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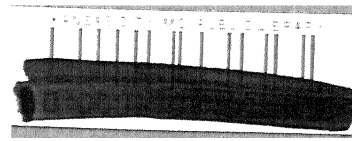

THE CRISIS IN IRELAND

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT CONDITION OF IRELAND AND SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS REFORM

BY

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THE CRISIS IN IRELAND

I.

IRELAND is at a crisis in her history. The Irish Land Act of 1903 is a signpost pointing in two directions. One arm, directed towards a steep hill bestrewn with many obstacles, is marked "Prosperity"; the other points downward into an abyss and is marked "Ruin." Under the provisions of the Act the agricultural land of Ireland is passing from its former owners into the hands of occupying proprietors. The Irish people are becoming the owners of Ireland in a sense and to an extent which was never contemplated by practical politicians before the meeting of the Land Conference which preceded the introduction of Mr. Wyndham's Bill. The radical character of the recommendations of the Conference, and the practical concurrence of the landed classes in those recommendations, while heralding a period of greater content and the healing of old sores, was in reality a signal of distress from the Irish to the English people, a cry for help to apply a drastic but wholesome remedy to a desperately unhealthy condition of things. Year by year the country has been sinking deeper and deeper in misfortune, and now it has reached the point at which it must be decided whether the downward tendency is to continue to the inevitable and most melancholy end, or whether a supreme effort shall be made to lift the country out of the national bankruptcy in man-power, intelligence, and material prosperity which so imminently threatens it. Mr. Wyndham's great Act was the first step in the right direction. It has made all things possible, but alone it will not suffice.

Ireland is sick almost to death. The wise man makes a careful diagnosis of his patient before attempting to prescribe, but in her case the origins of distressing symptoms have become so obscured that physicians are apt to confound cause and effect. Owing to the internecine warfare which for many years has been one of the main occupations, if not recreations, of a majority of the people of Ireland, the attention of England and the world has been directed away from the causes of Ireland's distressful condition to the quarrels of parties as to the best remedies to be applied. The aspect of the history of Ireland which has most

strongly impressed itself upon the minds of those who live on the other side of the Irish Channel has been the bitterness of sectarian strife and the warfare of party politicians. The disease, for which extreme partisans have been vehemently suggesting violent remedies, has been lost sight of amid the din of battle, and while the quarrels have gone on from year to year with more or less crime, as a result partly of the disease and partly of the high feeling engendered, Ireland has been slipping swiftly downward in all that goes to make for physical health, intellectual progress, and material well-being. It is very necessary, therefore, to consider the actual condition of Ireland, and the causes of that condition, before attempting to form any theory or policy for her relief.

For over sixty years the Irish population has been leaking away. There has been, and is still, a double leakage which none of the measures hitherto elaborated have seriously checked. The sun, as it has set day after day in a path of gold over the broad Atlantic, has been for sixty years a bridge of hope to all that has been best, physically and mentally, of the population in Ireland. Year by year an unending stream of emigrant ships has been bearing away from Ireland to the American continent the best brain and muscle of the country. These people in their millions have looked to the New World to right the balance of the Old. Down to the year 1845 the population of Ireland was steadily growing and its prosperity increasing. In that year the inhabitants numbered 8,295,061. How serious the emigration leakage has been in subsequent years may be seen from the following figures, showing the population of the different parts of the United Kingdom at various periods :—

Date of Enumeration.	England and Wales.		Scotland.		Ireland.	
	Population.	Pop. per sq. mile	Population.	Pop. per sq. mile	Population.	Pop. per sq. mile
1801	8,892,536	153	1,608,420	54	5,395,456	166
1811	10,164,256	175	1,805,864	60	5,937,856	186
1821	12,000,236	206	2,091,521	70	6,801,827	209
1831	13,896,797	239	2,364,386	79	7,767,401	239
1841	15,914,148	273	2,620,184	88	8,175,124	251
1851	17,927,609	308	2,888,742	97	6,552,385	201
1861	20,066,224	344	3,062,294	100	5,798,564	178
1871	22,712,266	390	3,360,018	113	5,412,377	167
1881	25,974,439	446	3,735,573	125	5,174,836	159
1891	29,002,525	498	4,025,647	135	4,704,750	144
1901	32,526,075	558	4,472,103	150	4,458,775	137

In 1845 Ireland had nearly three times as many inhabitants as Scotland could boast; half as many as England and Wales claimed. At that time nearly one-third of the whole population of the United Kingdom lived in Ireland (See Appendix III.) In

sixty years the population of Ireland has fallen by nearly 4,000,000 (for in 1903 the number was estimated to be 4,414,995), a record of national wastage which is unparalleled in the history of the world. A most lamentable fact in the outward flow of the population is that over 90 per cent. of the emigrants have been in the prime of life or approaching to it. According to the last census, nearly 91 per cent. of the 430,993 persons who left the country during the previous ten years were over 10 and under 45 years, and just under 4 per cent. of the remainder had not celebrated their forty-sixth birthday. In other words, practically the whole of the four million emigrants who have sailed from Ireland in the past sixty years or so have been in the full vigour of life, and those who have remained have for the most part been the less physically fit, the most mentally deficient, and those who corresponded to the lowest industrial standard. 4,000,000 people have gone out from their homeland, to the dire loss of the United Kingdom and of the Empire, because of these 4,000,000 no less than 89 per cent. have left, not to settle in other portions of the King's Dominions, but to lose themselves, as far as we are concerned, in the wide territories of the United States, a fact worthy of consideration from the Imperial point of view.

And there is another terrible leak from which Ireland is suffering, namely, lunacy. The figures of the census of 1901 tell an amazing story of the mental gloom which year by year has been settling down upon those who have remained in the old country. Of every ten thousand persons in Ireland 52·6 are registered as lunatics or idiots. Considered by provinces, the proportion is lowest in industrial Ulster, as might be expected, there being a difference of over 20 per 10,000 between that province and Munster. In Waterford the proportion is nearly 96 per 10,000, in Meath it is 78, in Clare 73, in Kilkenny nearly 71, in Kings County 69, in Wexford, Tipperary and Carlow 68, and in West Meath and Limerick 66. In County Antrim, including Belfast city, the rate falls to 29·6, and in County Dublin to 24·6.

The mental ravages among the Irish people are set forth with shocking lucidity in the last census report, in which the position is stated in another form :—

> The total number of lunatics and idiots returned in 1851 was equal to a ratio of 1 in 657 of the population; in 1861, to 1 in 411; in 1871, to 1 in 328; in 1881, to 1 in 281; in 1891, to 1 in 222; and on the present occasion, to 1 in 178, the ratio in the Province of Leinster being 1 in 187; in Munster, 1 in 152; in Ulster, 1 in 226; and in Connaught, 1 in 184.
>
> The following counties had the lowest ratios :—Antrim County and Belfast City, 1 in 336; Dublin County and City, 1 in 289; Londonderry County and City, 1 in 233; Down, 1 in 216; Wicklow, 1 in 209; Mayo, 1 in 208; Fermanagh, 1 in 205; and Donegal, 1 in 200.

These figures, varying as they do in town and country, are highly significant of the mental condition of the people of Ireland. Where industry exists and the population has more or less ample field for activity, lunacy is lowest; in districts where the outlook is shut in and life holds out no bright future, there the minds of the people become atrophied and die. Every doctor agrees that the mind loses its balance and the brain becomes soft and useless more by reason of disuse than over-use. The agricultural labourer leading a monotonous life on a small wage, poorly fed into the bargain, is the probable lunatic or idiot of to-morrow, and not the judge or professional man who day by day uses his brain almost to the point when physical endurance breaks down. The dulness of life in the country districts of England has been largely responsible for the fact that lunacy in England has been on the increase. In ten years the ratio has grown by over 13 per cent., but, even so, the rate for the whole of England and Wales is still only 34·71, or nearly 11·5 less than the average of the whole of Ireland, while it is about one-third that of Waterford, and half, or less, than the rate in Clare, Kilkenny, Kings County, Carlow, Wexford, Tipperary and other Irish counties. In these terrible figures relating to the outflow of population to America and the inflow of population to the lunatic and idiot asylums, we have an indication of the social and mental condition of Ireland which it is impossible to exaggerate.

For half a century and more the best equipped, mentally and physically, of the population have been leaving Ireland. The survival of the unfittest has been the law in Ireland, with an inevitable result upon the race which statistics abundantly bear out. On the first point the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland in their last report claim with some pride that there has been a reduction in the percentage of illiterates from 47 per cent. in 1851 to 14 per cent. in 1901, and they add "this change for the better is remarkable when it is remembered that it was the younger and better-educated who emigrated to the number of two millions during this period,[1] while the majority of the illiterates were persons who were too old to leave their homes." So much for the official view of the result of emigration on the mental condition of the Irish people. As to its effect upon their physical condition, it is surely a significant social fact that the Irish birth-rate should be almost the smallest in the world. For the twenty-five years—1877-1901—the Irish rate was 23·5 per 1,000 living, and now the figure has sunk to 23·1. This rate compares with other countries thus :—

(1) According to the census report of 1901, 3,846,393 persons—2,006,421 males and 1,839,972 females—emigrated in this period of fifty years.

England and Wales	31.7	Denmark	31.2
Scotland	31.7	Norway	30.6
Hungary	42.3	Belgium	29.8
Roumania	40.1	Switzerland	28.6
Austria	37.7	France	23.3
Prussia	37.3	Ireland	23.5
Italy	36.2		

It is true that the marriage-rate of Ireland is low, but the birth-rate is still disproportionately small, as the following extract from the Census Report shows :—

The general results of the inquiry as regards the conjugal condition of the people may be summarised by saying that :—The decrease in the proportion of married persons noted in 1891, as compared with 1881, still continues; that the relative number of married persons of the reproductive ages is under the low proportion for 1891, which in its turn was lower than in 1881; that in strict accord with the results shown in 1861, 1871, 1881, and 1891, the highest proportion of married persons is to be found in the province of Connaught; and that, estimated by the number of married women of the child-bearing ages, the natural increase in population in Ireland is at present very small.

The movement of the people of Ireland outwards has led to the depopulation, roughly speaking, of all the provinces except Ulster, though County Dublin is still well filled; in fact, in Dublin and Belfast and some of the Ulster towns, there is a congestion of population, while in Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Longford and Limerick the depopulation has been less marked than in other counties. The result of this movement has been that in a large part of Ireland the population consists of less than 100 per acre, while, to point the other extreme, there are over 79,000 tenants of one room, occupied as follows :—

By 1 person	20,994
,, 2 ,,	20,119
,, 3 ,,	12,867
,, 4 ,,	8,932
,, 5 ,,	6,250
,, 6 ,,	4,400
,, 7 ,,	2,701
,, 8 ,,	1,530
,, 9 ,,	786
,,10 ,,	364
,,11 ,,	136
,,12 or more persons	68

These facts and figures should convince the most unthinking observer of the course of events in Ireland that the social condition of the people in the towns as in the country is lamentably unsound. And there is no indication whatever of a turn of the tide

of emigration. The best of the population, as was shown last year, when the steamship rates were low owing to the fight between the various companies, is still anxious to leave. In 1904 no fewer than 58,308 persons emigrated as compared with 45,568 in 1903. There is good stock left, no finer people exist than those inhabiting many of the rural districts in Ireland; but it is to be feared that the cream of the peasant population which remains in Ireland remains, not because the people have no desire to leave, but because the cost of removal is, under ordinary circumstances, beyond their means. Many false deductions have been placed upon the slight decrease in emigration which occurred in some years prior to 1904.

Lunacy is not the only disease increasing to an alarming extent. The population in the larger towns, containing a considerable proportion of the physically and mentally efficient, are overcrowded to a horrible extent. The Irish people are a prey to tuberculosis, owing, at least, in some measure, to the insanitary conditions which prevail, and to insufficient or improper food. In 1903 12,180 persons died from tuberculosis in Ireland, and the disease is increasing. It now equals a rate of 4·1 per 1,000 in the larger towns and 2·3 in other parts of the country. Again, though the causes are less obvious, the ravages from cancer are significant. This disease claimed more victims in 1903 (3,048) than ever before —cancer is spreading. Again, take the figures of pauperism; one out of every 100 persons is an inmate of a workhouse, and one out of every 44, including those receiving outdoor relief, keep body and soul together by rate aid; and everyone who knows him will admit that the Irish labourer, who can and does live with wife and family on an average income of 10s. a week, including allowances in kind, is in no hurry to go on the rates so long as he and his can exist in independence.

It may be argued that the condition of Ireland is not singular as regards pauperism, at any rate, and that it is an immense burden in England also. That is true, but only to a certain extent.[1] The conditions of the two countries are very different. England is an industrial nation subject to great fluctuations in the demand for labour, while Ireland, being agricultural, is essentially a country in which the demand should be more or less fixed. Moreover, in Ireland the poorest classes manage to eke out an existence on an income which is regarded by Englishmen as insufficient to support

(1) Between 1863 and 1903 the percentage of the "daily average" number of paupers in Ireland to 1,000 of the population rose from 1·12 to 2·2, while in England and Wales the percentage of the "mean numbers" fell from 5·3 to 2·12 per 1,000. Roughly, these figures are on a parallel basis of comparison. In no year between 1863 and 1873 in England did the figure fall below 4 per cent., while in Ireland it never exceeded 1·5.

life. The Englishman goes into the poorhouse, or accepts relief, more readily than does the agricultural labourer of the adjacent island. Nearly 900,000 persons in Ireland are engaged in agriculture. Since the total population is not 4,500,000, and 2,500,000 are returned as "not producing," it will be understood how large a proportion comes under the head of agriculture. Probably in no other part of the British Empire can be found a body of men who are paid at as low a rate as the agricultural labourer in Ireland. Mr. Wilson Fox, in his second report on the earnings of agricultural labourers, issued by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade, gives some statistics with reference to the earnings, including the value of all allowances in kind, of able-bodied male adults among the agricultural classes in the different parts of the United Kingdom. He concludes that in England a labourer obtains 18s. 3d. a week, in Wales 17s. 3d., in Scotland 19s. 3d., and in Ireland 10s. 11d. These are the averages, but those for Irish counties were uniformly lower than in Great Britain, and in no county in England is a less sum than 14s. 6d. received. On the other hand, in Ireland the average weekly earnings in seven counties are not 10s. a week, Mayo being lowest with 8s. 9d., while in Sligo the average is 8s. 11d., and in Roscommon 9s. 1d. The fact that the Irish agricultural labourer, many of them with wives and families to support, can keep body and soul together on such a small income is surely one of the marvels of the time, and in view of these facts the surprise is that the expenditure on Poor Law is not higher than it is. The Irishman may, it is true, be able to add a little to the sum total of existence in various ways, but his lot at the best is a desperately poor one; and it is not confined to the labouring class properly so-called. There is another class, principally in the West, consisting of small farmers, who form, to a great extent, the migratory labourers who go to work on farms in certain counties in England and Scotland at harvest-time. In lieu of any better means of employment, they are glad to cross the Channel in order to get a wage varying from 15s. 3d. to 17s. 3d. a week. Let any working man in England consider this fact; these people are so poor that they are glad to leave their home, incur considerable expense in travelling, and suffer all the inconveniences of crossing the Channel—for the chance of earning for a short time a wage of from 15s. 3d. to 17s. 3d. a week.

But I need not pursue this theme; the broad fact is that the best that is in Ireland is flowing outward, the worst is drifting in increasing proportion to the lunatic asylums, and the balance remains in Ireland of necessity rather than by choice. It is in the face of these deplorable facts that I appeal to moderate men

in Ireland to put aside their differences for a while and to do something for the salvation of their country. Can we not endeavour to enlighten the English people and convince them that unless some remedial measures are undertaken Ireland must still continue her downward career, and become an increasing and eventually an intolerable, because an unprofitable, burden upon "the predominant partner"? The outlook is not without hope.

