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THE OUTLOOK IN IRELAND.

THE OUTLOOK IN IRELAND:

THE CASE FOR DEVOLUTION AND
CONCILIATION.

BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
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AUTHOR'S NOTE.

It is hoped that this volume may serve a beneficial purpose in explaining the present social, political, and industrial condition of Ireland, and the necessity which exists for reform—reform along several lines, and not exclusively in the system of government; and that the statistical matter, both in the text and in the Appendices, will prove of service during discussions on Irish affairs. An endeavour has been made to give official figures of the latest date bearing on various phases of Irish life, and thus to render the volume useful as a convenient reference-book to Irish matters.

In compiling this volume use has been made, as convenient, of matter which has appeared from time to time in various forms.

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THE OUTLOOK IN IRELAND.



INTRODUCTION.

THE OPPORTUNITY.

NEVER before in the modern history of Ireland has the outlook—political, industrial, and social—been as favourable as at the present moment for a strenuous effort for her regeneration. And yet never before has the situation been so critical. The fate of the country is in the balance. If “the predominant partner” will continue to evidence the desire to deal justly, generously, and intelligently with Ireland; and if Ireland will recognize that desire, and will show prudence, moderation, and a conciliatory spirit, an opportunity will be made for shifting the country from a downward and permanently placing her upon an upward grade. If these conditions are not fulfilled, an opening which may never present itself again will be lost, to the infinite detriment, if not to the absolute destruction, of Ireland. There is no doubt that the people of Great

Britain are favourably disposed towards Ireland. It is true that an attempt was made to inflame their passions against her prior to the General Election of 1906; they were threatened that if they returned a Liberal Government they would be committing the country to a policy of Repeal. The attempt failed. The menace produced no feeling of panic, because the electors in England, Scotland, and Wales realized that it was a false alarm raised to serve party purposes. The bogie was all the more transparent to their eyes, because the public in Great Britain remembered all the incidents which preceded Mr. Wyndham's resignation of the office of Chief Secretary; and accepted fully the assurances of the Liberal leaders that, whatever their ultimate aspirations might be, their immediate practical policy was to take up the threads of Irish administration at the point at which Mr. Wyndham had been compelled to lay them down, and to endeavour so to mould the administration gradually and on well-considered lines as to render Irish government in accord with Irish ideas. All immediate danger from this foolish attempt of "official Unionism" is past; and the Irish people have the satisfaction of knowing that they have in the new Parliament a huge majority, honestly desirous of doing justice to their country.

The principal items in the programme agreed upon between Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell, and presumably concurred in by Mr. Arthur Balfour, were the solution of the Land Question; the co-ordinate control and direction of Boards and other administrative agencies; the settlement of the education problem; the promotion of material improvement and administrative conciliation; the consolidation and increase of existing grants for Irish local purposes; the development of transit for agricultural and other products, "possibly by guarantees to railways on the Canadian model," &c.¹

Some of these projects have been already carried out; and the Government are pledged to take up the remainder. They are pledged, above all, to bring in a measure according to Ireland a large extension of self-governing power. They may be confidently expected to take a wise, just, and perhaps even a generous view of Ireland's circumstances, and to be ready to do all in their power to foster and encourage the policy of conciliation upon which everything depends.

The burden of responsibility for the future of the country rests, therefore, less upon the Government and the people of Great Britain than upon

¹ See Appendix VI.

the inhabitants of Ireland. By the exercise of self-control ; by bearing in mind the legislative limitations of any Government in dealing with reform, and with all the phases of an intricate problem ; by preserving the peaceful condition of the country, and refusing to lend themselves to any form of unconstitutional agitation, they can give the Government the powerful assistance which is essential for the successful fulfilment of the policy to which they are committed.

