

THE FINANCIAL RELATIONS
BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

*A SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE GUILDHALL,
PLYMOUTH, ON MONDAY, JAN. 4th, 1897*

BY
SIR EDWARD CLARKE
Q.C., M.P.

Reprinted from THE WESTERN MORNING NEWS

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1897

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FINANCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

SIR,—There is one subject which you have mentioned to which I propose to devote practically the whole of the speech which I shall make to-night. It is not a subject which, upon the face of it, is particularly attractive, because when we mention finance it suggests a dull speech with a number of figures in it. But this is a subject which has suddenly become of very great importance, and of which we shall undoubtedly hear a great deal in the House of Commons in the course of the coming session. There has been published a report upon the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland which will form a topic of discussion in Parliament, and as a consequence of which we shall probably have an amendment to the Address within the course of the first few days of the Parliamentary session. I am going to ask the indulgence of this audience to-night if I speak simply and entirely upon that one financial topic, and endeavour to put before you as clearly as I possibly can the various considerations to be discussed in Parliament with respect to what will be acknowledged to be an extremely important question. The history of the financial relations between Ireland and Great Britain commences practically with the Act of Union at the beginning of this century. Before the present century, that is, during the time of Grattan's Parliament, from 1783 to 1800, Ireland was separate in her exchequer from the exchequer of Great Britain, and her revenue was raised separately, and gave practically a very small contribution indeed to the Imperial

expenses of this country. Her contribution to the expenses of the great war was an extremely small one from 1783 to 1800. The revenue was something under two millions a year, and she made, as I have said, very little contribution to the Imperial expenditure. By the time we get to the year 1800, which was the time of the union, the people of Great Britain were ten millions in number, and were paying £3 per head in taxes, whereas the people of Ireland, numbering five millions, or one-half as many as in Great Britain, paid only 10s. per head, or one-sixth per head of the contribution paid by the people of Great Britain. During the time of Grattan's Parliament Ireland got into something like distress and disaster. Her deficits during the last seven years of that Parliament amounted to sixteen millions, and so bad was her credit that in order to raise that sixteen millions she had to incur no less than twenty-six millions of debt. It was in these circumstances that by the genius and ability of two great statesmen, Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh, the Act of Union was carried through. By the Act of Union the arrangement was made by which Ireland was to bear two-seventeenths of the taxation of the whole kingdom. And that upon the face of it did not seem to be an unfair arrangement. Taking into consideration the population of the two islands at that time, it amounted to this that by the Act of Union every individual in Great Britain would pay $3\frac{1}{2}$ times as much as each person in Ireland— $3\frac{1}{2}$ times as much per head. And there is no reason to believe that there was any neglect of Ireland's interests at the time that Act of Union was passed, nor that the statesmen of that time were at all indifferent to the condition of Ireland, and the position that she was in of inferiority in wealth to this country. They arranged this two-seventeenths to be her contribution. But it was too much. Ireland could not pay it. The great war between this country and the power of France, instead of coming to an end, extended its area and became more and more costly, and the two-seventeenths which Ireland was called upon to pay was far more than in

reality her people could bear. But she never paid it. For the sixteen years that passed between the Act of Union and the consolidation of the Exchequers of the two countries, Ireland only continued to raise about the same amount in taxation as she had raised before. She actually bore taxes to the extent of about one-thirteenth of the amount raised from Great Britain, but she increased her debt by no less than eighty-four millions of money. It was fortunate for her that she had not to raise that money upon the terms upon which she was obliged to borrow before the year 1800, for whereas under Grattan's Parliament, with a deficit of sixteen millions of money, she had to raise a debt of twenty-six millions to meet it, under the Act of Union the deficits of eighty-two millions were covered by a debt of only eighty-four millions. But by the year 1816 it had become clear that the relations between the countries required to be further adjusted. The great statesmen who had framed the Act of Union had foreseen that, and in the seventh article of the Act of Union there had been a provision that if at any time the debt of Ireland came to be in proportion to the debt of Great Britain in the proportion of two to fifteen, and if the Parliament should declare that it was desirable in future to raise revenue by taxes imposed equally upon different articles throughout the two countries, then it should be competent for Parliament to unite the financial administration of the two countries. But in the Act of Union there was a very important provision, which was that if Parliament should make this declaration, that then, thenceforward, the revenue of the whole country should be raised by taxes imposed indiscriminately on the same articles in the different countries, "subject"—and these words we find in the Act of Union, "to such exemptions or abatements in case of Ireland and Scotland as might be thought proper." That had been put in the Act of 1800, and when they came to 1816 Parliament adopted these words, and made a declaration in the month of May 1816, following the