The Land Act is solving one of the historical problems which Ireland has always presented to the world. The removal of one great cause of friction between classes will inevitably tend towards tolerance and mutual understanding. There is every reason to believe that landlords, when they have become occupying owners of their home farms and demesne lands, will continue to reside in the country, and that, with the disappearance of the old root cause of disagreement, they will interest themselves more freely and effectively than has hitherto been the case in local affairs, in the encouragement of education and the development of the resources of the country. The main cause of estrangement between the gentry and the people at large—the land question—is in the course of settlement; and, as the Earl of Westmeath admitted in the House of Lords on February 17th, "the time may possibly come when Unionists and Nationalists will work together"—a consummation of peace the very idea of which appears to fill some of my fellow-countrymen with the utmost terror and dismay. Even to-day, when the clash of party warfare still resounds, there is practically little difference of opinion as to the condition of the country and the diseases which afflict it. The Dublin Castle system of government, with the ramification of uncontrolled or only partly controlled departments, stands condemned; and no one who is conversant with Ireland can fail to admit that the economic and social condition of the country is one that gives cause for anxiety and alarm.

When the happy time foreseen by Lord Westmeath arrives, the moderate demand for adequate measures of reform in methods of government and for reasonable encouragement in recreating national life and prosperity will be presented in a shape and form which will not be denied.

Another hopeful feature in the outlook lies in the comparative peace which has settled over the whole country since Mr. Wyndham's Land Act was passed. Irishmen are emotional and sentimental, and do not hesitate to give forceful expression to the feeling of the moment, often occasioned by some single act which they regard as unjust. They have behind them a gloomy history; they have been reared amid the reminders of past persecution; and in the recollection of the days when the hand of

England pressed heavily upon them, throttling their industries and putting despair into the hearts of the people; but in spite of all this the better feeling prevailing is very marked.

A certain section of Unionists have been only too busy of late endeavouring to paint in lurid colours a grossly exaggerated picture of the social condition of Ireland. They have circulated far and wide extravagant speeches, which have been made in many cases by irresponsible persons irritated by local incidents. The intention apparently is to give Englishmen the idea that Ireland is at present in a state of extreme unrest, seething with crime.[1] There is nothing in the latest criminal statistics to justify this attitude. Crime of all kinds is diminishing in Ireland; while in Scotland last year indictable offences numbered 20,000, in Ireland, with practically the same population, the number was only 18,000. How long this happy condition may last it is impossible to say. Some recurrence of agitation may occur if the fight-at-any-price party are suffered to prevail, and if no steps are taken to deal with a critical condition of affairs which, as Lord Lansdowne admitted in the House of Lords on February 17th last, calls for active measures of reform; some recrudescence of agrarian offences may, in those circumstances, possibly take place. I trust not and I believe not; the patience, prudence, and wisdom of the people will prevail, but at present, at any rate, there are no indications which justify the efforts of extreme partisans in Ireland to blacken the reputation of their native land.

Legislation can do much to ameliorate the condition of the people in Ireland, especially those in the South and West, who feel most acutely the pressure of poverty; but it cannot remove the causes. Money is needed, and my contention is that by reform of the present system of government funds can be made available for the development of the latent resources of the country, which are by no means despicable, without trenching upon the cash or the credit of the United Kingdom. The Irish system of government is a grotesque anachronism which satisfies no one, and is costly in the extreme. According to the Commission on financial relations, Ireland is over-taxed annually to the extent of £2,700,000. This amount is taken out of Ireland, and she gets in return a method of government which is an imposition upon the people, against which they have protested in past years, and will continue to protest. The administration of Ireland is divided up between numerous departments, over many of which, some of them the most important, the Irish government has no effective control. These departments overlap, and the result is confusion and extravagance. Scotland and Ireland have approximately

(1) Wexford Prison, the only one in the county, has just been closed.

the same population, yet Ireland pays about £200,000 more than Scotland for her judicial system, £1,000,000 more for her police, and £64,000 more for her local government. The Irish police entail an outlay of over a million and a half annually; in other words, the cost of the police for every man, woman, and child in arms in Ireland works out at an average of 6s. 8d. per head. The picture of a charge of this amount for keeping in order an infant in arms, to state the case in its most absurd light, is too ridiculous to need statement in further detail, when it is borne in mind that crime in Ireland is actually less than in Scotland.

Money is needed for the development of the country, but money alone will not regenerate Ireland. The people are neither lazy nor devoid of intelligence. They do good work in all quarters of the globe. They go out into the world and become leaders of men. There is no inherent defect in the race. What is lacking to them at home? Why is it that in every department of national existence in the old Country they appear stifled, fettered, unable to go ahead? They need education. The light of modern science and modern thought must be thrown upon all Ireland's cramped activities. Instruction in industrial and agricultural life is required, and the creation of a hopeful determination to make the most of such instruction. The best laid plans for encouraging agriculture by the application of modern methods, for resuscitating other industries, and for utilising the natural resources of the country will meet with but a partial measure of success unless the healthy stimulus of responsibility and of an active participation in the management of their own affairs is imparted to the people. The people require education, and education in the literal sense; they must be drawn out of their despondency. They want the teaching that responsibility alone can give. One million saved by the efforts of the people and expended according to the wishes of the people would do more than treble the sum granted by Parliament and administered by independent departments. The self-respect begot by power, the self-control derived from duty, the confidence in self following upon successful effort, the hope springing from seeing the good results of a wise conduct of affairs—all this is wanting and must be given to the people. They must be shaken out of apathy, lifted out of despair, and though much may be done in minor directions the real motive power can only be found in self-government, in an active interest in the management of their own affairs. If the English people could but realise the gravity of the crisis which now hangs over Ireland they could not hesitate to give their support to some scheme that, while safeguarding the interests of the Empire, would conduce to the better government of

the neighbouring island and directly and powerfully check the terrible tendency to decay. What, then, do I propose? What is the circumference of my desires? Great Britain and Ireland are necessary the one to the other. Materially, Ireland is necessary to Great Britain as a producing country; and British markets and Imperial credit, and the force and backing of a great Empire, are necessary to Ireland. From a higher point of view the Irish character, nature, and genius are essential to the English character, nature, and genius. The mixture—might I say the leaven?—has made the Empire what it is. The two Islands are bound together, whether they like it or whether they do not, by ties which cannot be dissolved. So close a natural union must find expression in political union equally close. Representation in one Parliament and the supremacy of that Parliament is the only system satisfactory to the nature of the case. But though thus closely connected together by nature, the peoples of the two Islands differentiate to a vast extent. In many respects they think, feel, and act differently under similar circumstances. Their problems are not the same problems, or they present different aspects and suggest different means of solution. Ireland cannot be Anglicised. She cannot be happily governed, nor can her prosperity be assured by purely English methods and ideas. She understands her own affairs best, and she should manage her own affairs. One Parliament is my centre, its ultimate effective supremacy is my circumference; but emanating from that centre, and within that circumscribing limit, I desire to see the largest possible freedom of action and self-governing power delegated to Ireland.

II.

IRELAND'S TRADE RELATIONS WITH ENGLAND.

THE story of Irish industry is a gloomy chapter in the world's history, and whoever would understand the condition of the country to-day and the temper of the population, must be in possession of the broad facts with reference to England's dealings with Ireland in the past. In a brief space it is impossible to attempt a complete picture, but a sketch—some delineation of the general course of events, must be given to indicate why Irishmen still harp on the wrongs of former centuries. For this they are generally blamed, and not altogether unjustly. Irishmen are too prone to indulge in the luxury of contemplating an evil past to the exclusion of practical action in respect of present problems; but much may be said in extenuation. The past is ever before them. To the destructive policy pursued by England towards Irish industries may be traced in large part the present economic poverty of the country; and the opposite policy of construction has been very insufficiently tried. The bitter recollections of former days can be wiped out only by assisting the nation to bury its memories in a brighter present, and in a future in which hope may soar triumphant and unshackled.

It is essential to consider what the economic condition of Ireland has been before we can arrive at any conclusion as to what it may be. The circumstances of Ireland are peculiar if not unique.

The present economic condition is not a natural one. It has not evolved itself out of the unimpeded action of natural causes. It is not the product of the geographical position and inherent resources of the country and of the genius and characteristics of the people inhabiting it, unimpeded by external influence. On the contrary, it is the artificial product of constant interference from without.

Discussion on matters relating to Ireland is rendered exceptionally difficult because the status of Ireland has never, so far as I know, been authoritatively defined. In considering financial

relations, the basis of a separate entity, upon which the Commission of 1894 proceeded, is objected to on the ground that Ireland is an integral portion of the United Kingdom. When alluding to Land Purchase we are constantly informed that "Great Britain has pledged her credit for Ireland," thereby implying that the latter is not an integral portion of the United Kingdom, and is a separate entity. This vagueness has always existed, and one string or the other has been played upon as happened to suit the interests of Great Britain or England, for the moment. Ireland has been treated almost simultaneously as a foreign country, a semi-independent State and a colonised dependency.

In the early part of the seventeenth century Ireland was prosperous. Her agriculture flourished, she had various industries, and she did a fairly good trade. The Civil War destroyed this satisfactory condition of things. Industries were wiped out, and the value of live stock fell in eleven years from £4,000,000 to £500,000. The catastrophe was great, but it was not fatal. Ireland has always evinced great recuperative qualities; she rapidly recovered, and from the Restoration to the end of the century she made, it is said, more progress than any other country in Europe. She had a considerable textile industry and a large and profitable export trade in live cattle. Out of a population estimated at 1,100,000, one-eighth are stated to have been employed in tillage, about one-sixth in rearing cattle and sheep, and one-tenth in the woollen manufactures, nearly one-half of the population finding occupation in divers minor industries—a matter very worthy of note in connection with the problem of industrial employment in the future.

In her admirable monograph, "Commercial Relations between England and Ireland," Miss Murray sums up the position in these words:—

> Ireland had every prospect of developing a great woollen manufacture like England, and she was possessed of many potential sources of wealth in her splendid waterways, in the fertility of her soil, and in her geographical position. The progress made in the years succeeding the Restoration shows the recuperative strength of the country, and although England also progressed, it was thought by contemporaries that the advance made by Ireland in material wealth was during this period greater than that made by any other European country.

The economic condition was sound, but it was not destined to last. The extensive business in live cattle was put an end to by the English Parliament. Ireland, discouraged but not dismayed, turned her attention to the provision trade with England, the

Colonies, and the Continent. It greatly flourished. Ireland, robbed of her cattle trade, smiled under the new conditions. She soon seized a large share of the foreign trade in provisions. Miss Murray adds :—

> But not only had the Irish begun to rival the English in the provision trade with foreign countries, they had also begun to compete in the same trade with the plantations. In the fifteen years following the Cattle Acts Ireland began to furnish the English plantations with butter, cheese, and salted beef. She also supplied foreign plantations, especially the French West Indies, with salted provisions of all kinds. And so during this period England saw part of her provision trade with her own plantations, as well as with foreign countries and their plantations, taken from her by the Irish. This, of course, kept down the price of provisions at home, after the first effects of the Cattle Acts in raising the price of meat had worked themselves out. Naturally the low price of provisions in England proved injurious not only to the graziers and dairy farmers, but also to those cattle breeders who had hoped to gain so much by the Acts.
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> Thus one of the most important permanent results of the Cattle Acts was to give Ireland a comparatively large provision trade with foreign countries and English and foreign plantations. The establishment of this trade led directly to an increase in Irish shipping, and even as early as 1670 Sir Joshua Child noticed that the cities and port towns of Ireland had greatly increased in building and shipping.

The Irish people did so well that they aroused the jealousy of their neighbours, with the result that a most lucrative branch, the Colonial trade, was prohibited.

From the prostration, consequent upon the Great Revolution in 1688, Ireland, economically speaking, speedily recovered, mainly owing to the great expansion of her woollen manufactures. She beat England in her own markets, with the usual result. Export duties were imposed on Irish woollen manufactures destined for the English market, of such a character as, in addition to the English import duties, effectually to stifle the trade. The exportation of woollen goods to foreign countries was soon after prohibited. The great woollen trade was thus killed, and a severe blow was dealt to the industrial habits of the population. The linen trade alone received some encouragement, not, however, of a permanent character. The system of bounties upon the English export trade in linen goods effectually checked the growth of that industry also in Ireland. Nor was this deliberately destructive policy confined to the great woollen and linen trades. Another textile industry, cotton, was interfered with. Glass, hats, iron manufacture, sugar refining, whatever business Ireland turned her hand to, and always with success, was, in turn, restricted. The Colonial and Indian markets were closed against Irish goods, and prohibitive duties were placed against their entrance into the British markets. The

consequence of this policy was to check, if not entirely destroy, the natural capacity of the people for the manufacturing industries, and to force them to turn their attention almost exclusively to agriculture.

Even agriculture was not allowed to pursue a natural course. The remission of tithes on pasture land in Ireland, together with the effect of bounties on the exportation of English wheat, operated against wheat growing in Ireland, causing a great diminution of employment and consequent distress. Owing partly to purely natural causes, a reaction set in and England ceased to be an exporter of corn. Ireland began to supply her, and a large increase in the area of arable land was the result. The close of the eighteenth century saw a period of prosperity. The price of provisions had risen in England to famine rates. Ireland's demands for freedom to trade were granted, and all legislative restrictions upon exports were removed. Agriculture, sea fisheries, commerce of all kinds flourished greatly; but the period was short-lived. Over-exportation of grain caused a shortage in Ireland. England, by the imposition of protective duties, stopped the export of manufactures from Ireland to her ports. Yet, on the whole, the latter part of the century showed both prosperity and progress. The economic condition of the country compares favourably with the condition towards the close of the nineteenth century. The population was slightly greater, and what is of much higher importance, the proportion of that population employed in industries was decidedly larger. Industries were fairly diffused over the whole country, and a reasonable balance between arable and pasture land existed.

Miss Murray[1] has dealt in some detail with this revival in a period when Ireland was still largely shut out from the English market, but when she had regained something of the commercial independence of a foreign country. It must be borne in mind that the years of which Miss Murray writes were those which followed on the period when commerce in Ireland had been throttled by restrictions of many descriptions applying to the cattle, woollen, and other trades, and intercourse with foreign countries and the Colonies. With the grant of greater freedom of trade, Ireland revived. Miss Murray states :—

Broadly speaking, the country began to prosper from as early as 1780; this was stated as an acknowledged fact by the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was given by him as his reason for lowering the Government rate of interest from 6 per cent. to 5 per cent. Credit indeed recovered almost at once, and we hear nothing more of the difficulty of borrowing money or of raising funds by means of fresh taxation. The

(1) *Commercial Relations between England and Ireland.*

Irish Commons did much to foster this new prosperity. They could not spend huge sums of money like England in promoting trade and manufactures, but the sums they did spend were wisely allotted. The industrial aspect of Ireland rapidly changed. Ruined factories sprang into life and new ones were built; the old corn-mills which had ceased working so long were everywhere busy; the population of the towns began to increase; the standard of living among the artisan class rose; and even the condition of the peasantry changed slightly for the better. Dublin, instead of being sunk in decay, assumed the appearance of a thriving town. Commercial prosperity, combined with the new independent position of the Irish Parliament, brought with it other advantages. Absentees began to return to their country, attracted by the brilliant life of the Irish capital. Dublin became a home of arts and learning. Magnificent public buildings sprang up. The Dublin Society was given liberal grants by the legislature to enable it to encourage Irish manufactures and agriculture. Parliament took the repair of the streets from the hands of a corrupt Corporation; the principal streets were enlarged, and a great new bridge built.