The sound policy of moderation and conciliation makes progress, gradually it is true, but more rapidly than external circumstances may seem to indicate. The whole policy has met with bitter opposition ; no stone has been left unturned which can be used to arouse religious and political animosity in Great Britain against the Irish people ; and no means have been neglected of causing dissension in Ireland. The struggle is a hard one, and spectators must bear in mind that vehemence of expression on the part of extremists is likely to rise in proportion to the headway that conciliation makes. Is it too much to hope that in such a crisis Irishmen who really and truly desire to see their country happy and prosperous will adopt a large-minded attitude towards each other ; will deal fairly by one another ; will honestly co-operate in avoiding causes of friction, and in discouraging any recurrence of agitation and any

semblance of disorder which can be so distorted and exaggerated as to hamper a Government which, apart from all party issues, is, I believe, honestly anxious to do all in its power to help Ireland to rescue herself from the misfortunes which have so long afflicted her ?

To hold out the open hand of fellowship one to another ; to meet "the predominant partner" half-way, and show a desire to become an active, prosperous, useful member of that partnership ; to put aside personal jealousies, sectional quarrels, and animosities of class ; to cultivate a sense of proportion, and recognize limitations ; to be practical and have the wisdom to take and make the most of what will be of inestimable advantage to their country, even though it may fall short of that which many of them consider their due ; to hold their country's welfare above all things dear ; to place the national cause before party, the community before self ; to stand fast by the great principle of conciliation—that is the part Irishmen must play if they would seize an opportunity which may never occur again to give their common country a chance of re-establishing herself ?

What can Ireland do ? She can be conciliatory, willing to believe that justice will follow upon reasonable demands, and prosperity upon justice.

What can Great Britain do? If the British people will meet the Irish people half-way; if they will recognize, respond to, and cherish the feeling of confidence in Parliament that has grown up in the sister island during the last few years; if they will back up the Government, they have before them now a unique opportunity of gradually improving the whole economic and social circumstances of Ireland, of effecting a wholesome change in the relations between the two islands, and of greatly strengthening the whole fabric of the Empire.

I do not say that an opportunity exists of settling for ever "the Irish question." Matters of so general and broad a character can never be said to be settled; finality in the requirements and career of a community is impossible, save in its extinction. So long as the Empire and the United Kingdom last, there will be Imperial, British, and Irish questions, and problems arising out of them to be dealt with. But I do say that we have now before us a chance, such as has not offered itself for a century and more, of settling all the more acute problems of the day, and of establishing far happier relations between Great Britain and Ireland than have previously existed.

To attain such a frame of mind, and to form such a conception of Ireland as will enable them to seize this opportunity, the British people

must recognize one fact, and divest themselves of one delusion. The great and fundamental mistake that the English people have made is in attempting to turn Ireland into England. Since Ireland was handed over to England in the year 1155, every effort has been made to extirpate the Irish race, and to preserve the purity of the Anglo-Norman blood. With marvellous but mistaken pertinacity England has laboured to anglicize Ireland for some eight hundred years, and she has failed. Has not the experiment been tried long enough? It is unnecessary, surely, to investigate causes, to set out reasons why Ireland has not, does not, and never will become English. For a practical, common-sense people, the fact should be sufficient. No means were left untried to stamp out the originality and distinctive characteristics of race. Land was confiscated over and over again, Irish surnames were interdicted, the use of the Irish language was forbidden, native costumes and customs were placed under the ban of the law and of the Church. But the Irish not only remained Irish, but assimilated the Anglo-Norman element as fast as it was introduced. That is the fact, and the English people have got to admit it. They must realize that they cannot anglicize Ireland; and, having admitted that fact, they will come to the conclusion that they must proceed to work on other lines.

The British public—not enlightened men, of course, but the general public—have, I think, considerable difficulty in realizing the intense pride of the Irish people in their nationality and the justification that exists for it. They do not understand what there is to be proud of, or why the Irish people should not be delighted to merge themselves in the wealth and strength of Great Britain. They are under a delusion, and the delusion is due to historical ignorance. They forget that for centuries Ireland was in all respects in the forefront of western civilization. They do not remember that during critical ages Ireland held aloft and sheltered the struggling flame of Christianity. They are ignorant of the fact that when art and learning were well-nigh extinguished in Europe, they were cherished, nurtured, and kept alive in Ireland. They do not understand the natural pride in the mere fact that, in spite of every effort to deprive her of nationhood, Ireland remains Ireland to this day. To come down to modern times, they neglect the evidence of capacity for trade and commerce displayed by the Irish people, and the means whereby trade and commerce were crushed out. Physical courage appears to be the only quality inherent in the race which is recognized. For the rest, though it is admitted that Ireland has given us great soldiers, administrators, and statesmen, the

