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The Failure of William Ewart Gladstone's
Policy in
Ireland between 1868-1894

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Absract

This research examines the Irish Question during the time when W. E. Gladstone was Prime Minister. It describes the Irish Problems of land, religion, politics and Gladstone's attempt to solve these problems. This dissertation attempts to evaluate and to explain Gladstone's policy and his failure to achieve his goals in Ireland. It comprises three chapters. The first, an introductory chapter, traces the origins of the Irish problem back to the Normans and the Tudor and Stuart plantations and to the act of Union which united England and Ireland under the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The chapter also examines the Irish Question during the nineteenth century, from the tenants and landlords relationship to the established church of Ireland, and the disorder due to famine and the emergence of the Fenians. In addition to the coming of W. E. Gladstone to office in 1868. The second chapter tries to explain Gladstone's policy to solve the Irish question during his first and second ministries. From Irish religion to Irish education and Irish politics. Besides Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule policy in his third ministry. The third chapter examines the real failure of Gladstone's policy in Ireland. It tries also to explain Gladstone's failure illustrating with some events happened in Ireland. Moreover the failure of Gladstone led to his retirement from office in 1894.

يدرس هذا البحث المسألة الأيرلندية خلال الفترة التي كان فيها و.إ. غلادستون وزيراً أولاً. ويصف المشاكل الأيرلندية الخاصة بالأرض و الدين و السياسة، و كذا محاولات غلادستون لتسوية الوضع. كما تحاول هذه الأطروحة تقييم و شرح سياسة غلادستون و فشله في تحقيق أهدافه في أيرلندا. و تتضمن ثلاثة فصول، أولها هو فصل تمهيدي يعرض جذور المشاكل الأيرلندية التي تعود إلى بداية استيطان النورمانيين بأيرلندا بالإضافة إلى حكم كل من أسرتي تيودور و ستيوارت و وصولاً إلى عقد الوحدة التي جمعت بين إنجلترا و أيرلندا تحت حكم كل من مملكة بريطانيا العظمى و أيرلندا. و يدرس الفصل كذلك المسألة الأيرلندية خلال القرن التاسع عشر ابتداءً من العلاقة بين مالكي الأراضي و المستأجرين إلى إنشاء الكنيسة الأيرلندية و الاضطراب الراجع إلى المجاعة و كذا ظهور الفينيان، إضافةً إلى وصول و.إ. غلادستون إلى رئاسة الحكومة سنة 1868. أما الفصل الثاني فيحاول شرح الإجراءات التي قام بها غلادستون لحل المشكل خلال فترتي توليه رئاسة الوزراء الأولى و الثانية؛ من الديانة الأيرلندية إلى التعليم الأيرلندي ثم السياسة الأيرلندية. بالإضافة إلى تحول غلادستون إلى سياسة السيادة الوطنية في الفترة الثالثة لرئاسته للوزراء. و أما الفصل الثالث فيدرس الفشل الحقيقي لسياسة غلادستون في أيرلندا، و يحاول أيضاً أن يشرح سبب إخفاق غلادستون مستشهداً ببعض الأحداث التي وقعت في أيرلندا. علاوة على أن فشل غلادستون هذا أدى إلى استقالته و تخليه عن رئاسة الحكومة سنة 1894.

Résumé:

Cette recherche examine la question irlandaise durant la période où W.E. Gladstone était premier ministre. Elle décrit les problèmes irlandais de la terre, de religion et de politique, et les tentatives de Gladstone pour résoudre le problème. Cette dissertation tente d'évoluer et d'expliquer la politique de Gladstone et son échec d'atteindre ses objectifs en Irlande. Elle se compose de trois chapitres. Le premier est un chapitre introductif qui montre les origines du problème irlandais qui remonte au Normands et aux plantations des Tudors et des Stuarts et à l'acte d'union qui a uni l'Irlande et l'Angleterre sous le règne du Royaume de la Grande Bretagne et de l'Irlande. Le chapitre examine aussi la question irlandaise durant le dix-neuvième siècle commençant par la relation entre les propriétaires et les locataires en arrivant à l'établissement de l'église irlandaise, le désordre dû à la famine jusqu'à l'émergence des Fenians; et l'arrivée de W.E. Gladstone au gouvernement en 1868. Le deuxième chapitre tente d'expliquer les mesures prises par Gladstone pour résoudre le problème durant son premier et deuxième mandats. De la religion irlandaise à l'éducation irlandaise puis la politique irlandaise. En outre, la conversion de Gladstone vers la politique de la souveraineté nationale durant son troisième mandat. Le troisième chapitre examine le vrai échec de la politique de Gladstone en Irlande. Il tente aussi d'expliquer la cause de l'échec de Gladstone en illustrant avec quelques événements qui se sont passés en Irlande. En plus de l'échec de Gladstone qui a mené à sa démission du gouvernement en 1894.

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Introduction

William Ewart Gladstone(1809-1898) , was a British statesman. In a career lasting over sixty years, he served as Liberal Prime Minister four times, more than any other person (1868-1874, 1880-1885, February-July 1886 and 1892-1894) . His Christian faith held the extremes of his character in sufficient harmony to avoid disintegration and to produce one of the powerful political personalities in British history . He, thus, saw politics and political issues in terms of morals, and Irish affairs were no exception .

In this dissertation we will attempt to analyse the Irish problem, the objectives of Gladstone's policy in Ireland and why he failed . These sections have been selected because first they show the Irish question and the changes that occurred in Irish history. Second they show how Gladstone's points of view and attitudes about Ireland changed as he grew older. He shifted from righting Ireland's wrongs, to a complete separation from Britain by Home Rule policy.

The purpose of my research is to show that Gladstone's policy can not be separated from his own beliefs in religion, liberty and justice . His views had certainly contributed to his involvement in Ireland.

The main questions we deal with in this dissertation are :what was Gladstone's policy?
why
did Gladstone's policy fail ? To what extent was Gladstone's policy different from other policies in Ireland ?

To answer these questions descriptive, argumentative approaches will be seen. Because of

the nature of the subject in this dissertation we will try to use the descriptive method,

to show the main aspects of the policy and why it failed?

This dissertation begins with an introductory chapter that deals with the origins of the Irish problem that goes back to the first Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169. The impact of the Normans coupled with Tudors and Stuarts plantations and the heavy imbalance of advantage with disadvantage obtained by the Irish as a result of the Union of 1800, have left their mark upon Ireland, probably forever, and there may always be huge gaps in understanding how the Irish felt about British involvement in their country. The study also examines the Irish problem in the second half of the nineteenth century, to show the roots of the rivalry between Ireland and England, as well as the issues in which they struggled for a very long period of time (land, religion and politics). Without at least a short historical background, the reader may not really get a full understanding of Gladstone's policy and its relation with Ireland and Irish history. Then the chapter deals with the coming of W.E. Gladstone to office in 1868 to show how he sought to remove Irish grievances.

In the second chapter, we will explain Gladstone's reforms during his first and second ministries. Moreover, we will explain the effect of Gladstone's religious faith on the established church of Ireland. Then we will deal with his impact on Irish education. In addition this chapter is devoted to the Irish Land reform. As a final point the chapter introduces Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule.

The third and last chapter develops a discussion about Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule and the difficulties he faced to persuade his colleagues in the party and his followers that his policy was the right policy. Then the chapter will discuss the failure of Gladstone's policy in Ireland and his retirement from office in 1894 .