At the same time the popular party in the House of Commons took up the cause of the poor. The conditions of prison life were bettered; the criminal law was revised, and probably for the first time in modern history, free public baths for the poor were established. In fact, the independent Irish legislature set itself to promote the material prosperity of the country in every possible way, and there is no doubt that its efforts had much to say to the really surprising commercial progress which was made from 1780 until the years immediately preceding the Union. The Irish fisheries became the envy and admiration of Great Britain, and agriculture increased rapidly. Various manufactures in Ireland began to thrive; the manufacture of hats, of boots and shoes, of candles and soap, of blankets and carpets, of woollens, of printed cottons and fustians, of tabinets and of glass, all sprang into importance, while the linen manufacture, which had decayed during the American War, quickly revived, and in ten years the exports of various kinds of linen doubled.

All this progress was made whilst Irish manufactures, with the one exception of certain kinds of linens, were denied admittance to the British market, and whilst Irish ports were open to all British goods. The majority of the members of the Irish Parliament never evinced the slightest wish to retaliate on England by imposing heavy duties on British goods, and it must be remembered that they were at liberty to do so had they wished. In 1790, when applications were made by persons engaged in the leather trade in Great Britain to limit by high duties the exportation of bark to Ireland, Lord Westmorland, then Lord Lieutenant, opposed the scheme and spoke in high terms of the conduct of Ireland in commercial matters since the failure of the Commercial Propositions. He said that he had never found any desire on the part of responsible men in Ireland to snatch at any commercial advantage for their country at the expense of Great Britain, and that in all matters relative to the trade of the Empire, he had ever found the Irish Parliament ready and willing to meet the wishes of the Government. Such words from a Lord Lieutenant are indeed the best proof of the moderation of the Irish legislature in its relations with Great Britain. This moderation is all the more to be admired on account of the pressure brought to bear on Parliament by the Irish manufacturing interest for protection against British manufactures. But Parliament had no wish to stir up fresh strife, and moreover, many of the members were afraid that if high duties were imposed on British goods England would cease to import Irish linens. This would probably not have injured

Ireland to the extent supposed, as there was such a large and growing demand for her linens from America and the plantations. But the Irish Parliament was always nervously anxious not to lose English custom, and it preferred to accept the commercial inequality which existed rather than provoke England to possible retaliation. Indeed, Irish free trade was a mockery as far as England was concerned, and it is because of this fact that the progress of Ireland in trade and manufactures in the years succeeding 1780 is rather surprising.

Into the consequence of the great Napoleonic struggle, the inflation of prices, the abnormal production of wheat and minute subdivision of land, the awful visitation of the famine, and reaction towards pasture and consolidation, and the effects of the repeal of the Corn Laws, I need not enter here. All these subjects belong rather to the realm of natural cause and effect; and I am concerned only to point to a hostile policy, deliberately inaugurated and consistently pursued. That policy on the part of England was dictated partly by class selfishness—the fear of Irish competition entertained by individual trades or individual traders, partly by the dread, difficult for us to realise now, that Ireland would outstrip England in the industrial race, and partly by motives of a political and dynastic character. It was a policy eminently successful. Irish industry was crushed; but that it was shortsighted in the extreme will not, I think, be disputed by anyone now. It fulfilled its object, but it left behind a heritage of woe.

These facts, with which all students of history are conversant, must be mentioned because they demonstrate the manufacturing, industrial, and trading capacity of a people whose energies are now almost exclusively limited to agricultural pursuits; and because these natural characteristics must be borne in mind in considering the results likely to be produced upon the economic condition of the people by social or political reform. Potentialities as well as actualities must be weighed and balanced; what might have been but for artificial interference must be considered in order to form an estimate of what possibly may be. It is necessary also to form some idea of the effects of the Land Act of 1903 upon agriculture and the general economic circumstances of the country.

III.

IRELAND'S INDUSTRIAL FUTURE.

IT is impossible to appreciate the social state of Ireland and the changes likely to be wrought by recent legislation until the broad lines of the development of the land system are realised. As regards land tenure, Ireland differs radically from England.

The land system introduced from Normandy into England, and from England into Ireland, never took root in the latter country. The native system absorbed and changed it; and, down to quite modern times, the connection of landlord and tenant resembled the relationship of tribal chief to tribe rather than that existing between landowner and tenant farmer in England. The transition from tribal chief to absolute owner was never acquiesced in. Feudalism gradually developed in England into the existing system, which may be described as a purely business arrangement tempered by sentiment and tradition—an arrangement under which the duty of providing permanent capital accompanies the rights of ownership. A change of that nature never took place, or rather took place only partially, in Ireland; the physical, social, and economic conditions of the country were against it. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that land tenure and the relations between owner and occupier gave rise to perpetual friction. It is in putting an end to that friction that the Land Act of 1903 confers one great benefit upon the country.

The English system was not fully established by law until 1860, and it did not last long. It was interfered with by a whole series of enactments, of which the Act of 1881 was the most important. That Act was productive of both good and evil. Had it been honest and statesmanlike, it might possibly have sufficed, but it was neither. If fair compensation had been given for actual loss of property, it would not have left the landowning class embittered by a deep sense of injustice. Had it made a definite reduction of rent, variable subsequently according to values of produce, it might have satisfied tenant farmers, and the paralysing effect of perpetual and expensive litigation might have been avoided. As it is, occupiers unquestionably benefited by that and subsequent similar Acts, but it is very certain that the soil of the country was not made more productive. Legislation shut the

throttle on the stream of capital. No landlord could with safety put a penny into the land; it was to the advantage of the tenant to make what he could out of his holding for a short period, and to present it for revaluation in the worst possible condition. Such a system of land tenure was bound to be disastrous. It encouraged bad farming. It demoralised the industry. In the restoration of single ownership by transfer of the owner's interest to the occupier lay the only remedy; and it is in providing that remedy that the Act of 1903 confers a second vast benefit upon the country. What will be the result of this legislation upon the two classes primarily affected by it?

The occupier in acquiring the freehold obtains absolute security for the full enjoyment of all the fruits of his capital, intelligence, energy, and labour; and such security acts as the strongest possible stimulus to the employment of capital, intelligence, energy, and labour. The moral effect of ownership is also great and salutary. The incentive to effort that permeates a man's being when he looks upon his fields and can say: "That is my very own," is powerful though difficult to define; it makes for courage, self-reliance, and self-respect.

It is more difficult to gauge the effect upon the landowning class; if, as some people suppose, it will be to produce a tendency towards emigration, the result upon the country will be injurious, not only economically through the withdrawal of money, but also socially through the loss of a cultured class. But is there any sufficient reason to dread such results? I think not. Loss of social influence and political power attaching to the possession of landed property, which might in some other cases largely affect the issue, may, in the case under consideration, be disregarded; or if regarded, the probability of positive gain in both respects must be admitted. Sentiment, tradition, the attractions of home, the comparative cheapness of living and of field sports and outdoor amusements, must be taken into account. As a class there can be no question that the financial circumstances of the landed gentry will be improved by sale. Under the provisions in the Act for sale and repurchase they may become occupying owners of their demesne lands, and they can obtain what they greatly need, capital for the improvement of those lands. All these factors point to the conclusion that resident gentry will continue to be resident gentry, farming their own land, retaining the amenities of their position, and finding, as I believe they will, a larger scope for usefulness than they have hitherto enjoyed.

The effect of land purchase upon other classes of the community need not be dealt with at great length. With the possible exception of gentlemen connected with the law who may suffer from a

diminution of litigation, other classes must share in any benefit accruing to the classes engaged in agriculture. Shopkeepers and retail traders depend upon the requirements and welfare of the agricultural interest; merchants and shippers depend upon the demands of the retailers; and general prosperity reacts favourably upon freighters and all those connected with railway service and other means of communication. As to the probable consequences upon the Banking interest, banks may suffer in their position of permanent creditors through the repayment of mortgage debt carrying a high rate of interest, but, in their position of lenders of floating capital, they will gain. They may lose through the loss of estate accounts involving, as they generally do, fluctuating balances to the credit and debit of the estate, both of which conditions are profitable to the bank; but they will gain through the superior financial position of both landlord and tenant consequent upon sale. An important and increasing amount of liquid cash will be available, which will pass through banker's hands for longer or shorter periods. With a large amount of cash set free, a brisk demand for money and better security, the banking interest must, I should say, gain rather than lose.

Perfect confidence in the power of land purchase to effect a beneficial change of vast magnitude might be felt were it not for the danger that its salutary operation may be checked. A revolution of this character should be accomplished as rapidly as possible in order to produce its full economic results. Long delay in obtaining the purchase money will be vexatious to both parties, and this should by some means be avoided.[1] The application of purchase money to the liquidation of incumbrances is of the essence of the transaction in most cases. Occupiers cannot pay more than 3½ per cent. on the purchase price pending completion. Owners cannot make a loss of the difference between 3½ and 4½ or 5 per cent. payable on mortgage debt. It is not to be expected that mortgagees will reduce interest to 3½. If money cannot be found to finance agreements with reasonable rapidity; or if some means are not adopted whereby selling landowners can raise cheap loans on the security of a sanctioned agreement for the short period elapsing between the sanction of the agreement and the payment of the purchase price, a situation may be created which will seriously imperil the results of an Act so potential for good. That agriculture will improve under the operation of the Act of 1903,

(1) According to the return of the Estate Commissioners in the first seventeen months of the working of the Land Act, advances amounting to £5,790,832 had been made or sanctioned, but applications for over £19,000,000 had been received up to March 1st, 1905. At the present rate of advance, it will take over four years to complete the sales already agreed to by landlords and tenants.

if a short-sighted policy of obstruction and delay is not pursued, is not a mere speculative opinion. Land purchase schemes have been in operation for some years, and judging by actual experience, the improvement consequent upon purchase is a demonstrated fact.

If by some means a revival in the home milling industry were brought about, agriculture and the country generally would undoubtedly benefit. Milling means the employment of labour at home. It also means offal, and offal means cheap feed, and cheap feed means cheap fertilisers. The bye products of milling are valuable for feeding pigs and for winter dairying. The importance of winter dairying cannot be over-estimated. Customers want butter, not only in summer but all the year round, the demand is constant, and, if it cannot be satisfied by Ireland, customers will deal with Denmark or some other dependable source of supply. Winter dairying involves growing a part, at all events, of the winter's food; and this involves the employment of labour. Dairying properly conducted—the constant supply summer and winter of dairy produce—is a more stable, reliable form of agricultural industry, is a safer investment, in fact, than the more precarious branch of cattle breeding.

Ireland was in the past pre-eminent in the provision trade, and this pre-eminence was due largely to natural causes which still operate. No reason exists why a considerable development of that trade may not be expected. The dairying and bacon trades, and the trade in poultry and eggs, should be far more prosperous than they are; and other small industries—adjuncts of agriculture—are capable of expansion. Certain districts in Ireland will produce almost anything that can be grown from here to Madeira. If it is possible, as it certainly is, to send early vegetables and flowers from the South of France and North of Africa, eggs from Russia, and butter from Siberia, to London, it must surely be possible to do a profitable trade in such articles produced in the South-west of Ireland.

As compared with agriculture elsewhere, agriculture in Ireland always has possessed, and does still possess, certain advantages. Soil and climate are suitable. No portion of the United Kingdom is better adapted for milk and meat production. With the exception of potatoes and mangolds, and I do not know why those exceptions exist, the yield of crops per acre is larger in Ireland than in Great Britain. The standard of living is lower; it has risen, is rising, and will, I should hope, continue to rise. Nevertheless, it is a present fact which must not be lost sight of. Labour is comparatively cheap, and the cost of living comparatively small. With these natural advantages, the prospects of

agriculture are good, but it has many disadvantages to struggle against, and, lest too optimistic a view of the regenerating power of land purchase should be entertained, these disadvantages must be briefly glanced at.

The substitution of a sound for an unsound system of tenure offers an opportunity. The extent to which the possibilities latent in that opportunity are realised, depend largely upon the spirit applied towards it. In all countries, but to an abnormal extent in Ireland, social conditions govern economic development; and it is obvious that a favourable forecast of development presupposes social conditions of a favourable character. The spirit of the land conference applied to the various problems seeking solution is necessary to secure the full fruition of the first practical result of that spirit—the Land Act of 1903.

Out of some 500,000 holdings, 200,000 must be described as uneconomic, incapable *per se* of properly maintaining a family. Uneconomic holdings may be unobjectionable—in fact, they are unobjectionable in cases where agricultural economic deficiencies are made good by the proceeds of some other assured industries; but the fact that so large a proportion of holdings are absolutely uneconomic has an important bearing upon the present state and future prospects of agriculture. The occupiers of those holdings will, doubtless, purchase. In order to maintain themselves, and to become a source of strength instead of weakness to the social structure, economic deficiency must be balanced either by accretion or addition. These little barren holdings must be converted into moderate-sized farms by the addition of good land, or the occupiers must be provided with means of augmenting the insufficient living derived from the soil. The Congested Districts Board is occupied in the former process, and with good results, though the process is lamentably slow. The principle is sound, but alone it cannot suffice. The supply of good land is limited. It is impossible to convert all these uneconomic holdings into farms of an economic character. Many of these small freeholders can become a valuable asset to the country, only if to subsistence derived from the land, subsistence derived from some other source can be added; and that source must spring at home and be constant. The further development of sea fisheries in suitable localities, and the creation or encouragement of cottage industries is essential.

The economic holdings may be divided into dairying and cattle breeding, and the latter predominate. A large proportion of the capital employed and of the people employed in agriculture, are engaged in a speculative form of that industry. Cattle raising is a speculation rather than an investment, a species of gambling, and, like all gambling, attended with risk.

Cheap, rapid, and reliable means of transit are essential to any great advance in agriculture, and in this essential Ireland is deficient. Freights for produce are very high, far higher than in England; and the facilities for the punctual delivery of small parcels of perishable goods through the Post Office are defective. Means of communication should subserve the requirements of the community; and profit should be sought indirectly in future general prosperity rather than directly in immediate interest on capital employed. The question of State purchase, or State subsidies, or State guarantees is not one to be profitably discussed here; nor can I now consider whether relief could be afforded, and, if so, to what extent, by superior organisation and administration. Railway companies are not charitable institutions; money will not be expended on a carrying trade without the prospect of profit derived from carrying produce; but neither will money be laid out on production as long as profit is rendered impossible through the imposition of excessive freights. The demand of goods for transportation develops means of transportation; but, on the other hand, the existence of means of transportation develops production, and must often precede it. Without attempting to discuss this interesting theme at length, I would suggest that something might be done by mutual organisation and effort. High freights discourage agriculture. Old-fashioned methods in agriculture encourage high freights. Manual labour is an expensive item. If railway companies do their utmost to assist farmers, and if farmers do their utmost to assist railway companies by bulking their produce and thereby cheapening the process of handling goods, progress might be made towards a very necessary reform.

The inefficiency of the Post Office is distinctly an affair of State. The profitable growth of flowers, and, perhaps, early vegetables, depends upon punctual delivery. It may seem a small trade; but no industry is, under the present circumstances of Ireland, insignificant; and it is the duty of a State Department to see that it is not discouraged by neglect.

The weight of local rates and the want of cheaper means of transportation act as a drag upon the wheels of progress; and the system of taxation presses heavily upon Ireland.[1] Indirect taxation is always onerous on the poor. The balance as between classes may be fairly enough adjusted over England and Scotland, but the poor feel indirect taxation far more acutely than the rich, and Ireland feels it more than Great Britain, for the

(1) In Great Britain the proportionate burden of Direct and Indirect taxation is always balanced fairly evenly, but in Ireland 72·2 per cent. (figures for 1903–4), of tax revenue is raised Indirectly. See Appendix II.

simple reason that the poor in Ireland are poorer than the poor in Great Britain, and the proportion of the poor to the well-to-do is greater in Ireland than in Great Britain.