traditional stage Irishman, a sufficiently ridiculous, capering person, seems to set the general estimate of the race. It is a very false one. The Irish people have characteristics and a history of which they are proud, and of which they have every right to be proud. If the people of Great Britain will acknowledge the fact that Ireland cannot be converted into so many shires of England, and if they will rid themselves of the delusion that no real justification exists for pride in Irish nationality, they will infallibly come to three sound conclusions:— Firstly, that if Ireland is to develop, she must be allowed to develop on her own lines; secondly, that for the venom in the sting of memory, respect, forbearance, and just dealing are the only antidotes; and, thirdly, that it is only by admitting and encouraging the sense of her own nationality that a feeling of larger nationality and true Imperial sentiment in Ireland can be created and nurtured into healthy life.

CHAPTER I.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

UNDER the provisions of the Land Act of 1903, 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, were 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 had been sinking deeper and deeper in misfortune: it had reached the point at which it had to be decided whether the downward tendency was to continue to the inevitable and most melancholy end, or whether a supreme effort should be made to lift the country out of national bankruptcy in man-power, intelligence,

and material prosperity which so imminently threatened 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 Ireland's case the origins of distressing symptoms have become so obscured that physicians are apt to confound cause with 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, Ireland has been slipping swiftly downward in all that goes to make for physical health, intellectual progress, and material well-being. It is very desirable, 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.

It is necessary, in the first place, to note one of the most curious and pathetic features in Irish history to-day. By some strange misunderstanding the British people have come to regard the Irish as a race lacking in the primary virtues which make for happiness and prosperity, a people indolent, thriftless, and inordinately addicted to drink. Never was a race more cruelly libelled. The Irishman is a hard worker in every quarter of the globe; and if he does not always display the same energy at home, in common fairness his circumstances and environment, insufficient food, insanitary dwellings, and the general depression brooding over the country, must be taken into account. If the people could be persuaded that bread and stewed tea form a bad diet for adults and are poison for children, it would perhaps be as beneficial as many Acts of Parliament. The average Irishman is no more a model of sobriety and virtue than the average man to be met with in other parts of the United Kingdom. Ireland is not absolutely exceptional. Ireland is inhabited, as are England, Scotland, and Wales, by human beings of all sorts, and in common with Great Britain she possesses an unfortunate variety of men and women in almost every stage of social degeneration: but the Irish are

not particularly addicted to drink; they are distinctly less criminally inclined than the inhabitants of Great Britain; and in no country in the world have the people reached a higher standard of morality. In fact, the casual visitor to Ireland, who spends a few weeks away from the beaten track in some Irish village, is usually impressed with the extreme dulness of life, and is invariably struck by the rigid rectitude with which the moral code is observed. This characteristic of country life in Ireland has even been put forward in partial explanation of the great flood of emigration to America. It is said that Irish life is so deadly monotonous, is so lacking in all the allurements and attractions of modern civilization, and so devoid of all the pleasures which are gained by social intercourse, that the young people welcome emigration in the hope not only that the new world will right the balance of the old, but that in a new environment they may find life more varied and attractive. Be this as it may, let us recognize that the Irish are not a race of shiftless drunkards.

It may come as a surprise to the virtuous Englishman, who accepts this charge against the people of the neighbouring island, that the Irishman drinks less than the people of any other part of the United Kingdom. This statement is not made on *ex-parte* evidence, but is based upon the figures prepared by the

Rev. Dr. Dawson Burns, the well-known Temperance advocate. He has compiled three most interesting tables in order to show the extent to which each division of the Kingdom contributed to the expenditure of £164,167,941 during the year 1905. From these statistics it will be seen that in Scotland the consumption of spirits is 1·6 gallon per head of the population annually, or twice as great per head of the population as it is in England, while it exceeds that of Ireland by ·6 gallon per head, the Scotsman spending on spirits 16s. 3d. per head during the year more than the Irishman. Contrary to popular belief, Ireland consumes a considerable quantity of malt liquor, although the figure falls much below the consumption of England.