Throughout this research, efforts had been made to rely on books , essays and articles ,as well as on some electronic source. The majority of the sources used in the majority of cases are from Questia ,the electronic library .

Chapter One

Origins of The Irish Problem

.Introduction

The historian Tim Lambert says that, “The Irish Question” is a phrase first used in the 19th century (2). But the problem traced back to the Normans when they first went to Ireland in the 1169 to carve for themselves feudal domains and to impose an alien ruling class upon the native population. The impact of the Normans coupled with Tudors and Stuarts plantations and the heavy imbalance of advantage with disadvantage obtained by the Irish as a result of the Act Union of 1800, have left their mark, probably forever, and there may always be huge gaps in understanding how the Irish felt about British involvement in their country.

This chapter examines the Irish problem to the end of the 19th century starting with the land question, religion and politics. Then, the chapter deals with the coming of W.E. Gladstone to office in 1868.

1. Origins of the Irish Problem

The first Normans from England and Wales landed in Wexford, Southeastern Ireland, in 1169. They conquered the disunited Irish using armor, horses and fortified castles. The Normans brought with them the tradition of the Common law, based upon the personal ownership of property, in contrast with life under Irish Brehon Law where ownership was vested in the extended family or clan. However the new comers quickly adopted the Irish language, and it was

said that, “they were more Irish than the Irish themselves.” (Curtis, 1).

The political problem started with the Normans. They wanted to impose British rule over Ireland, Poyning was one who held those views. He introduced the Poyning laws which originated the Irish problem.

1.1. The Kildare Supremacy and the Poyning Parliament 1494-95

The period marked the culmination of the home rule demand of the English in Ireland. Though interrupted by Poyning's law in 1495, it continued in effect till the fall of the house of Kildare.

“Kildare the seventh earl, justiciar and then deputy in 1470,” (Somerset Fry, 101). His power was already prepared by a number of marriages, both with the Gaels and the English, which it was his policy to continue and which built up for his office and sent Lord Grey from London to replace him as deputy. King Edward could not defeat Kildare because he had power based on a network of family alliances.

At last new Tudor dynasty took decisive action in Ireland. Kildare was removed from power and on October 13th 1494, there arrived as deputy to prince Henry a Viceroy Sir Edward Poyning. He was ready to crush the home rule party; and restore the sovereignty of England. Poyning's orders were to reduce the lordship of Ireland to whole and perfect Obedience.

To ensure that the Irish parliament should never act freely again against English policy, the famous Poyning's law was passed which states that, “no parliament shall be held in Ireland till the lieutenant and council of Ireland shall first certify the King” (Forster, 98). Under the great seal of such causes and acts as them seem should pass; then the King and his council, after affirming such causes and acts to be good and expedient for the said land, should send his licence there upon, as well in the affirmation of the said causes and acts as to summon the said parliament under his great seal of England that: done a parliament shall be holden after the

form and effect afore rehearsed, any parliament holden hereafter contrary to these forms to be void and of no effect. The citadel of power being thus recovered, the next step was to defend it against Irish and English enemies. This famous law was to have a curious and long history right up to 1783.

As the

political problem started with Poyning's, the religious problem traced back to Oliver Cromwell's revolution and the passing of the Penal Laws.

1.2. Oliver Cromwell

The historian Forster stated that, Oliver Cromwell, who governed Britain in the mid 17th century and at a time when Britain was a republic (101) detested Roman Catholicism and believed that the Irish could never be trusted. His attempts to solve the Irish problem, was to send to the island his new model army and coerce the Irish into obedience.

In 1641, the Irish rebelled against the English and Scottish who seized their land, and were immediately caught up in the English civil war between parliament and the King. In 1649 Oliver Cromwell landed at Dublin with an army of 12,000 men. He was joined by the 8,000 strong parliamentary army. He successfully laid siege to the town of Drogheda, and on his orders the 2,699 men of the royalist garrison were put to death. Townspeople were also slaughtered. Cromwell reported that, "we put to the sword the whole number of inhabitants. I don't think thirty of the whole number escaped with their lives." (Curtis, 132).

Large scale confiscation of land followed. The owners were driven off eleven million acres of land and it was given to the protestant colonists. "Irish landowners found East of the river Shannon after 1 May 1654 faced the death penalty or slavery in the West Indies and Barbados." (Curtis,

133). The expression “to hell or Connaught” originated at this time: “those who did not leave their fertile fields and travel to the poor land west of the Shannon would be put to the sword.” (Forster, 102)

1.3. Penal Law

In the 1690s, the Penal Laws designed to repress the native Irish were introduced. “The first Penal Laws ordered that no catholic could have a gun, pistol, or sword.” (ellis, 129). Over the next 30 years, the other Penal Laws followed: Irish catholics were forbidden to receive an education, enter a profession, vote, hold public office, practice their religion, attend catholic worship, engage in trade or commerce, purchase land, lease land, receive a gift of land, or inherit land from a protestant. Rent land worth more than thirty Shillings a year, own a horse of greater value than five pounds. Be a guardian to a child, educate their own children or send a child abroad to receive an education.

Edmund Burke, an Irish born protestant who became a member of parliament, (MP) described the Penal Laws as

“well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded the perverted ingenuity of man.” (Ellis, 130).

The lord chancellor was able to say, “the law does not suppose any such person to exist as an Irish Roman Catholic.” (133). With the purpose of keeping Ireland under its rule, and avoiding all sorts of revolution, Britain introduced the Act of Union in 1801.

1.4. Act of union

To solve the Irish problem, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was created in 1801 by the Act of Union. This solution pleased no body in Ireland, the protest ruling class did not want to lose their independence, and the Catholics felt betrayed when George III refused to grant Catholic emancipation within a United Kingdom, Ireland started to struggle for reform. "O'Connell and his Catholic Association founded in 1823 led the Struggle for Catholic emancipation." (McDowall, 149). He insisted that British parliament repeal the anti-Catholic laws to justify its claim to represent the people of Ireland. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland lasted for 120 years. British politicians promised Irish leaders equal voting opportunities, when Ireland would be part of the United Kingdom. But the King of Great Britain and Ireland, George III supported by most Tories and by many Protestants Irish land-lords, behind the 1801 Act of Union through which refused to let this happen despite the intended logic the British parliament would open up the path for Catholic emancipation, that is the right for Catholics to sit in the Westminster Parliament. However, it was almost thirty years after the Act of Union that Catholics were granted emancipation.

There was an imperial context to the Act of Union as well. Ireland was often viewed as a British colony, and since this was long before the era of decolonization, if Ireland broke away, it would be a bad example for other colonies that seek independence. So, Ireland was not just strategically important, but it also had a symbolic value. "In the post emancipation period, Catholics and Protestants drifted further apart; Protestants increasingly seeking union, while the Catholics asking for its repeal." (Damrosch & Keving).

. 2. Irish Problem in The Nineteenth Century

2.1. Religion

“ Ireland's population had increased rapidly from about 2.5 million in 1767 to over 4 million by 1781 . It was to reach 5 million by 1800, and over 7.5 million in 1831.” (Morrogh). The not altogether reliable religious census of 1834 estimated that almost 81% of the population was Catholic, 10.7% was Anglicans, and 9% was Presbyterians ; 99% of the contry's Presbyterians and 45% of its Anglicans lived in Ulster. Anglicans also had a strong presence in and around Dublin, but were otherwise scattered throughout the east and west . The most important point to be drawn from these statistics is that numerically speaking, Anglicans and Presbyterians were strongest in the same area. This would have important consequences for their increasing cooperation in the face of what were perceived to be Catholic threats to the Protestant constitution.