provisions of the Act of Union, and containing some words which I should like to read. You will hear this very much discussed during the next few weeks, and perhaps months, and it is important to remember these words. The resolution was: "That all future expenses henceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to this declaration, shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, and from time to time as circumstances may require; such taxation shall be imposed and applied accordingly, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand." That resolution was passed in the month of May 1816, and from January 5, 1817, until to-day the system of taxation in Great Britain and Ireland has been one system of taxation, not absolutely equal in both countries, because exemptions and abatements have been made, but the whole of the taxes taken in Ireland and the taxes raised in Great Britain have, from January 5, 1817, been carried to one consolidated fund, out of which the expenses of the empire have been met. I said there had been exemptions and abatements made, and it is of cardinal importance in discussing this matter you should notice that both in the Act of Union and in the resolution of 1816, which brought into one system the finances of the two countries, there was a provision that special exemptions and abatements might be made for "Ireland, or for that part of Great Britain called Scotland." Now, from 1817 for just about seventy years, with only occasional and slight complaint on the part of the representatives of Ireland, this system of joint taxation had been carried on both in this country and in Ireland. But in the year 1886 there came the proposal, as you know, of the Home Rule scheme, and directly it was contemplated that there should be separation in the Government and in the Parliament between Ireland and this country, it became

important, of course, for the purpose of that scheme, to examine what share of the public expenditure Ireland in fairness ought to bear. Certain investigations were made, not of a very careful and not of a very successful character. But, as you know, in 1886 the House of Commons rejected the Home Rule Bill—(cheers)—and for a time any investigation of these financial relations between Ireland and Great Britain with reference to the scheme of Home Rule passed out of the line of political discussion. But the questions that had been raised in 1886, with regard to the fairness of the contributions of Ireland, were questions which were not allowed to sleep; and in the year 1890, Mr. Goschen, as Chancellor of the Exchequer—(cheers)—agreed to the appointment of a committee of the House, which was to examine into the equity of the financial relations existing between Ireland and Great Britain. From different reasons, which I need not stop to discuss, that committee never did any work at all; it never met, in fact, for consideration of the matter which was referred to it. But after the second Home Rule scheme had been introduced in 1893, a commission was appointed by the late Government, which was instructed to inquire into the financial relations between Ireland and Great Britain, to inquire into the taxable capacity of Ireland, and into the relations which should properly exist upon this subject. That commission was appointed by the late Government, but it was recognised by the present Government. Mr. Childers was chairman of that commission, but before it completed its labours Mr. Childers died, and in the month of March 1896, the present Home Secretary, by letters addressed to the commission, authorised them to appoint another chairman and complete their labours. They have completed their labours. They have made, I will not say a report, but they have made several reports, signed each by individual members of the commission, upon the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and it is out of the discussion of those reports that the questions have arisen

which are now exciting a great deal of very strong and ardent feeling apparently upon both sides of St. George's Channel. We have seen in Ireland a very remarkable spectacle during the last few weeks. We have seen in Dublin, in Limerick, and in other great towns, large assemblages of Irish people called together. There have been on the platform prominent representatives of the Unionist cause side by side with the most extreme representatives of the Nationalist cause. We have seen an Archbishop of the Protestant Church of Ireland standing on the platform along with dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church; the lord-lieutenants of some of the counties of Ireland have called meetings, and have been in the chair, and there have been speaking at those meetings, or been present, men who have been the strongest antagonists of the Unionist party and the most violent leaders of the Nationalist cause—indeed, at one of the meetings one of the “political prisoners,” as they are called, one who lately was released from prison, took part in the proceedings. There have been in Ireland many things said which, to say the least, are extremely unfortunate. One speech especially has been made by an Irish Unionist peer, which was couched in terms which were certainly extremely unfortunate. But there is undoubtedly a great deal of very strong feeling aroused in Ireland upon this subject, and we shall have to face that fact in the House of Commons when it meets. There probably will be a movement not by one section of the Irish members, but by the whole of the Irish members, Unionist as well as Nationalist, in order to redress the grievance under which they conceive themselves to be suffering. On the other side, there has been said, both in speech and in writing, much which I think as lamentable as anything that has been said on any platform in Ireland. It has been said that this commission was a packed commission, and that it was appointed for the purpose of assisting the scheme of Home Rule, and that therefore to accept or even to quietly discuss what that commission has ascertained or reported is to assist the