ENGLAND.

Population, 34,152,977.

Liquors.	Quantities Consumed.	Per Head.	Expenditure.	Per Head.
		Gals.		
British Spirits (gallons) ...	22,305,046	—	£29,554,186	—
Other Spirits „ ...	5,496,567	—	7,282,951	—
Total Spirits (gallons) ...	27,801,613	·8	£36,837,137	£1 1 6
Beer (barrels) ...	29,670,937	31·3	£88,812,961	£2 12 2
Wine (gallons) ...	10,153,759	·3	9,138,383	0 5 4
Other Liquors (gallons) ...	14,000,000	·4	1,400,000	0 0 10
			£136,388,481	£3 19 10

The consumption of beer in England is estimated by adding one-fourth of the quantity paying duty in Scotland and Ireland to the quantity paying duty in England.

SCOTLAND.

Population, 4,676,603.

Liquors.	Quantities Consumed.	Per Head.	Expenditure.	Per Head.
		Gals.		
British Spirits (gallons) ...	6,667,156	—	£8,833,982	—
Other Spirits „ ...	689,143	—	913,115	—
Total Spirits (gallons) ...	7,356,299	1·6	£9,747,097	£2 1 8
Beer (barrels) ...	1,188,929	9·0	£3,566,787	£0 15 3
Wine (gallons) ...	1,194,560	·3	1,075,104	0 4 7
Other Liquors (gallons) ...	500,000	·01	50,000	0 0 3
			£14,438,988	£3 1 9

IRELAND.

Population, 4,390,208.

Liquors.	Quantities Consumed.	Per Head.	Expenditure.	Per Head.
		Gals.		
British Spirits (gallons) ...	3,626,780	—	£4,805,417	—
Other Spirits „ ...	585,124	—	775,289	—
Total Spirits (gallons) ...	4,211,854	1·0	£5,580,706	£1 5 5
Beer (barrels) ...	2,390,738	2·0	£7,172,214	£1 12 8
Wine (gallons) ...	597,280	·1	537,552	0 2 6
Other Liquors (gallons) ...	500,000	·1	50,000	0 0 3
			£13,340,472	£3 0 10

While the average expenditure in the United Kingdom in 1905 was equal to £3 15s. 11½d., the average in each division of the Kingdom was:—England, £3 19s. 10d.; Scotland, £3 1s. 9d.; and Ireland, £3 0s. 10d. England spent more per head than Scotland or Ireland on beer, and Scotland more per head on spirits than England or Ireland.

Putting aside "wine and other liquors" as not affecting popular consumption, the consumption of spirits and beer is per head of population as follows:—

England, Spirits ...	£1	1	6	Beer ...	£2	12	2
Scotland, „ ...	2	1	8	„ ...	0	15	3
Ireland, „ ...	1	5	5	„ ...	1	12	8

In England the outlay is about two-and-a-half times greater on beer than on spirits. Ireland spends about one-and-a-quarter more on beer than on spirits. Scotland spends nearly three times as much on spirits as on beer. Consequently, Ireland compares well with the other divisions of the United Kingdom, and the community are beer-drinkers rather than spirit-consumers.

The facts as to the drink traffic in Ireland have been stated with considerable force by Sir Horace Plunkett, who has had exceptional opportunities of studying the question on the spot in all its varied aspects. In his book, "Ireland in the New Century," he makes the following references, which deserve the widest publicity, and it may be hoped will serve to correct the popular picture of the traditional "Paddy," who in the past has figured with such deplorable frequency on the stage:—

Now the drink habit in Ireland differs from that of the other parts of the United Kingdom. The Irishman is, in my belief, physiologically less subject to the craving for alcohol than the Englishman—a fact which is partially attributable, I should

say, to the less animal dietary to which he is accustomed. By far the greater proportion of the drinking which retards our progress is of a festive character. It takes place at fairs and markets, sometimes, even yet, at "wakes"—those ghastly parodies on the blessed consolation of religion in bereavement. It is largely due to the almost universal sale of liquor in the country shops "for consumption on the premises," an evil the demoralising effects of which are an hundredfold greater than those of the "grocers' licenses" which Temperance reformers so strenuously denounce. It is an evil for the existence of which nothing can be said; but it has somehow escaped the effective censure of the Church.