About 5,000 Protestant families owned 95 % of Irish land . Owing its privileged position to the conquest of Gaelic Ireland from the 16th century, this elite came to be collectively known as the Protestant Ascendancy. “ It was defined by its religion, its ownership of property , its adherence to notions of traditional privilege, and by social conventions. ” (Ellis, 200). The Ascendancy dominated politics, the civil service, and high society, but it was far more fluid and variable than this simple template would suggest. Throughout the 18th century, while land ownership conferred status, it did not necessarily confer wealth. And, just as impecunious landlords were not uncommon , neither were they ambitious and successful professionals. This was particularly true of lawyers, who cut a swathe through high society and gained political clout in the Irish parliament.

The incontrovertible identifying feature of this elite was Anglicanism . This distinguished them in crucial ways from Catholics and from other Irish Protestants. Presbyterians were excluded from this hierarchy, but throughout the 18th century they expanded their own economic and political influence. “Most Presbyterians were tenant farmers and merchants, their concentration in the north of Ireland allowing them favourable access to trade and industrial sectors and to relative security of

tenure.”(Morrogh) They maintained strong ties with Scotland and through their kirk sessions exercised real jurisdiction in local communities .

2.2. Land

In the 19th century, farming land became more and more the property of land-lords. They were absent and put little attention to the state of their lands. Trueman stated that, there only concern was rent. Those who could not pay were evicted and there was no place for these people when this happened (1-2).

The second problem which the rural population had, was the fact that their annual food harvest was based on potato. Potatoes were notoriously susceptible to disease and famines due to failed potato crops which had occurred on a number of occasions in 19th century Ireland .However, the potato blight of 1845 eclipsed all that had happened before and its impact on Ireland was nothing short of catastrophic.

The Great Famine and Its Impact

Famine had been common in Nineteenth Century Ireland and almost an occupational hazard of rural life in Ireland. But the Great Famine of 1845 eclipsed all others. It was known as the “Great Hunger, was set off by *Phytophthora Infestans*, a fungus which had traveled to Ireland from North America .”(Foster, 34). The Famine ravaged Ireland from 1845 to 1849.

“ Ireland's rural population had rapidly grown in the Nineteenth Century and potatoes were the staple diet of the rural population of Ireland.”(Trueman, 2).However, this crop was very vulnerable to disease and no cure existed in Ireland for the dreaded potato blight. In 1845

despite some of the crop having been lifted, starvation and consequent disease affected almost every part of the country, even though the crop failure itself was confined to little over a half of Ireland .

The misery for millions of potato dependent people and for others was compounded by a number of factors that even singly would have been overwhelming :government attitudes to the provision of relief; the spread of typhus, relapsing fever, bacillic desentery and famine dropsy, evictions from land and from mean one-room hovels by heartless landlords; the sight of cart-loads of grain and other crops being taken along the roads to port for shipments to England and other markets while they starved.

The famine had bad effects . First of all, between 1846 and 1850 the population of Ireland dropped by two million. One million died of starvation or the disease associated with the famine and one million emigrated to North America, Britain or Europe(Somerset Fry, 233).

Second , the fundamental problems between landlords and tenants, however ,remained unsolved. With fewer people to work the land, it might be thought that landlords would be less harsh on their tenants as they had a vested interest in having their land-worked .This did not happen. “Landlords used the opportunity to rationalize their estates and there were more evictions even after the famine had ended .”(Mokyr).

In dealing with the third and most important impact of the famine we move indirectly to the next point in the Irish problem which is Politics.

3.Politics

The political impact of the famine was very great. There were those who believed that the government in London had done as little as it could to help the Irish. In fact government more precisely under the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, tried to help Ireland.

He repealed the Corn Laws* so that grain could be released at prices which the Irish peasantry could afford. The government also provided works; those works could not relieve distress because there were only enough jobs for about one-tenth of the number of people looking for them. Then the government decided to transfer the whole problem of Ireland's poor to the landlords which encouraged them to evict as many poorer tenants as they could. Therefore, the Irish believed that the only people who could help the Irish were the Irish themselves.

After 1845 the Irish feeling that they were alienated from the British main-land grew. And it was after out of Ireland and the Great famine that secret organizations grew and they simply wanted the British a republic set up free from the rule of Westminster; the most famous were the Fenians.

Fenians

The Fenians were members of the so called Fenian movement in Ireland and elsewhere, though primarily in America and England

* Corn laws :laws put by the British government permitted the free entry of cheap

“formally Constituted as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (I R B) in 1858, the Gaelic label of Fenians(a reference to Fianna army in the medieval saga of Fionn Mac Cumhail) was the identification that stuck.”(Foster, 390).

The Irish Republican Brotherhood was founded in Dublin, and thousands of emigrants who fought in the American Civil War pledged themselves to return and fight for Ireland. They used their war experience to train young Fenians.

According to Christopher Harvie and H.C.G. Matthew, "The Fenians were the very opposite of the open, peaceful and Constitutional organization of the 1820's and 1830's as Daniel O'Connell's* party.", with their aim of orderly and limited change, "they wanted separation and revolution, the immediate and total overthrow of British power in Ireland. And they saw no other way of achieving it except by force." (Somerset Fry, 241). The Fenians declared to The Times

"we appealed in vain to the reason and sense of justice of
the dominant powers. Having no honourable alternative
we appeal to force as our last resource [...]. It is better
struggle for freedom than to continue an
existence of utter serfdom all men are born with equal
rights. They ended by proclaiming an Irish Republic."
(Somerset Fry, 242-43).

left
to die in the

Thousands more Irish men had followed the million or Famine emigrants to America,

*Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847) the Liberator, he is one of the great Catholic Irish political leaders in the first half of the nineteenth century. He campaigned for Catholic emancipation.

Continental Europe and even Britain herself the most radical had gone to Paris, where they could study the methods of revolution, and among them were James Stephens, railway engineer from

Kilkenny, and his friend John O'Mahoney, who came from an ancient land owning family with a tradition of rebellion.

Fenian activity took various forms. In March 1867, Fenians gathered in Chester to organize the Chester raid but the raising was badly led and they failed. Twelve Londoners were killed during the attempt to free Fenians imprisoned in Clerkenwell prison in London. The British were outraged and frightened, they saw the Irish man as a menace, a danger that had to be contained.

A few days after the Clerkenwell explosion the leader of the British Liberal party told a public meeting that "Irish violence was the result of Irish grievances, and it was Britain's duty to remove those grievances." (Somerset Fry, 244). The speaker was William Ewart Gladstone, a devout Christian who saw his mission in life as serving God in the highest manner possible, and in his view, that was through politics.

Conclusion

Gladstone started his parliamentary career in 1830's with the usual British misconceptions about Ireland; he resigned from the government when Peel repealed the Corn laws and in 1853, as Chancellor of the exchequer, he made swinging increases in Irish taxation. Gladstone like other Britons was afraid that Ireland, if treated lightly, might become dependent upon Britain.

yet for many years he had regarded Ireland as wronged. In 1845, he had spent some time traveling in Europe and European statesman, particularly the French foreign minister, Francois Guizot, had given him their views that the condition of Ireland was a blot on the honour of

Britain. “ Ireland, Ireland Gladstone had written to his wife that could in the west ,the coming storm , the minister of God's retribution upon a cruel and inveterate and but half-atoned injustice!”(Somerset Fry, 245).He was haunted by Ireland and after the Clerkenwell explosion he felt the plight of the Irish must be put before the British people. There was to be a general election the following year, and he decided the liberal party should fight it on the Irish issue.