Such great questions as the main drainage of the country and the condition of her harbours cannot be entered upon now, and I have only touched upon means of communication and transportation. To enable private and co-operative effort to exercise the best results, large and comprehensive views upon the profitable employment of public funds are desirable. There is much that private enterprise cannot accomplish; but, on the other hand, there is much that private enterprise alone can do. So far as agriculture is concerned, the great essentials consist in the application of modern methods to production, and in a plentiful supply of private capital. If agriculture, the foundation of prosperity, is to thrive, agriculture must keep abreast of the times. But agriculture requires capital. Supply of capital depends upon security both of a material and moral nature. As regards the former: whatever may be thought of the terms upon which land is changing hands, the general result, it must be admitted, is that the late occupier obtains a better property and pays less for it. The value of his security is enhanced. In respect of the latter—that lies largely at the discretion of the people. If industrial and commercial activity is not interfered with, if private enterprise is free to work in an atmosphere serene and undisturbed by social and other storms, it is safe to predict that capital will, perhaps slowly, but surely, flow towards fields for profitable employment.

Undoubtedly a large amount of capital will be set free under the operation of the Land Act. It is true that the majority of estates are entailed, but, as the perpetuation of property in land is the main object of entail, it is probable that, with that incentive removed, the tendency will be to allow entails to lapse. In addition to the ordinary floating capital, finding investment mainly through the medium of Joint Stock Banks, a certain amount of cash must be already available through the operations of the Land Purchase Act, and much more will become available in the future. The creation and encouragement of commercial and industrial enterprise will, it is to be hoped, offer a suitable field for profitable and at the same time patriotic investment; for Ireland cannot live upon agriculture alone.

The resuscitation or recreation of manufacturing industries, not on the largest scale, for that is impossible, but on a larger scale than is contemplated under the term "cottage industries," is necessary to check in some degree the stream of emigration which runs with unhealthy and unnatural velocity from our shores.

Profitable investment for capital and labour, other than in land, is the only sufficient cure.

Arguments as to future manufacturing development, founded on the proof of national capacity in the past, to which I have already alluded, and on the fact that all Ireland's great industries were purposely destroyed, might lead to very false deductions if the vast change in processes of manufacture and in trading facilities caused by the introduction of steam are not taken fully into account. Comparing Great Britain and Ireland there can be no doubt that the great revolution brought about by steam power and machinery, both in the processes of manufacture, and in carrying raw material and finished goods, acted favourably for the former and unfavourably for the latter country. Ireland has but little of the raw material—coal; Great Britain has much, and in close proximity to other minerals. Cheap and rapid ocean freights tend to obliterate the advantages possessed by Ireland in the geographical position of her harbours. It is an interesting theme for speculation whether Ireland, had she been equipped as Great Britain was, with flourishing industries and capital, could have availed herself of steam and machinery as England did. In my opinion she could not possibly have done so. The absence of coal would have handicapped her too severely in the race. Notwithstanding the proclivities of the people towards almost every form of industry other than agriculture, the new motive power must have forced Ireland into the position of a country largely dependent upon agriculture; and in that position she must remain, unless and until some motive power derivable from the country supersedes steam—an eventuality which I need not discuss. But, on the other hand, industrial habits are hard to uproot, labour and capital thrown out of one manufacturing industry seek for and may find employment in some other industry of a similar kind. Had not the greater industries of the country been so disastrously interfered with, there is little doubt that the destructive influence upon them of steam power and machinery would have been mitigated by transformation. Ireland would have retained a more or less considerable business in small trades, and in industries of a minor kind. That Ireland could never become a great manufacturing community is due to natural causes. That she has become, for all practical purposes, a purely agricultural community is due to the destructive policy pursued by England in the past. No reason exists why a considerable revival of industries other than those of an agricultural character should not be brought about.

One other matter must be taken cognisance of, namely, the effect upon a people of persistent interference with their natural

development. The free development and progress of a people cannot be arrested with impunity; national growth cannot be stunted, nor national energies forced into false channels without damaging national character. Ireland has lost some of her natural industrial instinct. She must be helped to recover it. She has suffered grievously through legislation, with the inevitable consequence that she looks too much to legislation as a remedy for present evils resulting from legislation in the past. She must learn that legislation alone is insufficient as a remedy. Ireland has lost some of her natural self-reliance, business capacity, and initiative. She must, by the exercise of responsibility, regain them. Ireland has become suspicious, and co-operation is difficult to her. She must overcome the difficulty. I do not say that Ireland is not entitled to what may be termed artificial aid; on the contrary, it is necessary for her recovery. She has been free from all local legislative restrictions on trade and industry for the best part of a century, but she started in the race as a cripple, not crippled owing to any organic defect, but artificially crippled by legislative interference with the free use of her limbs. She is entitled to exceptional treatment—and she does require assistance. But she will be unwise to look solely to that. The exercise of her limbs is the best part of the treatment, and that she can only do for herself. Much can be done and can only be done towards the solution of some of her economic problems by the judicious and liberal application of money; but the core of the question of genuine healthy improvement in her economic condition is the application to her principal industry of mutual help —co-operation, and the employment of up-to-date methods.

What is then the condition of things? My conception of it is this: A country not naturally adapted to great manufacturing industries, but possessed of good water power; a country extremely well adapted to agricultural industries of all kinds, but containing a larger number of uneconomic holdings; a country poor in this world's goods, not without resources, but greatly needing capital for their development; a people endowed with great natural capacity for industrial manufacturing pursuits, especially of an artistic character, but forced to depend upon agriculture through a lack of other industrial occupations, and, as far as agriculture is concerned, engaged largely in a speculative branch of it;[1] a people heavily handicapped in respect of agriculture by the weight of dear, slow, and inadequate means of transit; crushed in the poorer districts by a very heavy load of

(1) If at any moment the British markets are reopened to Argentina and Canadian cattle, the cattle trade, which has prospered owing to the restricted freedom of the English markets, must be crippled with disastrous results.

taxation, and looked upon as a unit of the United Kingdom, feeling the burden of indirect taxation more acutely than any of the other units, England, Scotland, or Wales; a people suffering under, but recovering from, the enervating effects of past legislative restrictions upon their natural development. Such is my conception, and I believe a true one, of the existing social, political and economic phenomena with which it is necessary for the salvation of Ireland wisely to deal.

IV

THE GENESIS OF DEVOLUTION.

AFTER a struggle to assert the efficacy of an idea has been in progress for even as short a time as two or three years, the history of all the little details which have been assimilated and consolidated cannot readily be recalled. Carlyle has remarked that "the idea you have once spoken is no longer yours"; and it is no easy matter to say definitely from whose brain the first suggestion of the "new movement" emanated. In general terms, however, it can be claimed that the conception of the possibility of reconstruction through co-operation may be traced back to the success attending the deliberations of the Land Conference. The fact that representatives of parties and interests so widely divided and for many years so bitterly opposed to one another could meet and thrash out a subject which had given rise in past generations to such acrimonious discussion, and had even led to series of incidents differing little from civil war, was a revelation not only to Irishmen, but to the people of Great Britain; and it must have occurred to many minds that if a policy of conciliation could solve the vexed land question, it was not beyond the bounds of possibility that by the application of the same principle in other directions Ireland might be rescued from the slough of despair into which she was sinking, and might even be provided with a system of government more suitable to the requirements of the country and more responsive to the wishes of the people.

It was, perhaps unfortunately, the Devolution portion of the Irish Reform Association's programme which obtained immediate notoriety. I cannot say why this should have been the case, unless it be that the land question, having been put in the fair way of solution, men's minds in Ireland and in England inevitably turned to the other problem so long associated with it. The possibility of evolving a system of Government dependent for its efficiency upon Irish help and Irish energy is the not unnatural corollary of a scheme for the settlement of land tenure in accordance with Irish views arrived at in a conference of Irishmen.

Some movements spring from the original creation of an individual mind; others are distinctly the offspring of a vague but widely diffused "spirit of times." Within this latter category

falls Devolution, and the whole programme of the Irish Reform Association.

Anyone conversant with the Irish Press during the last few years will have observed that certain ideals and objectives have been from time to time put forward by various individuals. The transfer of ownership in land on fair terms, a just settlement of the claims of labourers, a generous and large conception of educational requirements, the profitable employment of public money, better and cheaper means of communication, relief of the —in some places—excessive burden of local taxation, co-operation for industrial development, reform in the system of Government —all these and other similar projects have been independently and sporadically advocated by many persons. They have been focussed in the proposals of the Irish Reform Association.

The policy of the Association is the outcome of the natural effect produced upon many minds by the actual situation in Ireland; and, though it may have to pass through many vicissitudes it must most certainly prevail. Those who fight against reform in Ireland are engaging in a losing cause, because the necessity for reform is admitted, and because the evils now existing and calling for reform tend to become intensified day by day.

The vague aspirations towards reform have not by any means been confined to Irishmen or to persons unacquainted with the actual working of the system at present in force. It is a noteworthy fact that the best minds which have studied the Irish question on the spot have been led irresistibly to one and the same general conclusion, namely, that the present method of government, or rather lack of systematised government, is unsatisfactory, and, being out of sympathy with the Irish people, is detrimental not only to their interests, but to the general well-being of the Empire. Ireland has silently made converts of a large number of statesmen who from time to time have been called upon to take part in the administration of her affairs. Lord Carnarvon, Lord Kimberley, and Lord Spencer, Mr. John Morley, Sir George Trevelyan, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, have all returned from Ireland convinced of the unsoundness of the present methods of controlling Irish affairs, and that the present Lord Lieutenant is dissatisfied with the existing system is a well-known fact. If the recent discussions in Parliament have shown nothing else, they have demonstrated that after Mr. Gerald Balfour was transferred from the Irish Office to the Board of Trade, his successor, Mr. Wyndham, entered upon the work of Chief Secretary for Ireland with the firm conviction that some change had to be made. It has also been made pretty clear that he had the sym-

pathy of the Prime Minister in the attempt to find a *via media*, and it may be fairly assumed that the Prime Minister's desire for a settlement, though it may at first have come to him during the years when he was personally concerned with Irish affairs, was confirmed by the views and opinions formed by Mr. Gerald Balfour during the period from 1900 to 1905, when he was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant The debates on the MacDonnell incident have led not only to this assumption, but they indicate very clearly that a considerable body of opinion in the Cabinet was in full sympathy with the work of reconciliation and reconstruction which Mr Wyndham determined to undertake

Turning from politicians to the permanent officials of Dublin Castle, it is not without significance that Mr Thomas Drummond earned the same obloquy which has descended upon Sir Antony MacDonnell, that Sir Robert Hamilton should have left his sphere of work in Ireland admittedly dissatisfied with the state of affairs, and that Sir West Ridgeway, Sir Redvers Buller and others should have formed opinions against the continuance of the existing method of government [1] It is not, of course, suggested that the ideas of reform entertained by these statesmen and officials ran on parallel lines, on the contrary, they doubtless differed widely, but it is a fact, and upon that fact I desire to insist, that they saw the absurdity of resolute misrule and recognised the necessity for reform

Under all these circumstances it is not surprising that the movement for applying the policy of moderation and conciliation to various problems vexing the country, and the desire to find some alternative to the existing Castle system which "the predominant partner" ought to accept, should have come to a head when the labours of the Land Conference Committee were drawing to a close. Many members of the Committee deplored the desperate condition into which Ireland was falling, and realised that while a reformed government could do much to improve the state of the Irish people, there was a crying need for better education, for the encouragement of Irish industries and for social amelioration in all directions In the programme of the Irish Reform Association Devolution, as will be shown, was only one item, but as it is the item around which controversy has raged, it is desirable to state as clearly as possible the origin of the Devolution scheme.

(1) A writer in the *National Review* for March, 1905, attacking Sir Antony MacDonnell, recounts the administration of twenty-one Under Secretaries, all Englishmen or Scotsmen, but only two meet with his approval. All the rest are considered to have been more or less traitors to the "Ascendency" cause

As I have said, it is difficult to trace a policy to its absolute root. It is more than probable that the idea of Devolution, of the delegation of authority, has been in many men's minds for many years, but, as I explained to the House of Lords on February 17th, for all practical purposes the policy originated in a memorandum signed by five members of the Land Conference Committee, and privately circulated on March 3rd, 1903. The moment was not opportune for taking any practical action on the matter. The Land Conference Committee had been appointed for a definite purpose which had not yet been definitely attained. Pending attainment, it would have been most improper to place fresh issues before the Committee, and, in fact, the Committee could not have entertained them without the consent of the great body of landlords who had appointed them to deal with the specified question of land tenure. Whatever their private opinions may have been, the members of the Land Conference Committee could not as such deal with any subject other than that referred to them. It was necessary to postpone action until they had concluded their labours and had been discharged. But when the Land Conference Committee had finished its task, and it became obvious that, for various reasons, no further opportunity for useful work remained to them, the situation changed. The project of reform was revived. Some correspondence took place. Informal meetings were held, and it was decided to dissolve the Committee and to create a new organisation, having Reform on the lines of the Devolution scheme as a plank in its programme. On the 25th of August a meeting was held at which two resolutions were passed, one dissolving the Committee, and the other forming the Irish Reform Association. On the following day the Committee considered and adopted a tentative programme which was published on August 31st. In order to make the position quite clear it may be well to reprint the report of the proceedings at this meeting, from which it will be seen that the Irish Reform Association has from the first consistently supported the Union between Great Britain and Ireland, and that from the first it has embraced a variety of subjects, all of which, it is believed, are essential to the well-being of Ireland. The report is as follows :—

A meeting of the members of the late Land Conference Committee has been held at the Hibernian Hotel, Dublin, for the purpose of considering the report of the sub-committee appointed to formulate a programme in connection with the Reform Association which it was then decided to establish. The Earl of Dunraven presided, and the following gentlemen were present :—Lord Louth, Sir Algernon Coote, Bart., H.M.L.; Sir Anthony Weldon, Bart.; Lieutenant-General Dunham Massy, C.B.; Colonel

W. Hutcheson Poe, C.B.; Col. Everard, D.L.; Major Hillas, D.L.; Mr. Lindsey Talbot Crosbie, D.L.; Mr. Prior Wandesforde, D.L.; Mr. J. O'Grady Delmage, D.L.; Mr. George Taaffe, D.L.; Mr. J. Stewart Moore, D.L.; Captain Loftus Bryan, D.L.; Mr. A. More O'Farrall, D.L.; Mr. G. Trench, Mr. W. O'Reilly, D.L.; Mr. H. H. Persse, J.P.; Captain Shawe-Taylor, J.P.; Mr. T. C. E. Goff, Mr. David Crosbie, and Mr. Ambrose Lane.

Sir Josslyn Gore Booth, Bart.; Mr. Kavanagh, D.L.; Mr. T. D. Atkinson, D.L., and Mr. J. Butler Severs, D.L., to whom the programme of the Association has since been submitted, also concur in its views.

On the motion of Mr. G. F. Trench, seconded by Captain Loftus Bryan, it was resolved :—"That we hereby form ourselves into an association to be called 'The Irish Reform Association.'" After a lengthened discussion, it was proposed by General Dunham Massy, seconded by Mr. Lindsey Talbot Crosbie, and unanimously agreed :—

That the report of the sub-committee be adopted, entered on the minutes, and communicated to the Press.

Subsequently a provisional organising committee, consisting of the Earl of Dunraven, Sir Algernon Coote, Colonel Hutchinson Poe, Mr. Lindsey Talbot Crosbie, and Colonel Everard, was appointed, and the consideration of the constitution of the Association, the appointment of officers, of an executive committee, and other details, was postponed till a future meeting, which the organising committee were authorised to convene at their direction.

