



History 7042
Specimen Question Paper 1G (A-level)
Question 03 Student 2
Specimen Answer and Commentary

V1.0

Specimen answer plus commentary

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a 'model' answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Paper 1G (A-level): Specimen question paper

03 How successful was Gladstone in improving Anglo-Irish relations in the years 1868–1893?

[25 marks]

Student response

When Gladstone took over as Prime Minister for the first time in 1868, he made it his mission to pacify Ireland. There were 3 main problems in Ireland, which were land, religion and politics, and in order for Gladstone to pacify Ireland he needed to solve these 3 problems. Between the years 1868-1893 Gladstone had 4 ministries in which numerous acts were introduced in attempt to improve Anglo-Irish relations.

Gladstone helped to improve Anglo Irish relations in relation to religion. Most of the Irish population were catholic, yet the church of Ireland was Anglican; this meant that many people in Ireland had to pay to a church that they did not believe in. Naturally this angered many people and this was a cause of riots and a divide between ulster and the rest of Ireland as this is where most Anglicans were living at the time. All Irish people living in Ireland had to pay a tax of 10 pounds to the church at the time, but in 1869 Gladstone brought in the Irish Church Act, which had two main points, the Disendowment and disestablishment of the Anglican Church. The Act mean that the Anglican Church was no longer the Church of Ireland and it also meant that the catholic Irish no longer had to pay a tax to the church, which cut all the money going to the Anglican Church. This act solved the problem of religion and aided Gladstone's mission to pacify Ireland.

Within Gladstone's first ministry he stated that it was 'his mission to pacify Ireland', one of the main problems Gladstone attempted to amend was his interest over the issue of land. Therefore in 1870, Gladstone proposed his First Land Act. This attempted to increase tenant security by extending ulster land law to the rest of Ireland, and giving compensation to evicted tenants if they made land improvements. However, the Act had very substantial success. It did not apply to the cases of non-payment of rent and collapsed under the effects of the agricultural depression in Ireland from 1877, and the accompanying land war.

On the other hand, within Gladstone's second ministry 1880-1885, his 1881 Second Land Act, proved much more successful in dealing with Irelands land issues. The Second Act was Gladstone's response to dealing with the strain in Ireland caused by the effect of the Land War. This involved gangs of labourers murdering landowners and their agents and murdering livestock, as a result of the devastation and conflict in Ireland on the unsolved land problem. Effectively Gladstone's Act provided three main policies (the three F's) of free sale, fair rent and fixture of tenure. However, the Act did not stop the disorder in Irelands rural community, due to the Coercion Act, but overall, the 1881 land Act was seen as a way forward to reduce the violence being experienced in Ireland. Gladstone put a lot of his faith and commitment into Ireland over his Land Act, but the Phoenix Park murders in 1882 disturbed its success only a year later.

Gladstone, as well as tackling the issues of land attempted to resolve the Irish grievances of politics that were caused by the 1800 act of union. After committing himself to 'pacifying Ireland', Gladstone passed his first Home Rule Bill in 1886; however it failed in the House of Commons and also led to a division within the Liberal party. The Liberal party was divided into the Home Rulers and the Liberal Unionists, who defected to the Conservative Party; a famous example of this would be Joseph Chamberlin. Therefore in Gladstone's first attempt at resolving Irish political issues, he was unsuccessful.

In Gladstone's fourth ministry, he once again tried to solve the political problems in Ireland. He introduced a second Home Rule bill into the House of Commons in 1893; the bill passed through the commons however was defeated in the Conservative dominated House of Lords. The Act mainly failed in the Lords because of their fear of losing the empire and being a less secure empire, as invasion would become much easier due to armies being able to use Ireland as a military base. Overall Gladstone's Home Rule bill failed to resolve the political issues in Ireland as they failed to pass the bill in the House of Lords.

The Coercion Act in 1881 caused Parnell and the other leading activists of the Home Rule Party were arrested and put in jail for their influence on other individuals to take the violent action. However Gladstone in attempt to resolve the issues caused by these events, conferred with Parnell and passed the Killmainham Treaty also in 1882, which agreed to release Parnell from prison and restore the INP's popularity. This however was short lived due to the Phoenix Park murders, which soured English and Irish relations once more, which again ruined Gladstone's efforts in solving political issues in Ireland, therefore his attempt at passing political legislation can largely be considered as unsuccessful, even though most of the time it wasn't due to Gladstone's own faults, as he attempted to solve Irish grievances

Overall, Gladstone was relatively successful in improving Anglo-Irish relations in the years 1868-1893. During his first ministry, the Church Act of 1869 was introduced which disestablished the Anglican Church and also removed its funding, this Act was a success and went a long way in solving the problem of religion in Ireland. However the Land Act of 1870 wasn't a success as it only gave tenants limited rights against their landlords therefore didn't solve the issue of land. The failure of the first Land Act led to Gladstone introducing a second Land Act in his second ministry, which was a success as it gave tenants more rights and fulfilled the 3 F's which were fair rent, free sale and fixity of tenure. This meant the problem of land was solved relatively successfully as well as the problem of religion. However the problem of politics was far from solved, as Gladstone's Home Rule bills of 1886 and 1893 both failed. The 1886 bill was blocked in the House of Commons and the 1893 bill was blocked in the House of Lords. Therefore Gladstone was relatively successful as he near enough solved the problems of religion and land but failed to solve the issue of politics.

Commentary – Level 3

The introduction is somewhat descriptive and does not set out an argument to be advanced and the conclusion is somewhat repetitive. There is clear assessment of the settlement of religious issues, but the assessment of the land issue lacks development: why, exactly did the Coercion Act weaken the attempts at reform of land issues? There is also a careless error in the assessment of the first Land Act which is described as a 'very substantial success' when the opposite is meant. The treatment of political issues is narrative and descriptive without developed comment and analysis and the answer, therefore, is to the top of Level 3, rather than Level 4.