The activities of the Fenians were partly responsible for spurring William Gladstone into his stated mission “to passify Ireland” .

Chapter Two

Gladstone's Irish Reforms in his First and Second Ministries

Introduction

William Ewart Gladstone was one of the longest serving members of the British House of Commons, having sat as an MP for over sixty years. He first took his seat in 1832 and retired from it in July 1895. During this time he participated in nearly all of the major crises of nineteenth century Britain, and always aimed to support what he believed to be the cause of right. He was a good religious man and he brought his belief to do his will in Politics. Gladstone was completely loyal to the Queen, but she found it more difficult as time went on to get on with him. When she tried to avoid having him as Prime Minister after the great liberal victory of 1880. She wrote "she will sooner abdicate than send for or have any thing to do with that half mad fire brand who would soon ruin every thing, and be a dictator." (Jarman, 8).

Gladstone came to be a passionate believer in Liberty and Justice. Which made him the champion of oppressed and downtrodden Ireland. "my Mission", said Gladstone on the eve of becoming Prime Minister in 1868, is to pacify Ireland." (Jarman, 17). His aim in his Irish policy was simply stated, "our purpose and duty is to endeavour to draw a line between the Fenians and the people of Ireland indisposed to cross it. (Matthew, 192). Gladstone immediately started to implement his programme of reform that is socioeconomic, not political reform. There were three subjects to tackle: the church, land and education.

1. The Irish Church

The disestablishment of the church of Ireland was through the Irish Church Act of 1869 put by the British Prime Minister W.E.Gladstone. Gladstone was aware that the Irish tenant farmers felt several grievances. Underlying all of these was the position of the Protestant elite over most of rural Roman Catholic Ireland. Lydon stated that, Gladstone was determined to put an end to the Protestant ascendancy(309),and he thought one way this could be started was by attacking the position of the Established Protestant Church of Ireland. It was the first thing Gladstone turned his attention to after the formation of his ministry.

On 1 March, Gladstone introduced the Irish Church Disestablishment bill in a major speech to the house.

“He declared that,from 1 January 1871,the church of Ireland would cease to be the state church in Ireland,and would be disendowed of its lands.The church would there after be governed by its bishops and a representative group of clergy.All annual public grants to religion in Ireland –including that of Maynooth College-would cease. Much of the €16 million raised by disendowment would be devoted to public works in Ireland,except for those already covered by the poor laws.The remainder would be granted to help the church of Ireland to pay its own clergy,and be used as compensatory sums to the Presbyterian churches and to Maynooth College.”(Partridge, 122)

On 24 March,Gladstone secured a parliamentary triumph :a majority in his favour of 118 (368 to 250 votes).This was a large majority by far than in 1866,when the Liberals had been turned out of office by a mere eleven votes,while in 1841 Peel had defeated the Whigs in 1841 by only one vote.(Partridge, 122). Gladstone believed that it was a good start;it was such a large majority that it would help propel the Bill through the committee stage in the commons and, hopefully have some effect on the behaviour of the Lords when they came to discuss it .

Most importantly, as early as 13 December when Gladstone saw the Queen and stated the case of the Irish church, she hesitated however, it would seem that the Queen's hesitations were overcome by the scale of Gladstone's success. The Bill easily secured its passage through the commons, with even the proposal to compensate Maynooth College out of the church of Ireland's funds being voted through by a majority of 107. The final reading, on 31 May, saw a Liberal majority of 144.

Armed with this, Gladstone and the Queen began to pressure the Archbishop of Canterbury to make sure the measure passed the Lords by getting the church of England bishops to abstain at least from opposition.

The result of the disestablishment of the church of Ireland Act was the end of the union of that church with the church of England from 1 January 1871. It would receive some €10 million of revenue, but lose about €5 million to secular purposes. The measure was one of Gladstone's greatest triumphs, not so much because of its terms, but because of the way in which he had taken on the in-built conservative majority in the house of lords and had won.

The act was the beginning, rather than the end, of Gladstone's plans for Ireland. After all, the disestablishment of the church of Ireland was one of a group of questions including the 'land of Ireland' and the 'education of Ireland', which, according to Gladstone, "formed the many branches from one trunk, and that trunk is the tree of what is called the protestant ascendancy [...] like a tall tree of noxious growth [...] Now at length the day has come when, as we hope, the axe has been laid at the root of that tree." (Partridge, 125).

2. Education

Of great importance for both Ireland and for Liberalism in Britain, was the reception of his next major piece of Irish legislation –a bill for the reform of Irish education.

The situation of the universities in Ireland was complicated by religious factors, and by 1871 there were three universities in Ireland.

“These were Dublin university, a Roman Catholic foundation , dating back to the fourteenth Century; Trinity college, Dublin , a sixteenth-Century Protestant foundation ; and the Queen's University dating only from 1845 and consisting of three affiliated Godless Colleges- Belfast College , Cork College and Galway College.”(Partridge ,128).

Towards the end of November 1872 Gladstone brought up the Irish universities question in the Cabinet. The Irish University Bill endeavoured to establish a 'neutral' university centred on a new university of Dublin, which would not teach theology, philosophy or modern history.

Belfast , Cork , and Galway Colleges, and the Catholic Dublin University would be affiliated institutions of this new university. It was, in short, a large-scale and sweeping proposal on which Gladstone laid the responsibility for a complete review of Irish education . He also told the house of Commons, when he introduced the Bill on 13 February, that the measure was “Vital to the honour and existence of government.”(Partridge, 129). In fact, it was the 'honour' of Gladstone himself, as prime framer of the Bill, that was most at stake.

More difficult than the problem of church disestablishment, and education was the problem of the Irish land and the poverty of its tenants.

3.Irish Land

Even before the Irish Church Bill had run its course, Gladstone had been considering the Irish land question. As early as 24 May 1869, he was trying to provide a state fund from which tenants could buy up their tenancies from their landlord. By September the land question was assuming an aspect of greater difficulty. Gladstone spent a good deal of time reading around the subject of Irish land, and it was brought home to him that the main difficulty facing the Irish tenant farmer was the ease with which his landlord could evict him. The rent paid could be increased for any reason, and, if the tenant was unable to pay the increase, he could and understandably would be evicted, and he would not be paid compensation for it. The landlord could find some one else to take his place without too much difficulty.

Gladstone, perceived, as he told the chief secretary for Ireland, Chichester Fortescue, that "It is very desirable to prevent the use of Augmentation of rent as a method of eviction." (Partridge, 126). He also thought it only right that, if a tenant was evicted, he should be paid compensation for disturbance, and he should also be paid compensation for any improvement he had made on the land. This was through the passing of the Land Act in 1870 by Gladstone in order to protect tenants from unfair treatment.

Gladstone decided that a cabinet committee would have to be set up to look into the whole matter. When the proposal was discussed in Cabinet on 3 November, Gladstone in the early stages of negotiation he thought that he would be able to secure a measure which would

extend to the whole of Ireland the practice of Ulster. There tenants received protection from unjustified once they had been in residence for a number of years. If the tenant was evicted, he would be paid Compensation, whether or not he made improvements to the property. It took him until 25 January 1870 to win the support of all his colleagues. 'Cabinet', he noted in his diary, the great difficulties of the Ireland Land Bill there are now over. Thank God! (Partridge, 126).