Appended is the report above referred to :—

Believing as we do that the prosperity of the people of Ireland, the development of the resources of the country, and the satisfactory settlement of the land and other questions depend upon the pursuance of a policy of conciliation and good-will, and of reform, we desire to do everything in our power to promote an union of all moderate and progressive opinion, irrespective of creed or class; to discourage sectarian strife and class animosities from whatever source arising; to co-operate in recreating and promoting industrial enterprises; and to advocate all practical measures of reform.

While firmly maintaining that the Parliamentary Union between Great Britain and Ireland is essential to the political stability of the Empire, and to the prosperity of the two islands, we believe that such union is compatible with the devolution to Ireland of a larger measure of local government than she now possesses.

We consider that this devolution, while avoiding matters of Imperial concern, and subjects of common interest to the Kingdom as a whole, would be beneficial to Ireland, and would relieve the Imperial Parliament of a mass of business with which it cannot now deal satisfactorily, and which occupies its time to the detriment of much more important concerns. In particular, we consider the present system of financial administration to be wasteful and inappreciative of the needs of the country.

We think it possible to devise a system of Irish finance whereby expenditure could be conducted in a more efficient and economic manner, and whereby the sources of revenue might be expended. We believe that a remedy for the present unsatisfactory system can be found in such a decentralisation or localisation of Irish finance, as will secure to its administration the application of local knowledge, interest, and ability, without in any way sacrificing the ultimate control over the estimates presented, or in respect of the audit of money expended, at present possessed by the Imperial Parliament. All moneys derived from administrative

reform, together with whatever proportion of the general revenue is allocated to Irish purposes, should be administered subject to the above conditions.

We think that the time has come to extend to Ireland the system of Private Bill Legislation, which has been so successfully worked in Scotland, with such modifications as Scotch experience may suggest, as may be necessary to meet the requirements of this country.

We are of opinion that a settlement of the question of higher education is urgently needed, and that the whole system of education in this country requires re-modelling and co-ordinating.

We desire to do all in our power to further the policy of land purchase in the spirit of, and on the general lines laid down in, the Land Conference report.

We consider that suitable provision for the housing of the labouring classes is of the utmost importance, and we shall be prepared to co-operate in any practicable proposals having the betterment of this class in view.

Among many other problems already existing, or which may arise in the future, the above-mentioned appear to us to comprise those most deserving of immediate attention, and which afford the most reasonable prospect of attaining practical results; toward their solution we earnestly invite the co-operation of all Irishmen who have the highest interests of their country at heart.

Col. Poe was requested to act as honorary secretary.

This record shows the whole history of the genesis of the policy of Devolution. It did not originate with anyone at Dublin Castle. It was decided to take action on the lines indicated above without reference to Sir Antony MacDonnell or anyone outside of the Land Conference Committee. But when the line of action had been decided on it was desirable to obtain information and facts in support of our views. I first spoke to Sir Antony MacDonnell on the subject on the 23rd or 24th of August—the day before the first report was adopted. I had no reason to think that his ideas ran on anything like parallel lines with ours; indeed, I believed that his views took a different direction. Nevertheless, he had information which was essential to the work of the Association, and without considering whether he was in agreement or not with the aims of the Association his help was sought and readily given.

For further details, if anyone requires them, I cannot do better than refer to the statement which I made in the House of Lords on February 17th. I then stated that I had many long conversations with Mr. Wyndham and with Sir Antony MacDonnell on all kinds of subjects and topics connected with Ireland—not conversations with the Chief Secretary or Under-Secretary as such, but perfectly informal conversations with Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell. Among other subjects, we often discussed the condition of what might be called moderate opinion in Ireland,

the possibility of in any way making that opinion articulate, and of creating something like a Moderate Central Party. I always expressed the opinion which I held and still hold, that any attempt to start, or to hope to create, a Moderate Party on a purely academic basis would be futile. I deemed it absolutely essential to have a positive, constructive democratic policy—a policy embracing a large extension of local self-governing power—such a policy, in fact, as that which has been wrought out in the proposals of the Irish Reform Association. But I never propounded "Devolution" or any other scheme or programme to Mr. Wyndham or Sir Antony MacDonnell. My impression, derived from conversation—which may have been quite erroneous—was that Sir Antony did not share in my democratic decentralising views, and that Mr. Wyndham saw no particular objection to a general scheme of administrative reform proposed by perfectly independent and private individuals being put forward for public criticism and discussion.

The publication of the first report of the Association on August 31st led to a great clamour, in Ireland, at any rate, for fuller particulars. Though somewhat averse to proceeding further at a time of year inconvenient for consultation or holding meetings, I asked Sir Antony MacDonnell to assist me in drafting out the heads of a more elaborate scheme on the lines of that first report. Sir Antony MacDonnell very kindly consented to do so, and spent two days in Kerry with me, on his way to stay with the Marquis of Lansdowne. We went thoroughly into the matter, and drafted out a rough report. Having perfected this to the best of my ability I sent it to Sir Antony MacDonnell in order that he might get a sufficient number of copies typewritten in Dublin to circulate among the Organising Committee, as I had no means of doing so myself. This draft was considered by the Committee, and amended considerably. It was then brought up at a meeting of the Association, considered, amended, and adopted, and published on September 26th. (See Appendix I.)

Then came the Chief Secretary's letter disapproving of the Devolution proposals, and shortly afterwards I heard from Sir Antony MacDonnell that in the circumstances he did not feel himself to be at liberty any longer to give us any assistance of any kind.

That is the whole history of the matter. For this policy the Irish Reform Association is alone responsible; and that Association was brought into active existence without consultation with Mr. Wyndham or Sir Antony MacDonnell, or any other human being connected with Dublin Castle. The whole thing was done within the action of the Land Conference Committee.

The fact that Sir Antony MacDonnell was compelled to withdraw the valuable assistance he had given to the Irish Reform Association in supplying us with facts and information otherwise not easily obtainable, will not in any way affect the future work of those with whom I am associated. We recognise, as apparently the English people do not yet fully recognise, that the present condition of Ireland is critical; and that something must be done for the rescue of the country, for the good name of England, and for the reputation of the Empire. The Irish Reform Association from the first has insisted upon the necessity of maintaining the Union, but it has not concealed its belief that if the present system of government is persisted in, the stability of the Act of Union will be seriously endangered. Ireland cannot be suffered to go on from year to year heavily shackled and dragging her chains with increasing difficulty. Sooner or later the point must come when remedial action must be tried. At present the position is not beyond the scope of reasonable measures of moderate reform; but, if the existing tendencies continue—if the emigrant ships are to go on year by year carrying away from the Irish shores the pick of the population, and if an increasing proportion of the people left behind is to continue to file into the asylums for the mentally afflicted and into the poorhouses—the time will come when the problems of rescuing the country may baffle the efforts of statesmen, and the wisest of them may give way to a policy of despair.

Under such circumstances the Irish Reform Association is at any rate not content to remain silent, but is determined to do all in its power to open the eyes of the people of the United Kingdom to the need for action if Ireland and the Union are to be saved.

V

THE NECESSITY FOR REFORM.

THE Irish Reform Association has been established in the hope of assisting to solve some, at least, of those problems in Irish affairs most urgently demanding solution. Our efforts are not by any means confined to reforms of a legislative or administrative character. The end in view is that Ireland should become a valuable asset of the Empire and the home of a contented people. To generalise, we aim at reform in four directions:

(1) We desire to create in the minds of the people of Great Britain a truer conception of the needs and requirements of Ireland, and of the duty of the predominant partner towards her.

(2) We hope to instil among Irishmen a truer conception of their duty towards each other and their common country.

(3) We advocate the adoption of an honest friendly attitude on the part of Ireland towards Great Britain.

(4) We press for such reform in the system of government as will enable the people of Ireland to take an active and intelligent interest in financial administration and the management of their own affairs.

We claim to be national in the highest sense as regards Ireland; and national also in the highest sense as regards the United Kingdom and the whole Empire. The United Kingdom is the heart of the Empire. With Ireland discontented, decaying, and despondent, the heart cannot be sound, and we appeal to all those whose ideal is the permanence and progress of the Empire, to find a remedy for the disease gnawing at its core. It has been insinuated, and insinuated so strongly as to amount to an assertion, that, although we pretend to be Unionist and in favour of the Union, we are really Repealers in disguise. I wish there to be no mistake on this matter. In the forefront of our proposals we have stated, as plainly as words can express it, our belief that the Parliamentary Union between Great Britain and Ireland is essential to the political stability of the Empire and to the prosperity of the two islands. We mean exactly what we have said. We support the Union, and because we support the Union we desire to make the Union justify itself by results. To do so a true conception of the situation must be formed.

It is, I think, currently supposed that the Act of Union was the final phase in a long, gradual process of amalgamation which had been going on for centuries, and that since the Act of Union no discrimination can be made between the circumstances and conditions under which the inhabitants of Ireland and the inhabitants of England, Scotland and Wales exist, and live, and move, and have their being, so far, at any rate, as legislation and administration are concerned. Such is not the case. By the Act of Union the two legislatures were amalgamated; and shortly afterwards the two Exchequers were made one; but amalgamation was not the result of natural unification, nor did it produce unification in the sense or to the extent that occurred as the several independent or semi-independent States that once constituted what is now France, or Great Britain, gradually merged themselves into one homogeneous whole. Fundamental differences precluded and preclude fusion into one community. Why these differences exist is not worth considering. There they have ever been; there they are; and there they will remain. Ireland differentiates. It may be due to distinctive characteristics of race; to peculiarities of climate or soil; or to the fact that the islands are divided by a narrow but inconveniently boisterous sea. The cause is immaterial; the fact is material, and must be recognised. It must be borne in mind that neither party to the transaction ventured to assume that Legislative Union signified racial fusion or national absorption. On the contrary it was admitted on both sides that differences existed and would continue to exist sufficiently wide to demand differential treatment for their adjustment. This is an important point, because the neglect of the principle of exceptional treatment is the cause of many of those evils which have conspired to make the Union conspicuous as a failure so far as the health and well-being of Ireland are concerned.

The Irish Reform Association are not satisfied with the present anomalous position of Ireland, but we are not in favour, therefore, of the repeal of the Act of Union. Indeed, we urge our programme because if some change is not made it seems inevitable that the Union will be undermined. Neither Irishmen nor Englishmen can ignore the fact that since the Legislative Union Ireland has not prospered. During the last half-century and more every civilised community in Europe has been progressive. Great Britain has advanced enormously, and in the same period Ireland has been going to decay. It is true, I am thankful to say, that of late—that is in the last three or four years—there have been slight symptoms of a healthier state of things in Ireland; but taking all the proofs—the increase or decrease of population, the increase or decrease of

manufacturing industries, the increase or decrease of productiveness generally, the marriage-rate, the birth-rate, and all those great tests—judging by them, while Great Britain and every community in Europe have been going forward, Ireland alone has been falling back. That is not a pleasant thing to contemplate. It is enough to give Irishmen and Englishmen pause. To what is to be attributed this terrible decay? Many Irishmen say it is due to the Union—because it has taken place since the Union. If that is so, then the Irish Reform Association must be wrong in one of its beliefs, namely, that the Parliamentary Union is as essential to Ireland as to Great Britain. It may be right in its assertion that the Legislative Union is necessary for the stability of the Empire and for the prosperity of Great Britain; but on this hypothesis it must be wrong in claiming that it is also necessary for the prosperity of Ireland. That is a disagreeable dilemma to face. It cannot be very pleasant for any Irishman, however strong his Unionist opinions may be, to be forced to admit that though the Union is necessary for the Empire and for Great Britain, it is harmful to Ireland, and that Ireland must be sacrificed to the requirements of Great Britain and the Empire. No such dilemma really exists; the argument is based on a wrong interpretation of the facts. Decay is not due to the Union. It is traceable to many causes which have occurred, it is true, since the Union, but which are not consequent upon the Union, and which would never have produced such lamentable results had the spirit of the Union been wisely interpreted and honestly carried out. It is the duty of all Unionists to endeavour to find out the causes of Ireland's decay, and by remedying and removing those causes, to make the Union justify itself in its results.

What is necessary to enable the Union to justify itself? The answer lies in the frank acknowledgment of an underlying principle of the Union. The Treaty contemplated and stipulated for exceptional treatment for Ireland under exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances existed even at the time of the Union, but during the past century causes have become operative which have intensified the need of exceptional treatment to a degree that could not have been dreamed of when the Treaty was signed. No satisfaction has been given to that need. On the contrary, Ireland has been deprived of the small modicum of relief she once enjoyed. The spirit of the Union has not been carried out.

Up to about 1858 the principle of exceptional treatment was recognised to a certain practical extent, and in theory it is recognised even now. Ireland did not pay the same taxes as Great Britain. Until 1858 the excise duties were lower in Ireland than in Great Britain, and no income-tax was levied in the former

country. The spirit duties were gradually brought up to the same level. It is quite conceivable that the inconvenience arising from different duties, custom houses, &c., was so great as to make it necessary to equalise the duties. But when that was done for the sake of convenience, Ireland ought to have been given an equivalent advantage in some other way. The income-tax is perhaps a stronger case. No excuse whatever on the ground of convenience can be claimed for imposing the income-tax on Ireland; it was imposed for revenue purposes only. No man in his senses can pretend to say that the increase in excise duties and the imposition of income tax were justified by any increase in the taxable capacity of Ireland. It is not arguable that the change was necessary in order to equalise the burden between the two islands. It constituted a deliberate breach of the spirit of the Union, and cannot be justified.

It will, I think, be universally conceded that according to their capacity to bear taxation the inhabitants of Ireland are grievously over-taxed as compared with the people of Great Britain. The weight of taxation upon Ireland has increased enormously of late years. It is quite beside the point for apologists to claim that it has increased in Great Britain also. Of course it has; the burthen is the same, but in one case it is carried with ease by broader shoulders, in the other it is borne with difficulty by a weakened frame. The increase in Great Britain has been coincident with an increase in population, in prosperity, in accumulated wealth, and in power to bear taxation. In Ireland it has been coincident with a great diminution in population, and without any counterbalancing increase in accumulated wealth, in prosperity, or in capacity to bear taxation. The increase of taxation per head in Great Britain has been nothing in comparison with the increase per head in Ireland.

The position of Ireland may be illustrated by a few figures as to the revenue derived from the country:—

YEAR.	REVENUE.	POPULATION.
In 1801	£2,000,000	5,395,000
„ 1901	£9,784,000	4,415,000

From the figures given in Appendix II., it will be seen that the tax revenue in Ireland has risen since 1820 from 14s. 5d. per head of the population to £1 19s. 1d., an increase of 171·1 per cent., while in Great Britain there has been a decrease of 8s. 4d., or 11·7 per cent. in the same period. To justify this proportional increase Ireland ought to have progressed more rapidly than Great Britain. As a matter of fact, while Great Britain has gone

steadily forward during this period, Ireland has gone as steadily back.

Indirect taxation bears hard on Ireland—for indirect taxation is always a grievous burden on the poor. The duties on alcoholic liquors, tea and tobacco are felt more heavily in Ireland than in Great Britain, because the poor are poorer in the former than in the latter country, and the proportion of poor to well-to-do is greater.