The truth is that Ireland spends less per head on drink than England or Scotland; the Irish are no more weak-willed—no more lacking in self-restraint—than are their neighbours. I am not arguing against Temperance reform, far from it; and I believe that better food, healthier surroundings, more prosperous conditions will tend in that most desirable direction, for the depression into which the country has sunk contributes in no small measure to the present rate of consumption of alcohol.

Life in Ireland is led under circumstances of great depression. For over sixty years the Irish population has been wasting away. There has been, and is still, a double leakage which none of the measures hitherto elaborated have effectively 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 those who, physically and mentally, represent the best

of the population. Year by year, an unending stream of emigrant ships has been bearing away from Ireland to the American continent the finest brain and muscle of the country. These people in their millions have looked to an alien land for better conditions of life. Down to the year 1845 the population of Ireland was steadily growing—possibly at too high a rate considering the country's resources—and the prosperity of the nation generally was increasing. In that year the inhabitants numbered 8,296,061. How serious the drain of emigration 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 & 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 1841, Ireland had over 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 4,391,565)—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 nearly all 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 correspond to the lowest industrial standard.

The evil results of this artificial, extravagant, and unnecessary flow of emigration are not by any means confined to Ireland. The actual decline of population is a direct loss to the United Kingdom, and the direction in which the flood of emigration sets is an indirect loss to

Great Britain, and a direct loss to the Empire. A great proportion of British emigrants settle within the Empire. The bulk of those who sail from Irish ports find a new home in the United States. All these many millions are a direct loss to Canada with her illimitable supply of cultivable land; and are an indirect but very substantial loss to Great Britain, owing to the fact that they go to swell a population buying from us at the rate of 5s. per head, instead of adding to a population buying from us at the rate of £1 18s. 8d. per head.

And the effects of sentiment must not be despised. The majority of Irish emigrants desert their country with hearts hardened against those whom they hold to be responsible for the diseases which afflict it, and go out into the world disseminating the story of Irish grievances and English injustice. The flow of emigrants from Ireland is consequently proving not only a fatal drain upon the land which gave them birth, and which they still continue to regard with natural affection, but it involves also a dead loss to British manufactures and those employed by them; and, as a large proportion of the exiles go out into other countries with their hearts rebellious against British rule and British institutions, it cannot fail to be a source of anxiety to all those who value good relations with the great Republic across the sea, who desire to draw

closer the bonds uniting the component parts of our Empire, and who attach inestimable value to the homogeneity of the English-speaking race.

Owing to the drain of population outwards of men and women in the prime of life, Ireland has become the country of old men and women. In this respect its position in the British Empire is unique. Let readers ponder on the fact that Ireland has a larger proportion of aged than any other country in the King's dominions, because the young and energetic have fled to other lands in search of happiness and fortune. In Ireland, out of every 1,000 of the population, there are sixty-four men and sixty-three women of sixty-five years of age or upwards; while in England and Wales the figures are forty-two and fifty-one respectively; and in Scotland, forty-one and fifty-six. On this question the compilers of the "Census of the British Empire" state:

The effect of migration on the age-constitution of a population is considerable. For example, the low proportion of children and the high proportion of old people enumerated in Ireland are mainly accounted for by excessive emigration.

And there is another terrible leakage 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 10,000 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 King's County, 69; in Wexford, Tipperary, and Carlow, 68; and in Westmeath 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 between Ulster and Munster, and between 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 overuse. The agricultural labourer, leading a monotonous life on a small wage, and 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, King's 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.