The Bill secured its second reading on 11 March, by a clear majority, but it did not complete its passage through the Commons until 30 May. Even though the conservatives had expected legislation along these lines, they did not let it through quickly or easily, and Gladstone had to take the lead in securing its passage, since none of his colleagues had the necessary knowledge, or, in some cases, the desire to see it pass.

It is ironic that this act, which had taken longer to pass than the Irish Church Disestablishment Act, was not especially effective. This did not mean that the Bill was completely negative because it gave Gladstone a better reputation in Irish eyes, which he was to build on in later years. It showed that the Westminster Parliament could pass legislation that would try and improve the lot of the overworked Irish farmer and served as an indication that more concessions could be extracted from it if more pressure was put on it. But the new law did not go far enough to protect the Irish against too high rents. Landlords regarded their relationships with their tenants as a personal one, which the state should not interfere with. Yet, the act failed; the safeguards Gladstone had put in the Bill were taken out by the lords and Irish tenants found their position virtually unaltered. Competition for land was still so fierce

that a prospective tenant was often prepared to buy his way into a tenancy, spending money which could have been used for improvement, and occasionally to compensate a landlord for the cost of evicting a sitting tenant. Evictions without compensation were still easy enough. If a landlord raised the rent beyond what the tenant could pay, but not so much that a court would deem the increase exorbitant, he could evict the tenant without compensation when, inevitably, he fell into arrears.

Disappointed Irishmen turned, once again, to the idea of having their own parliament, not as the Fenians had advocated, after a complete separation from Britain, but as part of a federal arrangement. Irish MPs would still sit at Westminster, where foreign and imperial matters would be handled, but an Irish parliament would be responsible for domestic affairs, including the land laws. When Gladstone had disestablished the Church of Ireland, he had tampered with the act of Union, which linked the Protestant Churches of England and Ireland. Irishmen had been encouraged by that; it showed the union was not, after all, sacrosanct.

In 1870, a prominent Irish lawyer and MP, Isaac Butt (1813-1879), drew together a group of Nationalist Irishmen, some of them Protestants dismayed by disestablishment, some Catholic Liberals and others Fenians, and formed them into a Home Government association. Three years later, he superseded it with the Home Rule League. The Irish Home Rule Party failed completely to pierce the indifference of the new Conservative government. After G.C. Biggar came to the fore. Though ugly, hunchbacked and shrewd, Biggar developed a technique of obstruction in the Commons which infuriated his British opponents.

But Biggar was too plebeian to become party leader. The Irish gentry who comprised most of the parliamentary Home Rule Party would not follow a tradesman with a rasping Belfast accent. They wanted a leader with presence and impeccable background as well as dynamism. And before long they found him. In April 1875 a new member was returned for Meath in a by-election – an Anglo-Irishman, a protestant with an English education, tall and handsome with an air of self-confidence besides great force and determination. He was Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-1891).

Parnell's mother was an American whose father had fought as an admiral against the British in 1812. She was verulently anti-British and her son adopted her attitudes. Yet he had some English characteristics himself. Parnell first took notice of politics when the Fenians rose in 1867; he was only twenty one at the time and had no thought of joining them but, imbued with his family's tradition of nationalism, he felt a fervent sympathy for their aims.

“he saw the Home Rule Party as an alternative to Fenianism; more practical, less extreme, open instead of secret, using constitutional methods rather than force. But the intensity of Fenianism always struck a chord in him.”
(Somerset Fry, 249).

Parnell had quickly seen the possibilities of the Ballot Act*. Before it the Irish voters had been easily intimidated; under the direction of their landlords they had elected members to the two existing English parties. After the secret ballot, there could be an independent Irish party. Parnell as leader of this party, soon made himself master of a new parliamentary tactic – obstruction. By keeping the House of Commons up all night with their speeches, the Irish could hold up the progress of all business. This was a new and sensational method of forcing the Irish party and its problems on the attention of the British parliament.

In Ireland itself ,the agrarian problem became acute with the, agricultural slump** which set in after 1875 .Direct action began ,and the Fenians began to take hand .In 1879 an Irishman personally scared by eviction arrived in Mayo from America .He was Michael Davitt*** , a 31-years old Fenian ,found in Mayo a period of extreme disorder ,which became known as the

*Ballot Act 1872 one thing Gladstone did in his first government which made voting secret.

**Agricultural slump [the harvest of 1879 was the worst since the Great Famine;in 1880 there were 2590 agrarian outrages and between 1874 and 1880 some 10 thousand evictions.

.***Michael Davitt born in Mayo in 1846, evicted with his family which sought a home in Lancashire ,he became a Fenian and in 1871 was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment but was released in 1877,he thought the land struggle must go along with national struggle

Land War .as a result,in 1879 he formed the Land League to unite tenants who,because of the Depression,were threatened with eviction.The League got money from the USA ,formed branches throughout Ireland and seemed to be threat to government .In October 1879, Parnell agreed to become president of the Land League partly;to check the extremism of Davitt,who had thought of nationalizing the land ,and party so that he could use the power of the Land League in the cause of Home Rule.

Gladstone returned to power through his second government (1880-85).The Irish question had played a dominant role in the life of Gladstone's first ministry and,not surprisingly,it was to play a very important one in the second ministry too .By the time he returned to office ,Ireland was once more in a state of turmoil.This of course was because of the agricultural depression and the Land War which broke out between tenants and their landlords.In this respect,the historian Jarman says, that

“Eviction were widespread ,and they led to agrarian outrages in retaliation .In 1877, there had been 2,177 evictions and 236 outrages;by 1880 the figures had risen to 10,457 evictions and 236 outrages.Ricks were set on fire,cattle were maimed ,and gangs went round at night shooting

into houses and attacking people. Sometimes there was murder.” (22)

Parnell adopted a new method of attack. He told a gathering of peasant Farmers how they could get their way.

“when a man takes a farm which another has been evicted”he said,“you must show him on the road side when you meet him,you must showhim in the streets of the town ,you must show him at the shop counter, you must show him in the fair and at the market-place ,and even in the house of worship,by leaving him severly alone,by putting him into a sort of moral Coventry,by isolating him from the rest of his kind as if he were a leper of old,you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed. ”(Somerset Fry, 254).

A few days later, the tactic was applied ,not against a land-grabbing tenant farmer as Parnell had envisaged ,but captain Charles Boycott ,an evicting land agent in Mayo .The crops of Boycott had to be harvested by Protestant laborers brought in from Ulster under military guard,a measure that only served to publicize the success of the tactic ,which came to be called by the name of its first victim.Significantly ,there was a sharp drop in the number of evictions.

Parnell's new turn,incomprehensible to nearly all Englishmen,helped to determine the government's order of priorities.As soon as the new session opned in January, 1881 ,W.E.Forster ,the radical politician who had carried the education act in 1870 and who was now chief secretary for Ireland,introduced a Coersion Bill.The Bill provided for suspension of habeas corpus and so for giving the authorities the power of arbitrary arrested and held indefinitely without trial ,public meetings could be prohibited,newspapers seized and the right to trial by jury suspended .