revival of the Home Rule scheme. It was a packed commission. It was a commission consisting almost entirely of those who belong to the political party to which I am opposed, and of those who are pledged to a scheme of Home Rule, and therefore if we were called upon to discuss the proceedings of the commission or the advice given by them with regard to national policy, I, for one, should attach no importance whatever to their recommendation. I should refuse to accept, or even to consider, those recommendations, until they have been discussed by a commission more fairly composed and more fairly representative of both countries, as well as of both parties. But I cannot conceal from myself the fact that although upon any question of Imperial policy, especially upon any question connected with Home Rule, the opinion or report of that commission would be of very little authority, still, it was so constituted that upon the question of financial fact it was a very strong commission indeed. Mr. Childers had filled the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, amongst others, there sat with him upon that commission Lord Farrar, who is well known and well trusted as an inquirer into statistical facts; Lord Welby, who has long been associated with the administration of the Treasury; Mr. Bertram Currie, who died the other day, and was a well experienced and well trusted financier. The members of the Commission had before them to give evidence Sir Edward Hamilton, who has long represented the Treasury, and Sir Robert Giffen, whose knowledge and whose authority with regard to statistical matters no one can deny. And while I should refuse absolutely to pay any respect to the recommendations of such a commission on a question of policy, while I should recognise as destroying the value of its judgment upon such a question, the fact that it was appointed as a packed commission, I cannot refuse to accept—especially after very carefully reading and studying the reasons which they give—I cannot refuse to accept the conclusions of fact to which that commission has come. And I want to examine those conclusions of fact, and to

induce you to see with me to what fair result they lead in determining our attitude in the discussion which is about to arise. Now, the facts that are come to are these, that at this moment Ireland is paying about one-thirteenth of the whole taxation of the country, that the wealth of Ireland, so far as it can be determined by examination of all sorts of different subjects—the amount of things consumed, amount of imports and exports, the death duties, the amount of the assessments, the income-tax, and the like—instead of being one-thirteenth is only one-eighteenth part of the wealth of the United Kingdom. And there is a further conclusion, which seems to me upon a careful study of the evidence, not only a right but a moderate conclusion; that while the wealth of Ireland would form one-eighteenth part of the wealth of the United Kingdom, the taxable capacity of Ireland cannot be put higher than one-twentieth of the taxable capacity of the whole Kingdom. I stop for a moment to say a word or two upon that distinction. What is the distinction between wealth and taxable capacity? Why, when Mr. Pitt was framing the Act of Union, he had that very point in his mind, for in the year 1785 he made a speech in which he said that his opinion was that a people which was only double in resources and established trade the wealth of another country might have the capacity of paying ten times as much in taxes. It was putting it, no doubt, too high. It was putting it in a rhetorical way. But it establishes this principle, which I do not think any economist will seriously deny, that when you are judging of the relative taxable capacity of two peoples, if one people is much wealthier as a body than the other, you ought to take so much for the absolutely necessary expenditure of each country before you make a comparison of their taxable capacity. And the result of the moderate estimate, as I take it, which is given by this commission upon a consideration of the facts, is that whereas Ireland now pays one-thirteenth part of the taxation, her wealth is only equal to one-eighteenth part, and her taxable capacity is only equal to

one-twentieth part. Before one goes a step further to ask what consequence is to follow from the ascertainment of these facts, it is somewhat interesting to ask how it is that this has come about. It was never intended by the framers of the Act of Union, nor was it ever contemplated by those who passed the resolution in 1816. It was thought by Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh at the beginning of the century, and it was thought by those who passed the resolution in 1816, that by extending taxation upon the same main subjects of taxation to both countries you would get a fair representation in the taxes raised of the relative capacity of those countries. Their expectation was a true one, I dare say; but the history of the disadvantage under which Ireland has fallen is curious and instructive. It is in the main owing to that which is called the Free-trade policy of the Liberal party during the early part of the century, or about the middle of the century—I mean the free import policy which was adopted by Parliament. That policy had the result of taking taxes off a number of things that came from abroad for consumption in this country, things which were far more largely consumed in the rich districts than they were in the poor ones, and therefore that policy relieved the taxpayers of Great Britain to a very much greater extent than it relieved the taxpayers of Ireland. There is one passage in this Blue-book which, when one remembers by whom it was written, is very curious, interesting, and significant, not with regard only to the present condition of Ireland with respect to taxation, but significant with regard to the position of agricultural communities, whether they are found in Ireland or any other part of the United Kingdom. Mr. Childers, who wrote this passage, was a resolute and devoted Free-trader. Hear what he says with regard to the influence of the Free-trade policy upon the condition and prosperity of Ireland:

. “Ireland, being a country mainly inhabited by agricultural producers, could support its present population upon the

corn and meat produced there without having recourse, under ordinary circumstances, to a foreign supply of these articles, and could at the same time export a surplus of these food stuffs. The population of Ireland consumes a rather larger amount, in proportion to its wealth, of spirits, tea and tobacco. This being so it does not appear that a fiscal system which raises no revenue from foreign food stuffs, but does raise a large revenue from spirits, tea and tobacco, is advantageous to the population of Ireland, although it may be advantageous to the population of the United Kingdom looked at as a whole. It may even perhaps be said that just as Ireland suffered in the last century from the protective and exclusive commercial policy of Great Britain, so she has been at a disadvantage in this century from the adoption of an almost unqualified Free-trade policy for the United Kingdom."

But whilst it has been the Free-trade policy which has so injuriously affected the financial relations of Ireland, in this respect there is one person to whom almost exclusively the credit is due of having made those alterations in taxation which have produced injustice to Ireland, and that person is Mr. Gladstone. (Applause.) In the year 1853 Mr. Gladstone extended the income-tax to Ireland, and between the years 1853 and 1860, chiefly and almost entirely under his inspiration, the taxes in Ireland were increased to an extent which has added to the burdens of that country ever since the year 1860 a sum of very nearly two and a half millions a year. (Applause.) The changes were certainly remarkable. In the year 1853 the taxation upon spirits in this country was 7s. 10d. per gallon. It was raised by 1860 to 10s., an increase of about 33 per cent. In Ireland in 1853 the tax upon spirits was only 2s. 8d., but there it was raised to 10s. by the year 1860. That is to say, the tax upon spirits in Ireland was made four times as much as it was at the beginning of those seven years. It is those changes—chiefly, and almost entirely, made by Mr. Gladstone—in the taxation of those subjects,

and in the relief of the imports that I have mentioned, which have cast upon Ireland that additional taxation of two and a half millions, of which she is now complaining. Well you may say that there is a puzzle here—that you have raised the tax upon spirits it is true, but that you have raised it as much in Great Britain—raised it to as high a point in Great Britain as you have in Ireland; and many people say that if the Irish people do not have to pay a larger tax upon their whisky than the people of Great Britain do, there cannot be any possible hardship in the matter. Let me explain to you the different points. If you have an old-established country, with a very large accumulation of taxable wealth, as you have in this country, you are able to raise by direct taxation upon the wealth of the people a very large proportion of your income. Of every £100 raised in this country in taxation about £53 is raised by taxes upon commodities the people consume; but in Ireland out of every £100 raised in taxation no less than £76 is raised by taxation chiefly upon the four objects of taxation—spirits, beer, tea and tobacco—which form the great bulk of the tax-bearing commodities in both countries. And when you have a country making a contribution of one-thirteenth of the total taxation levied, while its wealth is only one-eighteenth, it is easy to explain, it is easy to see, that that country must raise its taxation, not by direct taxation, but by taxation upon the commodities consumed by its people. But then it is sometimes said, “Oh, well, but if the Irish drink so much whisky and are only asked to pay the same tax upon it per gallon as a man in Great Britain has, there is no unfairness then.” Let us examine that. There is an idea that the Irish people consume a much larger quantity of spirits per head than other inhabitants of these islands. That is not a fact. In Great Britain the expenditure upon spirits per head is £1 9s. per year; in Ireland the expenditure is £1 6s. 6d. per year; but the tax upon spirits is so much larger than the tax upon the other popular drink of the inhabitants of Great Britain

