nothing in legitimate action to which the Opposition will not resort. He may have an autumn session if he likes. Nobody cares whether he has an autumn session or whether he has not. There are only eight or ten weeks in which that distinguished man can accomplish anything, and we'll take care that he accomplishes nothing. He must re-introduce his Home Rule Bill next year, if he does not re-introduce it this year. I will tell you why. The Irish party will compel him to do so. The fact of the matter is the strain upon their pecuniary resources, the tremendous strain on their private business in Ireland, the strain on their physical strength and mental energy and patience will be too great. They will compel Mr. Gladstone to do their will, as they have done before. Mr. Gladstone is absolutely in the power and under the control of Mr. Sexton. He will be driven like any galley slave and will be compelled to place his Home Rule Bill before the House of Commons again. The House of Lords will throw out his bill again by a majority equal or greater than their former majority, and, in the face of dissolution, political ruin will await him. Now, we of the Opposition are determined to force the question, to keep a clear issue before the country. He shall not cheat and deceive the country as he did at the last election. The issue between the parties shall be Union or Separation, and nothing else.”

Well, it is quite true that the strain upon the Irish members has been, is, and will be of the very severest character; and that the strain upon the patience of the Irish people has been, is, and will be great. But it is not at this crisis of our fate that either the Irish members or the Irish people, within or beyond the shores of Ireland, are going to prove unequal to their high duty. You and we are, I believe, determined to stand that strain.