Parnell and his supporters fought the bill with dogged anger, employing every kind of obstruction ;the debate on the queen's speech at the opening of parliament was prolonged for eleven nights and a single debate spun out to forty-one hours. The Coercion act was passed ,nevertheless ,in February 1881.

In April 1881 Gladstone introduced a land bill which went very much farther than his land act of 1870. He conceded the demand of the Land League for what were popularly known as the three F S :Fair rents, Fiscity of tenure and Free sale. This meant that leases were to be for fifteen years and were to be renewable ;a land commission was set up to fix fair rents ;and a tenant on leaving his holding could sell his interest (his improvements) to the in-coming tenant. The law had successfully intruded upon the contract of landlord and tenant, the power of the landlords was broken and peasant ownership seen in the distance .The Land Act of 1881 was very far-reaching indeed .

The Irish were not grateful .The house of Lords had shown ,only a earlier ,that it would not countenance security of tenure for tenants in arrears with their rent, whatever the circumstances ,and in order to push his bill through ,Gladstone had had to leave out provision for hardship cases .Yet there were 130,000 tenants in Ireland ,who were in arrears and starving ,because the potato crop had failed again .(Webb, 368).

The government needed Parnell's support to make the act a success. "But Parnell and his associates issued a no rent manifesto ,and there a sharp rise in the number of disturbances." (Webb, 368). He made highly provocative speeches, hurt Gladstone by describing him as a 'masquerading knight-errant', (qtd. Somerset Fry in 255-56) and advised tenant farmers to put test cases to the land tribunals, set up under the act, and not to pay a penny in rent until the

cases had been heard. The chief secretary, W.E. Forster, concluded that Parnell was trying to wreck the Act. He arbitrarily arrested Parnell, as he had the power to do under the Coercion act, and elapped him into Kilmainham jail.

Parnell was in prison nearly six months (October 1881- April 1882), but coercion did not quell the agitation. Indeed while it lasted, outrages increased, as did also the number of persons killed. Both the British government and Parnell were at length prepared to feel their towards a settlement. Greaves stated that, an arrangement was fixed up- the so-called the Kilmainham Treaty - by which Parnell and other Irish leaders were released on condition that they used their influence to bring crimes and disorder to an end. (331). With the failure of the Coercion policy, the Viceroy and chief secretary W.E. Forster, resigned. His place was not taken by Chamberlain, who was the expected choice, but by lord Frederick Cavendish who was murdered in 1882 in phoenix Park, Dublin, along with his under secretary, T.H. Burke.

Parnell was so shocked that he wrote immediately to Gladstone offering to resign his seat: an offer Gladstone declined. He was deeply afraid that the murders would destroy the Kilmainham Treaty but, paradoxically, they helped him make the final break with extremism than he wanted. When the government brought in another Coercion act, to satisfy British public opinion, Parnell opposed it vigorously, becoming once more the Champion of Irish rights while, at the same time, cooperating with the government under the Land Act. Henceforth he was to be free to pursue his objective of Home Rule.

In October 1882, the suppressed Land League was superseded by the Irish National League, a nation-wide organization for collecting funds and putting candidates for a Home Rule Party. The

strength of the party and Parnell's standing in Ireland at this time was shown in the results of the 1885 national election. He won every seat in Ireland outside eastern Ulster except Trinity College, Dublin.

Gladstone had committed himself to what was vaguely termed justice for Ireland. But he was not yet ready to devise a Home Rule Bill, and a few months before the election Parnell had withdrawn his support from the Liberal government. A minority conservative government carried on for a few months while arrangements were made for a general election, and rewarded Parnell for his decisive help in ousting the Liberals by giving the Irish a new Land Act, making it easier for tenants to buy their holdings and landlords to sell. Parnell in return, advised Irish men living in England to vote conservative when the general election came. The result was the Liberals' majority over the Conservatives. The Irish leader had, very adroitly, put Home Rulers into the position which all third parties in the House of Commons hope to attain: he held the balance. Parnell could keep either party out of office, or, if he combined with the Liberals, he could put the Liberal party in. Gladstone believed fervently that all peoples capable of self-government should have it; he had championed self-government in Italy, the Balkans and other European countries dominated by a powerful neighbour and he could not, with any consistency, hold back self-government from Ireland (Jarman, 24).

Conclusion

In his first ministry and for much of the second, Gladstone was a sympathizer with Irish self-government. He did not see Irishmen as struggling to be free or deserving autonomy in any political sense. But for Gladstone Nationalism was a matter of principle, it represented for him an ideal of self-respect, independence and manhood. He reached the conclusion that home rule was

the right solution for Ireland when he saw the Norwegians, the inhabitants of a small country, living happily in their democratic way. Gladstone wanted to apply the same thing on Ireland. It was Gladstone's own conscience, his deep moral sense, that drove him forward.

Chapter Three

Home Rule and Gladstone's Failure in Ireland

Introduction

It had taken Gladstone many years of anguish and reflection before he reached the conclusion that Home Rule was the only solution for the Irish problem.

“Though he took up the Irish question in 1868 a response to the Fenian outrages and as a device for uniting his party, he did so also, as he told his sister, ‘in the name of the God of truth and justice It is his concern with justice for Ireland that is the leitmotiv of J.L. Hammond classic study of Gladstone and the Irish nation.’”(Adelman, 41).

As a result, in 1886 Gladstone introduced his first Home Rule Bill but it was rejected by the House of Commons. He introduced a second Home Rule Bill in 1893. This one was passed by the House of Commons, but it was rejected by the House of Lords.

It was clear that Gladstone failed to achieve his aim of Home Rule because first, it was difficult for him to persuade his colleagues in the party and his followers that Home Rule was the right policy. Second, Ulster Protestants and Ulster Unionists were firmly opposed to home rule. So Gladstone found himself fighting two fronts; this led to his failure.

1. Gladstone's First Home Rule Bill

“ In December 1885, after the general election when Liberals needed nationalist support to hold office. Gladstone's mind was moving to definite home rule policy.” (Jenkins)

The problem for Gladstone was-what tactics should he now pursue ? In the end he determined, publicly, to maintain silence over his conversion to home rule. Gladstone seems to have been moved primarily by two considerations. According to Adelman,

if he spoke out publicly of home rule, the break up of the Liberal party would inevitably follow; and on the eve of a general election; in addition he could be accused of counterbidding for the Irish vote. Secondly, [. . .] Gladstone aimed, sincerely if naively, at achieving a non-party approach to Irish problem.
(43)

It was these considerations that led Gladstone to keep silence, even to Parnell and his colleagues, during the election campaign at the end of the year.

But, Gladstone's conversion to home rule became known through the indiscretion of his son, Herbert, and on 8 April 1886; Gladstone introduced; at the cost of party unity, his first Home Rule Bill. The bill proposed an Irish parliament to deal with purely Irish affairs, to enter representation of Ireland in Westminster, and to leave control of foreign affairs, defence and external trade in the hands of the British government.

The leading members of Gladstone's earlier governments refused to join him, the most notable being the whig Lord Hartington. Also Joseph Chamberlain, a leading radical, resigned. Thus there were defections on both the right and left wings of the Liberal party. Both

Chamberlain and Hartington held several meetings to dissuade Liberals from supporting the bill. The Home Rule bill was introduced in a powerful speech which lasted three and a half hours.

“Gladstone maintained that it was the duty of parliament to find an answer to the question whether it is or is not

possible to establish good and harmonious relations between Great Britain and Ireland.[. . .]”(Jarman, 26).