The Census Commissioners in their Report make no attempt to explain away the tragic

significance of these figures ; and the Inspectors of Lunacy in their Report for 1905 add that if to the number of the insane (23,365) under care on the 31st December, 1905, be added the number of idiots and lunatics at large, according to the last census, the total 27,233 represents 620 per hundred thousand of the population. The Inspectors have instituted a special inquiry with reference to the increase in the number of registered insane, and their figures reveal that between 1880 and 1904, during the whole of which period the law was carefully administered, there was an increase of 1,014 in the total number : while the inmates of District Asylums increased by 9,948, and there was a growth in the number of patients in the Private Asylums and Institutions amounting to 172, the criminal lunatics, on the other hand, decreased by 18, and the insane paupers in workhouses by 193. The Commissioners, in their Report for the year 1904, summed up the situation in the following words :—

The admissions to District Asylums in 1881 numbered 2,502 ; in 1904 they had increased to 3,910. Similarly, in Private Asylums the numbers for 1881 were 145 ; and for 1904 they had increased to 225. It will thus be seen that the proportional increase in the two classes of Institutions during that time was practically the same, being 56 per cent. in the case of the District Asylums, and 55 per cent. in the case of Private Asylums. During the same period, the numbers actually resident in the District Asylums have increased by almost 115 per cent. ; while in the Private Asylums and Institutions they have increased by less than 28 per cent.

In a report dated July 31st, 1906, the Inspectors of Lunatics conveyed to the Lord Lieutenant their views on the growth in the number of insane. They gave a tabulated statement showing for England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, the total number of insane, and the ratio of the insane per 10,000 of the population at each Census since 1871:—

YEAR.	TOTAL NUMBER OF INSANE.			RATIO of the INSANE per 10,000 of the POPULATION.		
	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	Eng- land and Wales.	Scot- land.	Ireland.
1871	69,019	11,413	16,505	30·4	34·0	30·5
1881	84,503	14,397	18,413	32·5	38·5	35·6
1891	97,383	15,462	21,188	33·6	38·4	45·0
1901	132,654	20,291	25,050	40·8	45·4	56·2

In 1851 the proportion in Ireland of registered insane was as low as 15·2, so that in fifty years the proportion has gone up by 41·0 per 10,000 of the population. In spite of these facts, and by arguments which seem to rest on quite insufficient foundation, and to be designed rather to make fact square with theory, the two Inspectors, while admitting that no positive information supports their view, claim:—

Without venturing to affirm that there has been no increase of occurring insanity notwithstanding the great *numerical* increase, so far as the information at our disposal enables

us to form an opinion, we can only conclude that the very great increase which has taken place in the ratio of insanity to the population, as shown both by the Census returns and by the statistics of public institutions, is largely due to the accumulation which is taking place in the public asylums; partly to the reduction of the population by emigration; and partly to the return of emigrants suffering from mental breakdown, who have either come back voluntarily, or have been repatriated by the United States Government in consequence of their not having become naturalized American citizens. The emigration of the strong and healthy members of the community, amongst whom, if they had remained at home, the ratio of insanity would have been very small, not alone increases the ratio of the insane who are left behind, to the general population, but also lowers the general standard of mental and bodily health, by eliminating many of the members of the community who are best fitted to survive and propagate the race.

The increase in numbers has taken place mainly amongst the insane supported out of public rates—the increase amongst the classes who are able to pay, or whose relatives are able to pay, for their maintenance in private institutions, being small in comparison.

An ordinary observer acquainted with Ireland and the conditions of life there would expect that the growth in insanity would have been greatest among the poor—namely, among those living in the centres of greatest depression and privation—and would have accepted the fact as a clear indication of the low condition into which the Irish people have sunk, for the majority of the people in Ireland are undoubtedly “pinched.” It is well to know that the increase has not been great among those comfortably off, and the real

lesson seems to be that the number who are free from biting care and depression must be increased by raising the general level of prosperity throughout the nation.

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, and the inevitable result—deterioration of the race—statistics abundantly support. On the first point, the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have claimed 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 the 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. The Irish rate has sunk to 23·4 per

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.