Then, again, our system of free imports and taxed exports has been unfavourable to Ireland. It was devised to suit a great manufacturing population, and, however well it may have fulfilled that object, it is admittedly not beneficial to agricultural communities. It has sent land out of cultivation in Great Britain, but the British people had other occupations to which they could turn their hands when agriculture failed them. In Ireland, with the exception of a great industry in Belfast, the whole population, broadly speaking, is dependent on agriculture. Free Trade, however beneficial it may have been to Great Britain, where the bulk of the population are engaged in manufacturing industries, has undoubtedly been detrimental to Ireland, where the people are engaged almost exclusively in agriculture. I am not now arguing for fiscal changes of any kind; nor am I assuming that any better system of taxation can be devised than the imposition of equal duties on the same articles. My point is that in these facts—the equalisation of the spirit duties, the imposition of the income tax, the effect of indirect taxation, the results of "Free Trade," the over-taxation of Ireland, and the enormous increase of taxation—are to be found causes quite sufficient to account for the melancholy result that while the sister Kingdom and all other communities have been making progress, Ireland has been steadily going back. They are facts constituting exceptional circumstances, and Ireland is entitled to exceptional treatment in dealing with them. What should be the nature of such exceptional treatment?

Ireland needs development. She is living beyond her means. A balance should be arrived at rather by increasing her means than by diminishing her expenditure. Remission of taxation might be good; but that Ireland should become able to bear taxation would be infinitely better. She wants employment, and she needs money to develop the country. Questions connected with main drainings, the improvement of harbours, cheap transit, equitable adjustment of local rates, ought to be considered by Governments and wisely and generously dealt with as occasion serves. I am not claiming the immediate large advance of public money; the public credit has been but lately given with an open hand; but I plead for the recognition, and, in season, for the application of

the animating spirit of the Land Act of 1903. A little dole here and a little dole there are not sufficient. Ireland is entitled to claim that a large and comprehensive view should be taken of her condition. Capital should be applied where it can be applied with advantage. Ireland should be looked upon as what, in fact, she is—a poor corner of the estate to be made profitable by the wise development of resources and capabilities latent in it.

The Irish Reform Association appeals to the sense of justice and to the prudence of the people of Great Britain. We ask them to recognise the disadvantages under which Ireland suffers, and to formulate for their general guidance a wider and truer conception both of the economic needs of the country and of the methods by which those needs may be satisfactorily dealt with. We would remind them that in a sense and to an extent without parallel in the history of any country, every voter in Great Britain is now a partner in the industrial life of the Irish people, and that it is to their direct advantage that that industrial life should not decay. A wiser estimate of duty on the part of the "predominant partner" is the first of the reforms at which we aim.

Ireland has a past which is gloomy; but she may have a future bright with hopes of increasing happiness and prosperity, if she will adopt a reasonable and friendly attitude towards Great Britain; and if Irishmen could learn how essential it is to help each other and work together. Englishmen will freely admit that behind all the trouble there lies a dark page in the history of Ireland for which they are responsible. They will acknowledge that Ireland has not had fair play. They are anxious to atone for the past, ready to relieve legitimate grievances, desirous of effecting a permanent settlement of outstanding questions, if only Ireland gives promise of becoming a peaceful country, if they think she will devote her best energies to assisting them in the good work of repairing the errors of the past. No feeling of hostility towards the Irish race exists. If the English find it difficult to take us at all times seriously, that is our own fault for not more seriously and soberly addressing ourselves to the problems affecting us. In every rank and walk of life throughout the Empire Irishmen succeed, and Englishmen delight in honouring their success.

And Parliament and the country are sick and tired of all the wrangles of past years. The King's peace and law and order must be maintained; but the English conscience vibrates to facts and under the true and growing conviction that at the roots of trouble are practical grievances that can be remedied, and unreasonable prejudice on the part of a few irreconcilables which cannot be condoned, it will not stomach relying for peace in Ire-

land upon coercive measures alone. The English people desire to do justice, but not at the point of the bayonet nor because they are threatened with a stab in the back. Ireland asks for more power to deal with her own affairs. Does it not stand to reason that the extent of concession must depend largely upon the uses to be made of the power conceded? The attitude of undying, unreasoning hostility towards Great Britain is greatly to be deplored.

Ireland needs assistance in many ways. Can we complain that we do not get the help we want from others when we have not yet learned to help ourselves? To an Ireland really united, everything in reason is possible; to an Ireland divided into bitterly hostile camps little is possible. What can be done by united action is proved by the Land Act of 1903—the greatest remedial measure ever passed for Ireland. It lies with Irishmen to deal with other problems in the spirit that rendered possible the Land Conference report, and to work together for the salvation of their native land, putting aside those personal jealousies, those class animosities, that sectarian bitterness that neutralise their efforts. And why can they not? There may be points upon which they can never agree. If that be so, well, on those points let them agree to differ. On many points, and points vital to the country, they can, perhaps with some little mutual self-sacrifice, come to an agreement; and for the sake of humanity and their common country, they should do so.

So averse to concerted action and to remedial measures do some curiously minded people appear to be that it seems as though they feared that if religious and class animosities died down and Ireland became peaceful and contented, her sense of nationality would wane. National sentiment does not rest on so poor a basis. It does not depend upon the irritant of grievances unredressed. No scheme for the settlement of the grievances of the Irish people will ever wipe out the broad waters which flow between the two islands. Nor are the Irish so disloyal to the traditions of the past, nor so little ambitious for the future, as to suffer Ireland under any circumstances to lose her own special charms of nature, customs, language, literature, and art. A prosperous Ireland would become more Irish from year to year; with increasing hope in the future the nation would take more and more pride in all that is best in its past. If people of all classes and creeds in Ireland would only understand how anxious "the predominant partner" is to bury the hatchet, and heal the sores of past years, how desirous England is to be met half-way, they would realise that now is the chance, now is the golden opportunity, if they will only seize it, to work together, to put their shoulders to the wheel and lift their country out of the labouring rut, and place

her upon the smooth path of prosperity and peace. A truer conception of the duty of Irishmen towards each other and towards Ireland is the third reform for which the Irish Reform Association is determined to strive. What stands in the way? Politics alone, and that leads to the consideration of the fourth reform we advocate, namely, reform of the system of government in Ireland.

We of the Irish Reform Association wish to see a change in the method of Irish Government. The present system is peculiar, if not unique. It consists of a Lord Lieutenant and General Governor, who is theoretically supreme, but who has practically no power whatever except over the police and the administration of justice. He wields the policeman's baton, and very little else. Powerful to punish the people, he is powerless to help, assist, lead, or encourage them. He is assisted by his Chief Secretary, who represents him in Parliament. The Chief Secretary has control over some departments; over other departments he has partial control; and over others, again, he exercises no control at all. If the Lord Lieutenant is in the Cabinet, the Chief Secretary is not in the Cabinet, and he may be placed in the disagreeable position of having to explain a policy or action of which he knows nothing, and regarding which he was not consulted. If the Chief Secretary is in the Cabinet, the Lord Lieutenant is not, and he becomes more than ever virtually a figurehead, with very little power or control over policy or administration. These appointments being political, it follows that the government of the country is continually placed in the hands of gentlemen who know nothing at all about Ireland or Ireland's needs, and that as soon as they begin to know something they disappear, and their knowledge with them.

The affairs of the country are administered by numerous departments. Some of them are fed by money voted by Parliament; others, partially at any rate—and some to a large extent —obtain supplies straight from the Consolidated Fund or from other sources which render them independent of Parliamentary control. In the first case it is just possible that the money provided may come under the criticism, and to a very slight extent under the influence, of the Irish Members of Parliament. But in the other cases, neither the Irish Members of Parliament, nor any other Members of Parliament, have any control over the money.[1] There is no sort of co-ordination among those various

(1) Irish Departments are fed from the following sources :—
(1) £200,000 from the Consolidated Fund.
(2) £1,500,000 from the Local Taxation Account.
(3) £4,500,000 from Parliamentary Votes, specifically Irish.
(4) £1,500,000 from Parliamentary Votes included in English votes.

departments. They do not even know themselves where their functions begin and where they end; they overlap each other in all directions. It is the duty of one department to clean the outside of a window, and the duty of another department to clean the inside—with the not unnatural result that the window does not get cleaned at all. There is no inter-departmental division of labour. Three or four departments, each with its separate staff, are engaged in precisely the same work. Every poor little project has to struggle through a line of departments, and if it runs the gauntlet successfully is probably clubbed on the head at the finish by an omnipotent Treasury clerk in London. The great spending departments, like the Board of Works, are, so far as small matters are concerned, under the control of Treasury clerks in London, estimable persons, but knowing nothing about Ireland, and occupying themselves writing volumes of folios about the wages of a charwoman, the price of a pot of paint, and many little details of that kind. As regards large expenditure, the Department is entirely at the mercy of the Treasury. The Board of Works and other departments in similar case do not in any way come under the direct influence of the Irish people in Ireland; nor do they come under the influence, control, or criticism of the representatives in the Imperial Parliament of Irish constituencies. Practically they are solely responsible to the Treasury. That is to say, Irish affairs are conducted, and money voted for Irish purposes is administered by departments in Dublin which are responsible only to another department in London. The amount expended on salaries and pensions appears disproportionately large. It is impossible to ascertain the exact facts as to staff and salaries, as, in many cases, the money required is not charged upon the votes; but, judging by the votes, salaries form a large item in Irish expenditure. In the estimates for the current year the sums placed upon 26 Irish votes amount to about 4½ millions, of which about 3 millions are for salaries and pensions.

It is difficult to describe what is commonly called "Castle Government." It is easier to say what it is not than what it is. It is not a democratic form of government, for the people have nothing whatever to say to it, either through some representative machinery in Dublin, or through their representatives at Westminster. It is not a despotism, because the Lord Lieutenant has very little power. It is not exactly an oligarchy, though a small but avaricious section of the community appear to think that the country should be run for their benefit alone.

It is a sort, and a very bad sort, of bureaucracy—a government by departments in Ireland uncontrolled by Parliament, uncon-

trolled by any public body in Ireland, subject only to a department in London. For this anomalous and grotesque system Ireland pays dearly. It is the most expensive system of government in the world. Head for head, the government of Ireland costs more than the government of any civilised community on the whole face of the earth. Under it there is no security whatever against absolute waste and misapplication of money; no security against the indirect extravagance that arises from money not being spent in the best direction or in the wisest way. Against this abominable system the Irish Reform Association protests.

The advantages of a truer conception of Ireland's needs on the part of the "predominant partner," of a conciliatory spirit between the partners, and of co-operation for useful purposes among Irishmen will be gainsaid only by those whose conception of nationality is the narrow one of class, or whose ideal of statecraft is to keep Ireland in a condition of perpetual turmoil and unrest. It is round the proposals for political reform put forward by the Association that the conflict of opinions will arise, and the question which I commend to the earnest consideration of all moderate men, and especially of Unionists, is: are these proposals calculated to offer a reasonable solution of Irish problems and Irish difficulties; and if so, are they also compatible with the maintenance of Parliamentary Union?

The existing system of private bill procedure deprives Parliament of a great deal of local knowledge necessary to enable it to arrive at wise and just decisions; and being inconvenient, cumbrous, and most expensive, it frequently acts as a deterrent, instead of an encouragement, to municipal, commercial, and industrial enterprises. No man conversant with business and commercial undertakings will dispute these facts. It will be universally admitted, in theory, at any rate, that some authority should be established to deal in Ireland with Private Bills originating there. To reduce theory to practice we have made a suggestion as to how this authority should be composed. We have proposed that it should consist of Irish representative peers, and Members of Parliament for Irish constituencies, together with certain members of a financial council which we also desire to see created. Whether all Bills should go before this body, or whether there should be an option as to bringing Bills to Westminster or not, is a detail. The panel we propose may not be the best possible panel, but until somebody suggests a better our proposal holds the field. All that we maintain is that the reform which was some time ago granted to Scotland should be granted to Ireland. Ireland should not be put to the enormous expense incurred in Private Bill procedure legislation as it now exists.

The Irish Reform Association propose, also, that certain legislative functions should devolve upon the same body. It will be asked why we suggest this devolution. It is for two reasons. In the first place, the change is necessary because the Imperial Parliament is incapable of conducting all the business which comes before it. From pressure of business Parliament disposes of many, many millions of money practically without discussion. It is forced either to spend a great deal of time on small matters to the neglect of Imperial concerns, or else to spend time on Imperial questions to the neglect of local affairs. Parliament has ceased to fulfil its functions as an institution for administering Imperial, English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish affairs. It is over-burdened. It is becoming more and more a registration body, whose function and duty it is to put its signature to three or four bills that the Government of the day brings in; but as to attending to the details of the affairs of the inhabitants of these islands, and also to Imperial affairs, it cannot do so. It is absolutely impossible for Parliament to overtake its arrears of work unless it be given adequate relief, and relief can never be obtained except by devolution—delegation of authority in some shape or other. In the second place, Irish business cannot be attended to, and is not attended to, in Parliament. Ireland differs in many respects in her problems from Great Britain. The peculiarities of her position and requirements are such that similarity of treatment does not always involve equal justice. Her affairs require special attention. They are neglected and must be neglected. However willing Parliament may be, it is impotent through lack of time. We desire to give relief to Parliament, and to ensure that Irish business shall be attended to with full knowledge, care, and sympathy. Our view is that power to deal with much of the business relating to Irish affairs, which Parliament is at present unable to cope with, may, with perfect safety, and with advantage both to Ireland and to Parliament, be delegated to an Irish body, and to carry this view into effect we suggest that Parliament should take power to refer to the body created to deal with Private Bill legislation such other matters as in its wisdom it may deem suitable for reference under prescribed conditions. Bills might be referred to it as they are referred to Grand Committees. Bills in certain stages could be referred to it; or whole categories of Bills—a proceeding which we contemplate as likely to be found judicious after a time. What is there revolutionary and subversive in this suggestion? How does it involve an interference with the supremacy of Parliament? Parliament is to act as in its wisdom it thinks fit. Parliament can delegate as little or as much as it pleases; and delegated functions

can be resumed at the will of the delegating authority. It has been asserted that our object is to set up a separate and independent Parliament. The idea is absurd. Such a body as we propose may be called a Parliament or a legislature or anything else; but an independent or sovereign legislature it cannot be called. It would have legislative functions delegated to it. It would be a subordinate law-making body. So are a great many bodies. The Board of Agriculture has legislative functions, and county councils have them. Every body that has power to pass by-laws, every body that proceeds by provisional orders exercises legislative functions. Professor Dicey has laid down that a railway company is a subordinate law-making body; but no one will say that a railway company is a legislature. It is a question of degree. A railway company represents one end of the scale. It is a law-making body possessed of very limited functions. The body we propose would be at the other end of the scale. It would be a law-making body endowed with much more important functions; but it would still be subordinate. Its powers would be derived from a superior source. It would have legislative functions delegated to it by Parliament, under whatever conditions Parliament thought fit.

The Irish Reform Association has considered the question of the administration of finance. Money is needed for the development of the country. It has been estimated, and with truth, that economies to the extent of from one to three millions a year could easily be made in Irish administration. Suppose a million a year could be saved. A great deal that is urgently needed could be done in Ireland for a million a year, or for the capital a million a year could buy. But such savings can be effected only in one way. It must be to the interest of the people to make them. Large economies are possible by applying local knowledge, local experience, and local intelligence to the expenditure of money voted for Irish services; and by the assurance that the savings effected shall be devoted to Irish services, and shall not merely go back into the maw of the Treasury. The people must be made directly interested in diminishing expenditure and in determining how that desirable object can be best attained. Extravagance cannot be checked nor money voted for Irish services applied to the best purpose till the Irish people have some direct voice in saying how that money shall be spent, and are guaranteed that all savings that are made shall be used solely for Irish purposes.