He thought that it was necessary for a separation of Great Britain and Ireland he said:“how to reconcile imperial unity with diversity of legislation” (Jarman, 27).He claimed he would examine whether it was possible to establish a legislative body to sit in Dublin. And to strengthen the British parliament by freeing it from the obstruction of the Irish members. This meant that Irish nationalists would never again hold the balance between British parties.

The Bill was debated in the House of Commons for sixteen days. In June 1886, however, the bill was defeated in the commons by 343 votes to 313 with Liberals voting against the bill. As a result leading members of the cabinet resigned, the Liberal party split, one section becoming liberal unionists (as Joseph Chamberlain), and in June the bill was defeated. Protestants of Ulster remained firmly unionist. Lord Randolph Churchill, a leading conservative, wrote in a letter words which are still remembered : “ Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right.” (Jarman , 28).

Gladstone refused to resign during the time of the elections. The Liberals were defeated and as a result Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister. In the struggle for Irish home rule the Liberal party had split, this led to the emergence of the conservative party .

Salisbury's government from 1886 to 1892 was supported by Liberal Unionists Hartington and Chamberlain, ruled Ireland strongly. New Crimes Act was introduced as a coercive measure and was administered by A.J.Balfour, Lord Salisbury's nephew. Also according to Lustick, measures to reform the land issue and public disorder were introduced to kill home rule with kindness as Balfour put it.(189). Kindness was the Tory solution to the land problem. In a number of land purchase Acts between 1886 and 1905, the conservative governments proposed to make £ 200 million available for loans to tenants who wanted to buy their land from the landowners. By this policy the government hoped to create a body of satisfied Irish proprietors; by 1920 the greater part of the land was owned by the Irish, whereas before 1903 most of the land was owned by the English and the Irish were only tenant farmers. Also the policy was created to weaken the support for Land League and Home Rule.

There was a bad harvest in much of Ireland in 1886, many tenants found that they could not even pay the judicial rents fixed under the 1881 Act, and Parnell's Irish National League organized what was called the Plan of Campaign, which ingeniously proposed that hard-hit tenants should offer their landlords lower rents and, if the landlords refused them, pay no rent at all, but put the money into a fund for those who were evicted. When the new conservative government tried to destroy the plan of campaign through the Coercion acts, its high-handed arrests and imprisonments of priests among others, were reported and bitterly criticized in England. "British members of parliament went to Ireland and watched evictions: they described Parnell, as the champion of the Irish poor who had become the hero of the hour."(Turner, 250).

Then in 1887, The Times opened a vicious campaign against him, accusing him of inciting the Irish to crime and, in particular, condoning the Phoenix Park murders.(Jackson, 346) The

government set up an inquiry which went on for the best part of two years until, in February 1889, a Dublin journalist broke down in the witness box and confessed to forging the letter on which the accusation was based. When Parnell appeared in the house of commons shortly afterwards, the entire opposition rose to its feet and gave him a standing ovation. He was on the crest of a wave.

Then the wave broke. In 1880, Parnell had met Mrs Catherine O'Shea, the English wife of captain O'Shea*, an Irish home rule member of parliament. They had begun a passionate love affair and in 1882 Mrs O'Shea had given Parnell their first child, a girl who died a few weeks later. In 1883 and 1884 two more daughters had been born to the couple. But in 1886 O'Shea resigned his parliamentary seat and his antipathy to Parnell revealed itself. It was until 1889 that O'Shea started divorce proceedings.

In Victorian England divorces were so rare they and they were given a great deal of attention. They were heard at great length in open court and fully reported in the newspapers. The puritanical nonconformists who made up the bulk of the British Liberal party were so shocked by Parnell's adultery over so long a period with the wife of a colleague that Gladstone was in danger of losing their support for home rule. So he gave the Irish Home Rule Party an ultimatum. "Parnell's continued leadership was, he said, likely to render his own leadership of the Liberal party 'almost a nullity' (Somerset Fry, 259-260). The Irish Party must choose between Parnell as its leader and Liberal support

* O'Shea, an impecunious, somewhat raffish character who had his own affairs on the side, was a complaisant husband so long as complaisance could help his career, and Parnell did all he could to further the captain's ambition for home rule.

'Resign-marry-return' was the laconic advice sent to Parnell in a

telegram from South Africa by Cecil Rhodes .But Parnell was determined to hold onto the leadership .The Irish Home Rule Party debated Gladstone's ultimatum for several days in a committee room in the house of commons and then voted by 45 to 29 against Parnell,but he would not accept the decision.He allowed the tightly disciplined,highly effective Home Rule Party,which he himself had moulded ,to destroy itself by splitting .

He married Mrs O'Shea in June 1891 and set up house with her in Brighton.From there he carried on a frenetic campaign in Ireland,making the crossing from Holyhead every week to travel the country,address meetings and try to drum up support .But the Catholic bishops were against him ,as Victorian Britain had been ,and his standing in Ireland slumped .Yet he struggled on,a gaunt ,proud figure ,until his health gave way and he died at the age of forty five .

The fall of Parnell was a heavy blow to Gladstone-the heaviest,he said,he had never received .For five years he had been battling for Irish Home Rule,‘ laboriously rolling up hill the stone of Sisyphus ’(qtd.in Somerset Fry 260).As he put it .When he lost Parnell's dynamic support ,the Irish Home Rule Party split .Gladstone ,the grand old man of British politics ,was eighty one:too old to roll it uphill again .Nevertheless he introduced a second Home Rule Bill in February 1893.

2.The Second Home Rule Bill

Though Gladstone's 1868 Home Rule Bill had caused him to lose power,once reappointed Prime Minister in August 1892 Gladstone committed

himself to introducing a new Home Rule Bill for Ireland. The Liberals were brought back to power with a small majority-there were 273 Liberals and 81 Irish members against 269 conservatives and 46 Liberal Unionists .The conservative government was defeated on a vote of no confidence,proposed by H.H.Asquith .“It was Gladstone's fourth ministry and he was nearly eighty-three ,but the vigorous old man was determined to do his duty as he speech Gladstone spoke for two and a half hours .Once again Gladstone appealed for peace between the British and the Irish .He argued :

“If it were with my latest breath, I would entreat you to let the dead bury the dead ,and to cast behind you every recollection of bygone evils to cherish and love and sustain one another throughout all the vicissitudes of human affairs in the time that are to come. ” (Jarman, 31).

The Bill passed in the House of Commons in September by 307 votes to 267.But the House of Lords rejected the Bill by 419 votes to 41.Lord Hartington who had broken with Gladstone in 1886 proposed the rejection.

Gladstone wished to dissolve parliament and carry the issue to the country .But the country was not interested in home rule, there was no popular excitement over the defeat of the Bill, and Gladstone's colleagues would not agree to dissolve parliament. Other disagreement with his colleagues followed, and in 1894 he resigned, dying four years later.

3.Gladstone and The Irish opponents of home rule

Gladstone failed to give Ireland home rule because there was a double Irish attack in Ireland itself , opposition of Liberal Unionists, and in England the disagreement among members of his party.

3.1 Opposition in England

The historian Hammond stated that, this was very evident in the way that he announced his conversion to Home rule, refusing to admit any change of policy and insisting upon consistency.(70) This infuriated his opponents who described Gladstone in various unflattering ways. “an honest man with a not dishonest mind” (Lecky, 2). Gladstone's disagreement with his colleagues led to his total failure.

