

**SPEECHES BY SIR
EDWARD CLARKE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649272914

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Cover @ 2017

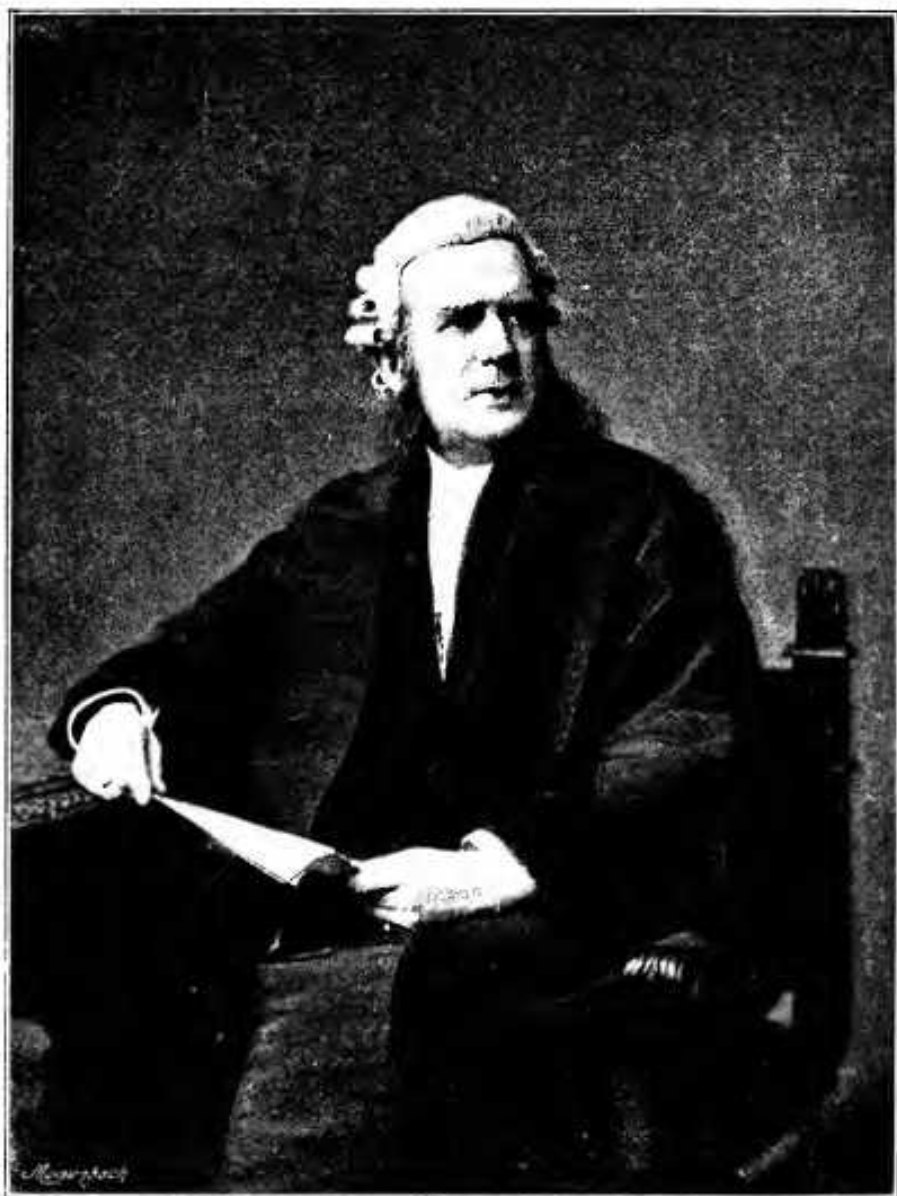
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EDWARD CLARKE**

SPEECHES
BY
SIR EDWARD CLARKE
SECOND SERIES



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BY

SIR EDWARD CLARKE

Q.C., M.P.

(HER MAJESTY'S SOLICITOR-GENERAL, 1886-1892)

SECOND SERIES

CHIEFLY FORENSIC

LONDON

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS, LIMITED

BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL

MANCHESTER AND NEW YORK

I DEDICATE THESE SPEECHES

TO

*THE MEMBERS OF THE HARDWICKE
DEBATING SOCIETY*

*IN RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT IN THE MEETINGS
OF THAT SOCIETY I FOUND MY BEST TRAINING
FOR THE WORK OF THE BAR*

EDWARD CLARKE

37 Russell Square

May 11, 1894

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THE CHURCH IN WALES.

Speech in the House of Commons.

FEBRUARY 23, 1892.

[ON the 23rd February 1892, Mr. Samuel Smith moved, and Mr. Dillwyn seconded, the following resolution:—
“That, as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers only to a small minority of the population, its continuance as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist.” Upon a division the motion was negatived by 267 to 220.]

SIR EDWARD CLARKE said: Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer, on the part of her Majesty's Government, and on the part of those who sit upon this side of the House, a most definite and uncompromising opposition to the resolution which has been moved, and to the policy which prompts that resolution. Sir, I draw a distinction, and I think it is a natural one, between the resolution and the policy which it is supposed to represent; for I am sure it will have been observed by those who have listened to the speeches of the mover and seconder of the resolution that they have paid no attention whatever to its terms; that they have made no attempt to establish any one of the propositions which it contains; and that they have contented themselves by referring to other matters—matters which I own might form matter for consideration in debate, but are not relevant to the propositions put before the House. I am not surprised at the course they have taken. I was, in truth, somewhat amused to find that, having long delayed in choosing the terms of the resolution, the hon. member for Flintshire on Friday last put upon the paper of the House this old resolution,

which has been proposed and debated several times, and which I thought had been absolutely destroyed last year by the right hon. gentleman the member for Midlothian. I saw in the paper to-day an inspired communication to a newspaper in which the hon. member for Montgomeryshire writes that—

“Mr. Gladstone desired to support the motion for Welsh Disestablishment this Session as he had done last Session.”

Sir, I wish he were here to-day to do it. I can conceive nothing more satisfactory than that a resolution aimed at the Church in Wales should be supported as the resolution of last year was supported by the right hon. gentleman the member for Midlothian. We have taken care to circulate largely the speech of the right hon. gentleman on that occasion, and it will long be remembered as a lasting demonstration of the futility—I was going to use a stronger word—of the propositions in the resolution before the House. Does any one who heard him forget the paternal way in which the right hon. gentleman the member for Midlothian corrected the innocent indifference of the hon. member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Pritchard Morgan) to all the history of the Welsh Church? Does any one forget the way in which he, taking the terms of this resolution, declared that he could not agree with them, and stated with regard to the first phrase which strikes one's attention, that “the Church of England in Wales” was an entire misrepresentation, and that it would be as reasonable to speak of “the Church of Wales in England” as of “the Church of England in Wales?” Last year the speech of the right hon. gentleman was a very interesting speech. He came down to the House in order to appear to make a recantation of his statement of twenty-one years ago, that it was impossible to dis sever the Welsh Church from the Church of England, and the principal sentence in which that apparent recantation was expressed deserves to be always remembered as the choicest possible example of the verbal dexterity of the right hon. gentleman the member for Midlothian. I think no such gem was ever contributed to the debates of this House as the sentence in which he dealt with his own assertion that it is impossible to dis sever the case of the Welsh Church and the Church of England. I beg the House to mark the sentence. He said :

“It is quite possible that I may have used that expression which may, when strictly regarded, be found to involve the element of exaggeration.”

The most the right hon. gentleman could do when he came down to recant the declaration of twenty-one years ago, was, not to say that it was an exaggeration, but to say that he