

the Treasury and other departments of the Government with those classes which savoured a little too much, in the then public opinion of the country, of a feeling of interfering with the sacred property in land—which looked a little too much towards a denial of the

#### DIVINE RIGHT OF LANDLORDISM,

which looked a little too much like a practical recognition of the motto that property has its duties as well as its rights, and it so happened in practice that there were but 100 sales a year on the average, or a total of 800, by the last return I have been able to obtain under the provisions of the land clauses of the Act of 1870. So, therefore, you will observe that the Act was wholly defective as a remedy for the evils complained of, and, by experience, was proved to be wholly inadequate. Then, in 1880, the last Land Act, was passed, under continual pressure, under similar pressure increased and aggravated by events; a great measure, but in itself not likely to settle the great question. I will not discuss the complicated details of that measure; but I will say that a measure which is based upon the grounds and founded upon the reason upon which that measure depends, and which makes no provision at all for dealing with cases of arrears of rents—cannot be regarded as a final or satisfactory measure, if there were no other defect. If you look at the history of the ills which preceded that measure, and at the circumstances of the country, as stated by others, you will see that such a measure must be to a large extent wholly inadequate and entirely beyond practical application towards many, or most of the grievous cases that can be supposed to exist under it, unless it deals with arrears. The most grievous cases will be those of parties unable to pay their rents. However, no one can doubt but that that measure was an

#### IMMENSE ACTIVE RELIEF,

that it was a measure that gave more than was expected by many, or thought possible to be obtained from the Parliament of the United Kingdom, and nobody can doubt that it was obtained also from Parliament only by continued difficulties. The state of Ireland, as it had been, was becoming more aggravated still. Things were growing worse and worse before the adoption of the last remedial measure, and the conviction at length impressed itself on the United Kingdom that something more must be done to remedy those evils. But the same fatal errors which attended the agitation for the introduction of the previous remedial measures, attended this. It came so late that a large portion of the benefit—so far as feeling was concerned, and so far as the conviction that Ireland could depend on the justice of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, that there was any prospect of an ending to their sufferings—of this last

remedial measure had wholly lost its grace. I say it is as plain as the day that true statesmanship pointed to earlier action, to action under other and different circumstances when a measure, even less thorough going than this one, would have produced an amelioration in the condition and temper of the people of the country, much greater than could be expected from the measure brought in and carried at the time, and under the circumstances and under the pressure which attended its being carried. That is the record of eighty years of

#### REMEDIAL LEGISLATION FOR IRELAND.

These are the important land marks of the acts for the remedy of wrongs, and the delay of justice that have distinguished British legislation in the past eighty years. There are others, no doubt, subsidiary acts. It did not take quite so long—I forget whether more than a couple of Parliaments—to induce the Parliament of the United Kingdom to pass a Sunday closing Act, which was demanded by the unanimous voice of the Irish population, and was applicable to them only, but which did not agree with the sentiments of the British publican, and which, therefore, it was thought wrong to give to the Irish people. But, it came at last, and minor measures of this description have come to Ireland from time to time, but the large and important measures of statesmanship which had agitated the public mind are those to which I have referred, and which have been accomplished only after the delays and under the circumstances I have briefly stated. Can anybody wonder then that there should have grown up early, and that there should continue with an ever increasing volume and urgency, a cry for

#### A MEASURE OF HOME RULE.

Put the question to ourselves. If we had been for eighty years in the position that these people have been in for that time: if we had to agitate for one generation for one measure of justice, for three quarters of a generation for the next measure, and two-thirds of a generation for the third; if as each of these measures had been obtained, it was due not to the recognition of the justness of our cause, but to the recognition of the danger of further delay, what would have been our feelings and how earnestly would we have demanded some portion of control over our affairs? But there is a darker side to the picture than that. While remedies were refused, force was at the same time constantly applied. While you have the miserable record of remedial Acts to which I have referred, you have the record of Arms Acts, Coercion Acts, Restraint of the Press Acts, Suspension of Habeas Corpus Acts, and all these legislative means of coercing the people passed from time to time with the utmost freedom by the same Parliament which was denying and delaying what is now admitted to have been only justice to the people. I do