A concrete illustration of the way Gladstone misjudged the home rule and stored up future trouble was his complete under estimation of the Irish opponents of home rule-the Irish Unionists, the Irish land owning ascendancy in the South, and the Ulster Protestants in the North .

3.2 Opposition in Ireland

North-East Ulster was to be for thirty years the citadel of the union cause. In 1886 Churchill, a tory leader, addressed enthusiastic crowds in Belfast and the North, urging them to resist home rule. Religious animosity has on the other hand been inconspicuous in the South, where the intensity of Protestant feeling in the North has hardly been realized. The excitement of Belfast was expressed, after Churchill left ,in serious riots

“They were not the first of their kind, for in 1864 riots had followed the burning of effigy of Daniel O'Connell by a Protestant crowd, as an off-set to a demonstration in Dublin Of the Liberator ” (Partridge, 340).

In subsequent years the Orange operatives of Belfast showed themselves determined to permit no Catholic procession or home rule demonstration in their city. So in 1886 a collision began between Protestant and Catholic workmen which led to riots in which many lives were lost and the military had to be called into the help of the police.

Meanwhile in the House Commons, Gladstone made a superbly eloquent appeal to all sides to pass the Home Rule Bill and end a feud of England and Ireland. But already some of his ablest lieutenants had forsaken him. The Radical Joseph Chamberlain who founded the Liberal Unionists, and Lord Hartington and the whig section revolted. In spite of all the old man's eloquence and solemn warnings, the enthusiastic support of his main party, and a temperate speech from Parnell. The bill was defeated. Also the Conservative government with the help of the Liberal seceders to finally defeat home rule.

Gladstone's failure was not only in terms of home rule; land issue also raised questions. How far Ireland and the land issue benefited from Gladstone's intervention?

It is true that Gladstone focused attention on Ireland and it is also true that the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland satisfactorily moved the longstanding grievances. Nevertheless, the wisdom of his attitudes to land is open to question.

Gladstone's land legislation of 1870 and 1881 aimed at curbing the rights of the Irish landlords and transferring more rights to tenants in doing so, it has generally been regarded as a good thing, going some way to solve the problems that had retarded Irish agricultural development and prompted Irish unrest. However, it is doubtful whether Gladstonian land policy was really in the best interest of Ireland and Irish agriculture as a whole.

Increased tension in the Irish countryside was an evidence Gladstone chose to ignore. He was not interested in the economic and technical problems

arising from attempts to modernize methods and output on the small farms that predominated in Ireland. Concerned rather with the redemption of English guilt, Gladstone's land legislation offered a solution to neither the problem of Irish agricultural backwardness nor the problem of Irish agitation against British rule.

the need to make Irish agriculture more efficient and more competitive. It discouraged landlord investment. It encouraged farmers to continue inefficient practices.

Gladstonian legislation failed. It was easier to attack Irishland lords than to tackle the more fundamental problem of Irish agricultural development.

Conclusion

By the time his second ministry came to an end in 1885, Gladstone was convinced that traditional liberal policy towards Ireland was completely bankrupt. It was this that helped the Summer months of 1885 the key period in Gladstone's conversion to home rule. His own Policy of religious and agrarian reform had failed to reconcile the Irish to the continuance of English rule; further reform was bound to be just as nugatory. Moreover Gladstone's reflection during these months on fundamentals of the Irish attitude, coupled with his deep European outlook, convinced him of the reality of Irish nationality: how then could he oppose what a majority of the Irish people wanted? His letters to Hartington and Chamberlain showed that it was perfectly plain to them that his mind was moving to a definite Home Rule Policy. (Redmond)

The basis of his conversion is that he came to believe that home rule was the only solution to pacify Ireland and complete his 1868 mission. Gladstone came to the conclusion that the union had been unjust to the Irish, as a result, he put the first Home Rule Bill which was rejected by the House of Commons. It was followed by the Second Home Rule Bill Introduced by

Gladstone in 1893, which was not so much different from The first one with the presence of 80 Irish MPS in Westminster. The bill Passed by the House of Commons but was rejected by the House of Lords.

Gladstone failed to realise his dream in Ireland this was due to his colleagues opposition to his policy on one hand; on the other hand Ulster unionists were an obstacle against him. This is what led to his failure and to his retirement from office in 1894.

Conclusion

William Ewart Gladstone's obsession with Irish affairs was one of the most interesting problems of nineteenth century British history. Gladstone's measures did amount to significant departure in British Politics. It was unusual for any British minister to have an Irish policy. The key to understanding why Gladstone took such a fervent interest in Ireland is his deep sense of religion.

Gladstone's evangelical upbringing had left its mark which was evident in his policy. He thought that England owed much to Ireland because of Ireland's past history. He believed that England had wronged Ireland, as was very evident in his attitude towards the land question. Also he was convinced that Ireland and the Irish had suffered great wrongs, He thought that nineteenth Century England had a moral duty to make reparations.

It can be argued by some critics that Gladstone's crusade was for England's sake rather than for the sake of Ireland. Gladstone told the whole House of Commons that the removal of Ireland's grievances was an English duty so that instead of hearing in every corner of Europe the most painful commentaries on the policy of England towards Ireland we may be able to look our fellow Europeans in the face.

But it was clear that Gladstone did his best to help Ireland and to meet Irish grievances. Through his ministry reforms were made to satisfy the Irish but the question is did Ireland benefit from Gladstone's reforms?

It is a matter of debate as to how far Ireland and Irish concerns benefited from Gladstone's intervention. It may be that the benefits were far outweighed by the

future problems his policy stirred up.

It is true that Gladstone focused attention on Ireland and it is also true that the disestablishment and partial disendowment of the Church of Ireland satisfactorily moved the long standing grivence. Nevertheless, the wisdom of his attitudes to land and home rule are open to question.

According to some critics Gladstone had failed to look at tenure from an Irish point of view, and did not yet realize that Irish tenants thought of themselves as part owners of the land on which they worked. therefore the land Act was the remedy for a disease that was not seriously affecting Ireland in 1870. One important consequence of the Act was to establish the principle that property in land was not absolute, but this was certainly not Gladstone's intention.

Gladstone wished to protect tenants from unfair treatment, and in this the 1870 act failed. Overall the Act did little to stave off revolutionary fervor as it ultimately led to the rise of Parnell and the land war and the consequent militancy and rural unrest in Ireland.

Ireland soon emerged as major problem of Gladstone and the liberal Government in 1880. Violence caused by a coupling of Nationalism and an Agricultural depression increased substantially. Gladstone's aim and objective was to right the wrongs of the first land Act and end the land problem. Again the long-term solution to the crisis, Gladstone insisted was further land reform.

Some critics concludes that it took the sting out of nationalist radicalism complicated land bill, recent historians have argued Gladstone again failed to face up the economic realities of rural Ireland.

We conclude that Gladstone's measures did little or nothing to improve Productivity and competitiveness in Irish farming and that the Act had little economic impact. Gladstone as a politician and leader of his party was burdened with the task of having to keep his party united to be effective in government and to consolidate his position.

By the 1880's it was clear to Gladstone that his aim to reconcile the Irish to English rule had failed. He had got himself in to a vicious cycle involving popular protest being responded to with passage of reform and realised that he was getting nowhere fast. This failure to solve resentment in Ireland brought Gladstone to the natural conclusion that the Irish needed liberty.

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