that the Irishman has to bear a large excess of taxation. Let me give you two or three more figures which are interesting. The average expenditure of the people of Great Britain upon intoxicating drink—that is, upon spirits and beer—is no less than £4 2s. per head. The expenditure in Ireland is only £2 13s. per head. So unequal is the tax upon spirits and beer respectively that the man in Great Britain who spends £4 2s. upon intoxicating drink in the year is only taxed upon that to the extent of 15s. 6d., whereas the Irishman who spends £2 13s. in the year is taxed to the extent of 13s. 6d.; and the consequence is an inequality of taxation of which, it seems to me, Ireland has good reason to complain. Assuming these figures to be true, it does not seem to me it can be just that a country which has one-eighteenth part of the wealth should be called upon to bear one-thirteenth part of the taxation. It certainly is not carrying out the principles and the provisions of the Act of Union or of the resolution of 1816. It has been said, and said strongly, that this idea of Ireland being a separate taxable entity is a new one; it has been put down to some unguarded observation made by Mr. Goschen, or some unwise phrase used in debate. If one were dealing with phrases, wise or unwise, used by any leader of the Unionist party, I confess I should not feel myself very much fettered or limited by those observations, but I do feel fettered and limited by the terms of the Act of Union and the resolution of 1816. When I find in the terms of the Act of Union and the resolution of 1816 that Ireland and Scotland were both recognised as taxable entities, whose circumstances were to be considered, then I think that, taking one's stand, not upon any recent declaration of any leader, but upon the plain declaration of the Act of Union itself, we are bound to give consideration to this Irish cause and to see where the grievance is and how, if there be grievance, it ought to be remedied. (Hear, hear.) But there are some other things to be taken into consideration. We have in Ireland an extremely expen-

five civil administration, and while this curious change has been taking place in the infliction of taxation upon Ireland, there has been another change, no less remarkable, in the relation of Irish finance to Imperial finance. In 1860 the revenue raised from Ireland was very nearly the same as it is now, seven and three-quarter millions. In 1860 two millions four hundred thousand was the amount spent upon the administration of Ireland, and five and a half millions were contributed to the Imperial expenditure of the country. These figures have now almost exactly changed. At this moment the expense of administration in Ireland is no less than five and a half millions a year, or rather over, while the contribution which it makes to the Imperial expenses of the country has fallen to about two millions. The question at once arises, How are you to reconcile the claim which Ireland is making for a reduction of taxation, with the fact that she only contributes one-thirty-first portion of the Imperial expenditure of the country? There is this to be said about the enormous increase of expenditure, that it cannot be put down to the fault of the Irish people. It is not unnatural that the Irish members should have said that their country is being over-taxed, and that they should have tried to get back as much as possible. I am afraid it must be said that this greatly increased expenditure on administration in Ireland has been due to the corruption practised by both political parties in turn, in using Imperial funds for the purpose of pacifying, or bidding for the friendship of the Irish parties, by a too elaborate expenditure upon Irish administration. I have been now sixteen years in Parliament. I do not think I ever heard a proposal made by anybody for an economy in Irish administration. I am quite sure that if I had heard such a proposal from anybody I should have heard it resisted by the whole of the Irish members without distinction of party. But let us just consider what is the true proportion, upon those figures, which Ireland ought to bear as its fair share of expense. If it has one-twentieth of

the taxable capacity of this country, the figure that it ought to raise is very easily arrived at. It so happens—and it is very convenient that the matter should have to be discussed at this time, because the figures are so easily dealt with—it so happens that the total expenditure of this country upon Imperial service and upon local administration is at this moment about one hundred millions, and, of course, one-twentieth part of that would be five millions. But suppose we take five and a half millions. That would be one-eighteenth. No one could reasonably suggest, if those figures that have been investigated are in any way trustworthy, that Ireland ought to be called upon to pay taxes to the amount of more than five and a half millions in the year. And that means a reduction from her present taxation of some two and a quarter millions. Well, but on the other hand, what ought she to pay for the expenses of her own administration? It is said by some that if she has only to pay one-twentieth or one-eighteenth of the taxation of the whole country, she ought only to have one-eighteenth or one-twentieth to spend upon her civil administration. I don't think that will hold water for a moment. The expense of government does not depend upon the wealth of the country that is governed. It depends upon the number of the people, and the area you have to administer, and there are circumstances in Ireland which would make it unreasonable to call upon her to cut down suddenly the expenditure which was adjusted no doubt to a larger population than that which is now to be found within her borders. And, therefore, it seems to me she would have a right to claim that her local expenditure should be in proportion to her population; that is to say, one-eighth of the thirty-six millions which are now being spent by the whole United Kingdom in local administration. That would be four and a half millions for the expenses of the Irish administration, and would leave one million for her to contribute to the Imperial purposes of this country. And I confess that I think, looking at the evidence which has been