Successive Governments have not taken a sufficiently large and comprehensive view and grasp of the whole situation in Ireland. They have spent a little money here, a little money there, in pur-

suance of the policy stigmatised by some as "killing Home Rule by kindness." It is not kindness I am pleading for: I want justice. Parliament should understand the circumstances, the necessities, and the requirements of the country; seize the whole problem squarely, and deal with it in a bold and sufficient manner. What is needed by Ireland is not feeding with a spoon by a capricious nurse, but the freedom to use her own limbs. The country requires development. If Ireland is ever to be made capable of bearing taxation, and the people afforded an opportunity of bettering themselves, the principle must be applied that has been applied in Egypt, in South Africa, and almost everywhere in the Empire except in Ireland; public credit and public money must be profitably employed in the development of the country, in providing harbours, main drainage works, in educational work, in encouraging industries, and in a thousand other ways. There is nothing recondite, obscure, or difficult about this; it is merely applying to Ireland in a public way the same principle which every man applies to his own property—that is, the investment of capital in it which can be profitably employed. Ireland is not suffering because of the contiguity of a melancholy ocean, nor because of a double dose of original sin, which strangely enough only affects Irishmen at home; she is suffering from plain and tangible facts, which, if once understood, could be grappled with and cured.

For the development of Ireland money is needed, and money can be got for that purpose in many ways—by the use of the Imperial credit, by larger sums voted by Parliament; or by making the amount of money that is voted for Irish services go a great deal further than it does now. I put aside the two former methods and confine myself to the last—to a method of financing Irish problems without costing the taxpayer a penny in credit or in cash. There is no doubt that very large savings can be made now—it may be as much as two or three millions—and perhaps still larger savings may be possible in the future. Ireland, now the land question is in course of settlement, is entering on a new era, a bright era full of hopefulness, and if she can secure internal peace she can save in many ways. Ireland is extraordinarily free from crime, except crime of an agrarian character. That will gradually disappear, and unquestionably in time considerable economies in the policing of the country will become possible. As it is, the time is ripe for reform of the judiciary. In no country in the world does government cost half as much as in Ireland. Everything connected with law and justice costs in Ireland from three to four times as much as it does in Scotland, and it might be supposed that the calendar of criminal offences in Ireland largely exceeded

that of Scotland. This is not the case. Indictable offences in Scotland last year numbered 20,000, and in Ireland only 18,000. Surely there must be something a little wrong about a system under which the legal machinery in Ireland costs three or four times as much as in Scotland, with an equal population somewhat more predisposed to crime.

The Irish Reform Association propose that a Financial Council, under the presidency of the Lord Lieutenant, shall be instituted, which can at least endeavour to secure efficiency and economy with some hope of success; and that all savings made by the council shall be devoted to Irish purposes, and be expended in the development of the resources of the country and in satisfying the needs of the country. Under the present system the financial administration is wasteful and unappreciative of the needs of the country, and the methods in which monies devoted to the Irish service are expended do not inspire public confidence in Ireland. We believe that this most unhealthy state of things can be remedied only by the institution of a Financial Council, through which local knowledge, experience, interest, and talent can be applied to the financial administration in Ireland. Our suggestion is that the council should prepare and submit the Irish estimates to Parliament; that it should be competent to examine, supervise, and control every item of expenditure, to call for information with reference to financial questions of all kinds, to propose such reductions as may be consistent with the efficiency of the public service, and to see that such savings and reductions are applied to the improvement of Irish administration and the development of the country's resources. We desire that local knowledge and experience should be applied to administration, that the council shall have a potent voice in the preparation of the estimates and in the expenditure of the money. We stipulate that the estimates are to go up to the House of Commons, as they do now, that the expenditure shall be subject to the audit of the Auditor-General, as it is now, and to the scrutiny of the Accounts Committee of the House of Commons, as it is now. Such are our proposals.

And they have been denounced as revolutionary. We are, it is said, insinuating Home Rule in disguise. Home Rule is a vague and indeterminate expression, and our proposals may be Home Rule disguised or undisguised. I do not quarrel with the name. I have no objection to it as applied to myself. But the assertion that our proposals are repeal in disguise or dualism in disguise, or that they abrogate the ultimate and effective control of Parliament is utterly absurd. What is the ultimate power of the House of Commons? Is it not that it holds the purse-strings,

and can grant or refuse, diminish or increase supplies? As our proposals do not aim at curtailing the power of the House of Commons in that respect, how can it be pretended that they do away with the practical control of Parliament?

Let me sum up the position to make it perfectly clear. The ideal of the Irish Reform Association is,

(1) To relieve the Imperial Parliament of a great mass of business to which it cannot possibly attend at present, by delegating to an Irish body legislative functions in connection with Irish affairs.

(2) To ensure that business peculiar to Ireland shall not be neglected as it is now, but shall be attended to by those who understand the needs and requirements of the country.

(3) To apply local knowledge and experience to the financial administration of the country, and to ensure that all economies made shall be devoted to Ireland, and expended in developing the resources of the country, and satisfying the needs of the people.

Those are the great principles at which we aim. Whether our proposals hit the mark is a question about which differences of opinion must naturally arise. Our published scheme is not to be considered final, incapable of amendment or alteration. We have made no such claim for it. We have suggested lines on which the necessary reforms can, as we believe, be most successfully carried out; and we invite discussion, comment, and criticism upon them. We believe and assert that on those lines salutary reform can be achieved within the Union, and we invite Unionists to consider whether those reforms are not only compatible with legislative Union but necessary if the Union is to be maintained.

I do not commend these proposals to the acceptance of those whose ideal is an independent Ireland. That ideal is not my ideal. The notion that a small and poor country like Ireland could possibly maintain herself in a position of independence is to me preposterous. She might probably—she is a nice little island—be annexed by somebody; and with conscription and higher rates of taxation, that would not be very much to her advantage. But the important factor is that, as long as Great Britain exists, it cannot be convenient for her that Ireland should be annexed by anybody; and, after all, Great Britain has a perfect right to protect herself. Dualism is equally out of the question. The Parliamentary Union is not merely a legislative enactment; it is the result, the tangible effect, of natural ties, tendencies, and causes—the outward and visible sign of the indissoluble interdependence of the two islands. My ideal is that Ireland should be proud of her

own distinct nationality, and cherish and develop it; but that she should also take pride in what in a sense may be called a larger nationality—the honourable share she has in the government of the United Kingdom, and in the conduct of the great Empire of which the United Kingdom is the centre. There is every reason why Ireland should be very proud of the part she has taken in creating, maintaining, and administering the Empire. Every reason also why she should be very proud of her distinct characteristics and nationality; every reason why she should desire to have, and should have, over her own affairs, as much power and control as is compatible with the share she has in the larger destinies of the United Kingdom and of the Empire. Such is my ideal, and, therefore, I cannot share the ideal of my fellow-countrymen who aspire to a complete independent position for Ireland. But I do not deny that I sympathise with them. I can understand the mental attitude of men who, seeing the many disabilities under which the country suffers, and despairing of any relief under the extraordinary and preposterous form of government which exists in Ireland, come to the conclusion that nothing can remedy those evils except absolute repeal.

To them I would appeal for a charitable consideration of our views. I would ask them if they cannot walk with us a little way without prejudice to larger ideals which we cannot conscientiously share. Procedure is of the essence of statesmanship, and procedure must be governed by conditions as they are. I would ask them to bend their eyes down from somewhat inaccessible heights to the contemplation of material facts—the condition of the country, and the methods of dealing with that condition not too fatally remote. I make no appeal to sentiment or romance. Our suggestions are purely practical. They deal with practical matters, and matters of that kind must be dealt with if the country is to be saved. Ireland is very sick. For the last fifty years she has been gradually decaying. Is nothing to be done for her? Physicians differ as to the exact prescription that may be ultimately necessary, but on certain points they are agreed. They are agreed that a more generous diet, freer use of her limbs, greater liberty, and a larger horizon are needed. Is nothing to be done while they wrangle about the one point on which they are not agreed? Though they may not be in accord as to the exact nature of the prescription necessary to bring about a complete cure, is it not possible for them to combine to render at any rate "first aid"?

Is it in the course of nature that an intelligent and industrious people, who in every quarter of the globe under different circumstances and different conditions succeed in life, should be

doomed to failure in the cradle of their race in Ireland? Is it natural that a people loyal in disposition and easily led should be chronically in a state of suppressed revolt? Is it in accordance with natural law that Ireland should present the solitary example of a community going steadily to decay? Will Englishmen not consider the facts? If they will give the matter a little thought, the case for reform will, I am sure, appeal to their common sense, and their sense of justice. Let them regard this matter, as I regard it, from both an Irish and an English point of view. From the Irish standpoint I protest vehemently against seeing the Irish race wiped off the soil of Ireland; and from the English point of view I am profoundly dissatisfied with a discontented and decaying Ireland. As a taxpayer, Ireland is my security for an enormous loan, and I want to see my security going up and not going down. Ireland, moreover, is very useful to me in a great many ways. Ireland finds some of the finest fighting material in the world, as the glorious records of Irish regiments and the history of the Navy abundantly show; and Ireland is valuable not only as a military asset, but in the whole administration of the Empire. Ireland is of inestimable value in the leavening and quickening qualities of her spiritualised nature. No man —certainly no candid student of history—will deny the essential nature of the qualities peculiar to the Irish race in building up the Empire of which Englishmen are so properly proud. A discontented and decaying Ireland is the one solitary, sad blot in the British Empire; and I am certain that if the facts can be brought home to them the English people will do anything that is in their power to remove the blot from their escutcheon.

Let Irishmen cease from beating the wind and England will play her part. Will Ireland bar the way to a brighter future against herself? Ireland is bleeding to death before the eyes of the world. Industries are leaving the country; the population is deserting. If no action is taken to help the country in matters upon which all students of Irish affairs are agreed she can be helped, simply because agreement cannot be arrived at on some other points; if Irishmen in North and South are to go on from year to year, from generation to generation, from century to century, wrangling and fighting and doing nothing, then the fate of the country is sealed. If Irishmen would only bury their differences for a little while Ireland might be saved, and if they do, and looking back after a time, see the causes of dissension in perspective they will realise how futile they were, how fertile with evil, how utterly unproductive of good. I appeal to Nationalists to consider the desperate condition of the country as she now stands, and the urgency of some measures of relief; to gauge

what is practical and possible of achievement not too long deferred. I remind Unionists in Ireland and in England that in defending the Act of Union they have taken on themselves the responsibility of showing that that measure can justify itself. It has not done so, and from day to day as Ireland sinks in happiness and prosperity the Union, by inference, stands more and more condemned. Under a purely negative policy Unionism cannot prevail. Inaction contains the seeds of death. The argument of a sad decaying Ireland is difficult to answer; if the Union is to be maintained, an active, living, democratic, progressive policy must be applied to the causes of decay.

APPENDIX I.

IRISH REFORM ASSOCIATION'S PROGRAMME. THE DEVOLUTION SCHEME. SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AMELIORATION.

IN order to complete the history of the Reform movement in Ireland there is appended the further and more detailed report of the Association which was adopted unanimously at a meeting attended by the Earl of Dunraven (who presided), Lord Rossmore, Lord Louth, Sir Algernon Coote, Bart.; Sir A. Weldon, Bart.; Captain the Hon. Otway Cuffe, Colonel Hutcheson Poe, C.B. (hon. sec.), Mr. Lindsey Talbot Crosbie, D.L.; Colonel Nugent Everard, D.L.; Mr. J. O'Grady Delmege, D.L.; Mr. A. Moore O'Ferrall, D.L.; Captain Loftus Bryan, D.L.; Mr. T. C. E. Goff, D.L.; Mr. A. Collum, D.L.; Mr. David Talbot Crosbie, and Captain Shawe-Taylor. The report, as reprinted below, was published on September 26th, 1904. It consists of tentative suggestions made primarily in order to provide a basis of discussion, and the proposals, roughly outlined, are not to be regarded as definite and final. It was felt by the Association that some platform was necessary as the rallying point of Moderate opinion in Ireland and in England, and the report is an endeavour to meet this need, without prejudice to any more desirable solutions of the problems of Irish government which may be evolved as a result of discussion and a truer conception of the needs of the Irish people than has existed in the past, when attention has been so largely concentrated upon mere questions of party differences and religious disputes.

The report is as follows :—

In our report of the 25th August we stated that "while firmly maintaining that the Parliamentary Union between Great Britain and Ireland is essential to the political stability of the Empire, and to the prosperity of the two islands, we believe that such Union is compatible with the devolution to Ireland of a larger measure of local government than she now possesses."

We now desire to indicate the lines on which, as it appears to us, the devolution proposed by the Association may be carried into effect.

We deal with this devolution under two heads :—

(*a*) Administrative control over purely Irish finance; and,

(*b*) Certain Parliamentary functions connected with local business.

As regards

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL.

I. The Revenue and Expenditure Return for last year (Parliamentary Paper No. 225, dated June, 1904) gives £7,548,000 as the expenditure "on Irish services." We think that in apportioning the gross expenditure of the year—namely, £155,496,000—between English, Scotch, Irish, and General Services, it would be fairer to class the expenditure on "Post Offices and Telegraphs" and on "Collection of Taxes" under "General Services, because they are disbursements for Imperial purposes, for which the Irish Government prepares no estimates. If corrected by the inclusion of these and some other charges of an Imperial nature not separately shown, the return would indicate an expenditure on purely Irish services of about £6,000,000 of voted money.

II. To consider whether this sum is a fair assignment of revenue to Ireland in the peculiar circumstances of her case would be beside the present question. Such an inquiry is, indeed, suggested by the evidence and report of the Financial Relations Commission, but in this report we confine ourselves to the administration of the six millions actually voted.

The methods under which this sum is expended do not inspire public confidence in Ireland; and we desire to express our strong opinion that if local knowledge were brought to bear upon expenditure, the money could be made to go further, and would be more usefully employed than it is under the present system. The effect, we feel confident, would be a great improvement in the mutual relations between Great Britain and Ireland, increased confidence in the government of the latter country, and amelioration in her economic condition.

III. We believe that these desirable results would be to a large extent attained if the control over purely Irish expenditure were taken from the Treasury, which is now only interested in effecting economies for the Imperial account, and were entrusted under Parliament to an Irish Financial Council, interested in making savings for Irish purposes.

IV. Power to raise revenue would remain, as now, with Parliament. The duty of collecting the revenue would also remain an Imperial concern, unless Parliament desired to delegate the duty to the Council, under prescribed and revocable conditions, in respect of any heads of revenue localised to Ireland.

COMPOSITION OF THE FINANCIAL COUNCIL.

V. The exact composition of the Council and the method of enrolment is a matter for future careful consideration. It should be under the presidency of the Lord Lieutenant, and, as at present advised, we think that it might consist of (say) twelve elected and twelve nominated members, including the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who should be a member *ex-officio*, and Vice-President; that the County and Borough Councils constituencies and the Parliamentary constituencies might be gathered into convenient groups, each group to return a member of the Council; and that the power of nomination should be exercised by the Crown to secure the due representation of the Government, of commercial interests, and of important minorities.

One-third of the members of Council should vacate their seats, in rotation, at the end of the third year, but should be eligible for re-election and reappointment.

The votes of the majority should determine the decision of the Council—the Lord Lieutenant having only a casting vote—and its decisions should

be final, unless reversed by the House of Commons on a motion adopted by not less than a one-fourth majority of votes.

VI. It would be the duty of the Council to prepare and submit the Irish Estimates to Parliament annually. The estimates might be transmitted through the Treasury Board if for formal reasons this was thought desirable. The audit and check over expenditure would remain as now with the Auditor-General and the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons.