before this commission, that the only way to deal with this matter would be that in some way or other this over-taxation of Ireland should be met by either a remission of taxation, or by a return to Ireland of so much of the taxes which she contributes to the Imperial Exchequer as to place her in a position of fairness and equality in this matter. (Cheers.) Now, of course, it is not possible to reduce the taxation in Ireland only. Nobody would suggest, I think, reducing the taxes upon spirits in Ireland. In the first place, it would probably lead to a much larger consumption of spirits, and that is not a result one would like to contemplate. In the next place you would have to set up as between Ireland and this country a system of Custom House inspection, and to set up a Custom House system, putting a barrier between this country and Ireland, would be a step towards the separation of the two countries, which I for one would never willingly consent to. (Cheers.) Nor would it do to relieve her from the burden of the income-tax, because the income-tax does not fall on that class of the population who suffer most from the injustice which is now sustained. What can we do? I think we could and ought to make a grant in some way from the Imperial Exchequer of an amount of one million a year, leaving the contribution of Ireland to Imperial purposes at one million, which is the full amount of the surplus which she could have, supposing her to be taxed according to her capacity or her wealth—as a surplus after defraying the proper expenses of her own administration. We should then still be in face of an expenditure in Ireland of five and a half millions a year upon civil establishments, for which if properly administered and adjusted to the practical requirements of the country, would certainly not cost that Parliament four and a half millions a year. Let Ireland generously to contribute to the Imperial Exchequer—I do not stop to discuss the question of it should be given—that every shilling which is taken from the pockets of the people, and inflamed again. The

large and too costly establishments in Ireland shall be devoted to special purposes of Irish advantage in compensation for the amount that has been taken in too heavy a taxation (Applause.) I do not stop to discuss how this could be carried out. This is not the place to discuss that question. Next week this subject will come on in the House of Commons, and it is to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government of the day, and to Parliament itself, that the country may look for the fair consideration and discussion of the question (Applause.) But that it should be fairly and candidly discussed I have no doubt at all; and my object in devoting to this subject the time I have this evening, was to point out to you that quite apart from any question of the political character of the commission, quite apart from any question involving political differences between us, it appears to be established upon evidence that cannot be controverted that Ireland at the present time is under a burden of taxation greater than she ought to be called upon to bear; and I say if the injustice is established it ought at once to be remedied (Applause.) Now, we are told—I see it every day—that such contentions as I have been discussing to-night, and as I have to some extent endorsed and supported, lead straight in the direction of disintegration or Home Rule. I am precisely of an opposite opinion. In my judgment it is essential to maintaining our position as Unionists that we should be prepared to listen to complaints of this kind, and should be prepared to remedy them if we find an injustice has been done. (Applause.) We owe justice to all. We owe the same justice, strict and scrupulous justice, to the stranger; and to one of our own household and family we owe something more than justice—we owe the most generous consideration; the most anxious care to see lest there should have been any wrong done, the most determined resolution to remedy the wrong, if wrong there be; and I do not think we should be diverted from that course of honour and of duty even by the complaint of a sister, who complains that injustice has been

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 or complaint. During the last ten
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 t and strongest weapon by which that
 won? The strongest weapon that we
 eclaration, which we challenged any one to
 at the Imperial Parliament might be trusted to
 tice to Ireland in all its affairs. (Cheers.) We declared
 ver and over again in Parliament, and here, and through-
 the country, and I believe the fact that we were able to
 , and prove it, was the great argument which carried
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We declared that there was no grievance which
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 By that, and by that perhaps in chiefest measure,
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 attitude, and acting on that declaration, that we
 uphold the position we have so succeeded in
 I think, so far from the raising of this question
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...ents in Ireland shall be devot
 do now, the authority of our compensation for
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 That was the reason why I desired to be carried
 and in that place where I love to speak. Next
 questions, to deal with this subject. I wish to
 something to make clear to you the government
 raised, and the evidence given upon that matter may
 said something to my constituents in that question.
 justify the line I shall take in my speech candidly
 this question is discussed—first to establish that
 there be, and then if a grievance be established, to
 recognise our responsibility to remedy it, but to
 to address ourselves with all promptitude and resolute
 the discharge of that which in my judgment would
 of duty and of honour. (Loud cheers.)

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