VII. It would be out of place here to enter into minute detail regarding the powers which should attach to the Council, and the procedure by which it should be governed. On the former point rules would, we assume, be prescribed by Parliament for the Council's guidance. On the latter point the Council should, we think, regulate its own procedure subject to Parliamentary control. Here we content ourselves with saying that the Council should be competent to examine, supervise, and control every item of expenditure, and to call for information relevant to financial questions of all kinds, to propose such reductions as it considered consistent with the efficiency of the public service, and to apply such reductions and all other savings on the annual estimates to the improvement of the administration and the development of the country's resources. Under the Budget system here contemplated all such proposals on the part of the Council would necessarily come under the cognisance of Parliament, which would afford an adequate safeguard against undue interference with any establishment or service.

The Provision of Funds.

VIII. The Financial Council might be placed in possession of funds in three ways :—

(*a*) The entire revenue contributed by Ireland might be assigned to her, subject to payment to the Treasury of a fixed contribution, or of a contribution regulated by a fixed principle; or

(*b*) The estimates for an average of years might be taken as the standard contribution from the Imperial Exchequer towards Irish expenditure for the year, or for a fixed period of years; and that contribution, with the addition of savings effected by the Irish Government in a preceding year of the period, might be voted and allocated in accordance with the Budget annually submitted by the Council to Parliament; or

(*c*) Certain heads of revenue and the income derived from them, supplemented, if necessary, by a grant from general revenues, might be assigned to Ireland either annually or for a period of years.

IX. (*a*) is not, in our opinion, a desirable method; we dislike the idea of "tribute," and desire to preserve in substance, as well as in appearance, an inter-dependence of interest between the two countries. We see no objection to the adoption of either plan (*b*) or (*c*).

X. (*b*) requires no further explanation.

XI. If plan (*c*) were adopted we think that, in assigning revenue to meet sanctioned expenditure, those heads of revenue should be selected which admit of expansion by the application of local knowledge, or by improvement in administration, and which, in regard to collection, can be localised in Ireland.

Any assignment of heads of revenue would from time to time require revision, as it is probable that the income derivable from some sources of revenue, which naturally suggested themselves, such as income tax and

estate duties, would diminish in Ireland with the progress of land purchase, though not diminishing in the United Kingdom, as a whole.

We see no objection to the assignment, as an asset of Irish revenue, of land purchase annuities, which now amount to nearly £1,000,000 per annum, and must rapidly increase. In a few years the income derived from this source will suffice to feed nearly one-half the Irish expenditure. The employment of it for that purpose will enable the Treasury to meet the interest on the Land Purchase Loans and the claims of the Sinking Fund from moneys already in their hands, and thus relieve them from any possible anxiety touching the punctual payment of their annuities by Irish tenant purchasers.

But even if the sources of income indicated above be placed at the disposal of Ireland, a grant from the Imperial revenue to adjust Irish receipts and expenditures would be necessary. Such a grant might, with advantage, take the shape of a percentage on one or more of the great heads of Imperial revenue.

XII. If a financial contract for a fixed period of years were made with the Treasury, Ireland should be secured in the full enjoyment of the results of better financial administration during the contractual period. But whether a contract is made or not, the Council should be entitled to carry forward balances and to meet deficits under one head of expenditure by savings under another. Supplementary Estimates would cease to be submitted to Parliament. Savings on Ireland's contribution to "General Services" would be available for the reduction of the Public Debt.

We should have no objection to the Treasury Board exercising such degree of supervision over the Irish Financial Department as will assure it of the due observance of uniform procedure and prescribed rule.

XIII. In the event of further subventions in aid of local taxation in Great Britain being granted by Parliament, Ireland would, of course, be entitled to an equivalent grant in addition to the funds placed at the disposal of the Financial Council as above mentioned.

XIV. The Irish Government should take over and continue the existing arrangements under which loans for public purposes and land improvement are now made in Ireland. The prosecution of large schemes of drainage and land reclamation, which in the new conditions of a peasant proprietary should become State concerns—improved railway and other means of communications, harbour construction and the like, are matters which may call for the support or initiative of the Irish Government. In respect of them the right of the Irish Government to look to the Treasury Board for financial aid on suitable conditions, will, of course, follow from the fact that Ireland continues to contribute to the General Exchequer.

XV. It is essential that the chief spending department in Ireland, the Board of Works, which is now subordinate to the Treasury, should come directly under the undivided control of the Irish Government; and that the responsibility to that Government of the numerous other boards and departments, now operating with much irresponsibility, should be made clear and complete.

Devolution of Irish Business.

As regards the devolution or power to deal with Irish Parliamentary business,

XVI. It is, as we believe by common consent, admitted that the existing system of private Bill procedure deprives Parliament of a great deal of

that local knowledge essential to enable it to arrive at wise and just decisions; and that, being inconvenient, cumbrous, and most expensive, it frequently acts as a deterrent instead of an encouragement to municipal, commercial and industrial enterprise. The desirability of a Private Bill Procedure Act for Ireland has been repeatedly admitted by the Government, whose only reason for not undertaking to deal with it appears to have been the desire to observe the results of the working of the Scotch Act. Those results are now known. The general success of the Scotch Act is admitted, and there remains no justification that we can perceive for any longer postponing legislation for Ireland, on somewhat similar lines.

But the disabilities under which Ireland labours are not confined to Private Bill Procedure. The problems that affect her wellbeing, the peculiarities of her position and requirements, are such that similarity of treatment does not always involve equal justice. Her case is, in many respects, exceptional—a fact which is admitted in the Act of Union.

The great and increasing difficulty which Parliament finds in dealing with the unwieldy mass of business that comes before it is, we believe, very generally admitted. Under existing circumstances the special needs of Ireland do not and cannot receive adequate attention. Sufficient relief cannot, in our opinion, be afforded by mere amendment in the standing orders of the House of Commons. Some delegation of authority is necessary. We believe that power to deal with much of the business relating to Irish affairs which Parliament is at present unable to cope with, might with perfect safety and with advantage both to Ireland and Parliament, be delegated to an Irish body to be constituted for the purpose.

XVII. We are thus led to the considerations of the constitution of a Statutory Body, and of the business to be delegated to it.

On the first point we suggest that this body might be composed of Irish representative Peers and members of the House of Commons, representing Irish constituencies, and of members of the Financial Council, which would thus become an extra Parliamentary panel for the purpose. In order to enlarge the panel and thus widen the field of choice, we are disposed to recommend that past as well as present members of the Financial Council might be eligible.

On the second point we suggest that Parliament should confer on the Statutory Body authority to promote Bills for purely Irish purposes, including some of those now dealt with by Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board and the Board of Works; and that Parliament should take power to refer to the Statutory Body not only business connected with Private Bill legislation but also such other matters as in its wisdom it may deem suitable for reference, under prescribed conditions. The experience gained by this method of *ad hoc* reference would materially assist Parliament in the ultimate grouping into district classes of matters to be referred to the Statutory Body.

XVIII. We do not consider it now opportune to make more definite proposals on the points herein raised. We are prepared to inquire fully into them if the Association so desire; but we submit that inquiry can be best conducted by means of a Royal Commission, and that the proper function of this Association is to place its opinions and propositions before such a Commission. We, therefore, recommend the Association to use its best endeavours to secure the appointment of a Commission, and to instruct this or some other Committee to prepare a detailed report for its consideration, with a view to placing the same in evidence before the Commission.

Social and Industrial Amelioration.

XIX. The preceding remarks have dealt with the political portion of the report adopted at the meeting held on the 26th August last, but before concluding we wish to make a few observations on another aspect of the Irish question. Though much of the social unrest and industrial stagnation which unfortunately exist in Ireland is, in our opinion, due to defective government, it is not all attributable to that cause. We attach the greatest importance to the opinions expressed in our former report on the purely social and economic aspects of the situation; and we suggest the appointment of a Committee to watch and from time to time report on such matters as the conditions of the labouring classes, the question of local rating, the working of the Land Act in respect to purchase, the reinstatement of evicted tenants, the progress of improvement in the congested districts, and on other matters bearing on the social and economic welfare of the country.

We reiterate the desire expressed in our former report to do all in our power to further the policy of land purchase in the spirit of, and on the general lines laid down in the Land Conference Report.

APPENDIX II.

Indirect and Direct Taxation and its Incidence.

Statement showing how much per capita of the Estimated True Revenue derived from Great Britain and Ireland, respectively, represents the proceeds of Taxes on Commodities or Indirect Taxes, and how much represents the proceeds of other Taxes or Direct Taxes, since the amalgamation of the British and Irish Exchequers. (Summarised from the Report of the Financial Relations Commission).

[N.B.—The estimated true revenue from taxes is the collected revenue in each Kingdom, exclusive of Imperial receipts, after being adjusted in accordance with Parliamentary Paper 313 of 1894.]

—	Taxes on Commodities.		Other Taxes.		Total Tax Revenue.	
	Great Britain.	Ireland.	Great Britain.	Ireland.	Great Britain.	Ireland.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1819–20	2 8 7	0 11 0	1 1 8	0 3 5	3 10 3	0 14 5
1829–30	2 2 1	0 11 6	0 15 11	0 1 7	2 18 0	0 13 1
1839–40	1 14 4	0 11 1	0 13 1	0 1 4	2 7 5	0 12 5
1849–50	1 10 3	0 12 2	0 17 5	0 1 9	2 7 8	0 13 11
1859–60	1 11 7	1 0 7	0 18 5	0 4 9	2 10 0	1 5 4
1869–70	1 5 8	1 0 6	1 0 1	0 4 11	2 5 9	1 5 5
1879–80	1 3 7	1 0 1	0 16 10	0 4 10	2 0 5	1 4 11
1889–90	1 3 2	1 3 2	1 0 2	0 5 10	2 3 4	1 9 0
1893–94	1 4 1	1 2 0	1 0 9	0 6 10	2 4 10	1 8 10
1903–4 (a)	1 10 7	1 8 3	1 11 4	0 10 10	3 1 11	1 19 1
Increase (+) or decrease (−) since 1820 ...	(−) 18 0	(+) 17 3	(+) 9 8	(+) 7 5	(− 8 4	(+) 1 4 8
Increase (+) or decrease (−) per cent. since 1820	(−) 37·7	(+) 156·8	(+) 44·6	(+) 217·0	(−) 11·7	(+) 171·1

(a) Figures supplied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (House of Commons, April 13, 1905), but it was not stated if they referred to "true revenue" or "revenue as collected." The difference, however, is not very great between the two; and presumably Mr. Chamberlain gave the "true revenue," as usual under such circumstances.

APPENDIX III.

Ireland's Loss of Population.

Table showing the Population of Ireland in comparison with that of the United Kingdom.

Census of 5th April.	Great Britain.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.	Ireland. Per cent. of United Kingdom.
1821	14,091,757	6,801,827	20,893,584	32·5
1831	16,361,183	7,767,401	24,128,584	32
1841	18,534,332	8,175,124	26,709,456	31
1851	20,816,351	6,574,278	27,390,629	24
1861	23,128,518	5,798,967	28,927,485	20
1871	26,072,284	5,412,377	31,484,661	17
1881	29,710,012	5,174,836	34,884,848	15
1891	33,028,172	4,704,750	37,732,922	12·5
—	—	—	—	—
1899	36,024,438	4,535,516	40,559,954	11·2
1900*	36,683,879	4,466,326	41,150,203	10·85
1901	37,103,328	4,443,370	41,546,698	10·69
1902	37,528,925	4,432,287	41,961,212	10·56
1903	37,957,561	4,414,995	42,372,556	10·42

* The estimates of population in 1900 and subsequent years are based on the results of the Census of 1901. For 1899 the estimate formerly made on the results of the Census of 1891 is retained.

APPENDIX IV.

British and Irish Progress.

Table from Appendix to Report of the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland, showing the progress made by Great Britain and Ireland, respectively, between 1870 (or the earliest Year for which Information is available) and 1894 (or the latest Year), as regards the undermentioned Particulars.

		Increase (+) or Decrease (−) in Great Britain.		Increase (+) or Decrease (−) in Ireland.	
		Amount.	Per cent.	Amount.	Per Cent.
Population	Thousands	(+) 8,757	(+) 34·0	(−) 829	(−) 15·3
Excess of births over deaths	,,	(+) 125·2	(+) 39·3	(−) 37·7	(−) 63·4
Pauperism: Mean number of paupers in receipt of relief at one time	,,	(−) 286	(−) 24·5	(+) 30	(+) 42·9
Criminal offenders convicted	Number	(−) 3,782	(−) 24·6	(−) 1,579	(−) 51·8
Education: Average number of pupils in attendance at primary schools	Thousands	(+) 3,340	(+) 229·9	(+) 167	(+) 46·5
Live stock: Number of cattle	,,	(+) 944	(+) 17·5	(+) 596	(+) 15·7
Number of sheep	,,	(−) 2,536	(−) 8·9	(−) 229	(−) 5·3
Number of pigs	,,	(+) 219	(+) 10·1	(−) 70	(−) 4·8
Income tax assessments, total gross amount of	Thous. £'s	(+) 248,733	(+) 59·4	(+) 12,483	(+) 47·9

APPENDIX V.

British and Irish Revenues.

Imperial Revenue of the United Kingdom, showing the amount retained for Local Expenditure, compiled from Parliamentary Paper 269 (July 18, 1904) and the Financial Relations Commission's Report.

	Ireland.			Great Britain.		
	Estimated *True* Revenue.	Local Expenditure	Imperial Contribution	Estimated *True* Revenue.	Local Expenditure	Imperial Contribution.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
1819–20	5,256,584	1,564,880	3,691,684	51,445,764	4,439,333	47,006,431
1829–30	5,502,125	1,345,549	4,156,576	49,637,892	4,326,437	45,311,455
1839–40	5,415,889	1,789,567	3,626,322	46,262,412	4,474,583	41,787,829
1849–50	4,861,465	2,247,687	2,613,778	51,870,866	5,855,389	46,015,477
1859–60	7,700,334	2,304,334	5,396,000	61,386,845	8,540,204	52,846,641
1869–70	7,426,332	2,938,122	4,488,210	65,600,612	10,229,668	55,370,944
1879–80	7,280,856	4,054,549	3,226,307	69,760,870	17,182,952	52,577,918
1889–90	7,734,678	5,057,708	2,676,970	84,980,792	24,284,124	60,696,668
1899–1900	8,664,500	6,980,000	1,684,500	117,388,500	39,188,000	78,200,500
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1900–1	9,505,000	7,306,000	2,199,000	128,163,000	39,730,000	88,433,000
1901–2	9,784,000	7,214,000	2,570,000	139,613,000	40,988,000	98,615,000
1902–3	10,205,500	7,353,000	2,852,500	146,401,000	42,164,500	104,236,500
1903–4	9,748,500	7,548,000	2,200,500	137,184,500	44,227,000	92,957,500

From these figures it will be seen that while the population of Ireland has fallen from by nearly half since 1841, the local expenditure has grown from £1,789,567 to £7,548,000, or by nearly six millions sterling, while her contribution to Imperial services has fallen by nearly one-and-a-half millions sterling. Local expenditure in Ireland, from taxes collected by Imperial officers, is at the rate of £1 16*s.* 2½*d.* per head of the population.

Contribution to Imperial Services, 1903–04.

This Table, from Parliamentary Paper 225 (June 24, 1904), shows the Balances of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, which are available for Imperial Expenditure after the Local Expenditure of those divisions of the United Kingdom has been met:—

Year 1903–4.	England.	Per cent.	Scotland.	Per cent.	Ireland.	Per cent.	Total.	Per cent.
	£		£		£		£	
Total Revenue as contributed	121,658,500	82·80	15,526,000	10·57	9,748,500	6·63	146,933,000	100·00
Local Expenditure	88,850,000	75·04	5,377,000	10·38	7,548,000	14·58	51,775,000	100·00
Balance available for Imperial Expenditure	82,808,500	87·02	10,149,000	10·67	2,200,500	2·31	95,158,000	100·00

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