1,000 living. This rate compares with other countries thus :—

England and Wales	...	...	31'7
Scotland	...	...	31'7
Hungary	...	...	42'3
Roumania	...	...	40'1
Austria	...	...	37'7
Prussia	...	...	37'3
Italy	...	...	36'2
Denmark	...	...	31'2
Norway	...	...	30'6
Belgium	...	...	29'8
Switzerland	...	...	28'6
France	...	...	23'3
Ireland	...	...	23'4

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 summarized 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, in the towns there are over 79,000 tenements of one room, occupied as follows:—

By 1 person	...	...	20,994
2 persons	...	...	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 superficial 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.

There is unfortunately little indication of a permanent turn of the tide of emigration. The best of the population is still anxious to leave. 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 deficient, is overcrowded to a horrible extent, and the labourers in rural districts are badly housed. 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 1905, 11,882 persons died from tuberculosis in Ireland. It now equals a rate of 2·7 per 1,000. Again, though the causes are less obvious, the ravages from cancer are significant. This disease claimed more victims in 1905 (3,291) than ever before—cancer is spreading. Again, take the figures of pauperism; one out of every 100 persons is an inmate of a work-house, and one out of every 44, including those receiving outdoor relief, keeps body and soul together by rate aid; and every-

one 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, which 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 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

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.

in agriculture. Since the total population is not quite 4,400,000, 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 earnings in seven counties are less than 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 Irish agricultural labourers—many of them with wives and families to support—can keep body and soul together on such a small income without assistance, is one of the marvels of the time;

were it not for this, the expenditure on Poor Law Relief would be higher than it is. The Irishman may, it is true, be able to add a little to the sum-total of the means 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 homes, 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 of choice. It is in the face of these deplorable facts that I appeal to moderate men in Ireland to put aside their differences, and to do something for the salvation of their country ;

to endeavour at any rate to enlighten the English people and convince them that, unless remedial measures are undertaken, Ireland must still continue her downward career, and become an increasing, and eventually an intolerable, because an unprofitable, burden upon them. The outlook is not without hope.

The Land Act of 1903 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 selling their estates 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. Even to-day, there is practically little difference of opinion as to facts—as to the condition of the country and the diseases which afflict it. Except in the eyes of an impossible few, 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.

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.

It is the habit of the Unionist Press generally, and of some Unionist speakers, to paint in lurid colours a grossly distorted picture of the criminal condition of Ireland. Any outrage of an agrarian character, any speeches made by irresponsible persons irritated by local incidents, are exaggerated and circulated far and wide, with the intention, apparently, to give Englishmen the idea that Ireland is in a state of extreme unrest, seething with crime. There is nothing in the latest criminal statistics to justify them. Crime of all kinds is diminishing in Ireland, prisons are being shut, and Judges presented with white gloves; while in Scotland, in 1904, 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, 1905, "calls for active measures of reform." Some friction may be looked for in the earlier stages of the working of so great a revolution as that initiated by the Land Act of 1903. Some recrudescence of agrarian crime may, in those circumstances, possibly take place. I trust not, and I believe not; I think the patience, prudence, and wisdom of the people will prevail.

Though 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, it cannot do everything, it cannot remove the cause. Money is required, and the need of money is one of the arguments for legislative and administrative reform. 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.

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, for, in short, developing industries of all kinds, must be preceded by proper facilities which Ireland certainly does not now possess, for marketing the products of those industries; and even then they 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.

CHAPTER II.

PAST 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 vague-

ness 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 colonized 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 connexion 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 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.

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 results. Export duties were imposed on Irish woollen manufactures destined for the English market, of such a character as, with the addition of 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 more 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 Murray¹ 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 some measure of commercial independence. It must be borne in mind that the years of which Miss Murray writes so lucidly were those which followed on the period when commerce in Ireland had

¹ "Commercial Relations between England and Ireland."

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 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 artizan 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 cabinets 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 consequences 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 traders—partly, on larger grounds, by the dread, difficult to realize 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 the policy

was short-sighted 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.

CHAPTER III.

LAND PURCHASE DIFFICULTIES.

It is impossible to appreciate the social and economic state of Ireland, and the changes likely to be wrought by recent legislation, unless the broad lines of the development of the land system are understood, and it is realized that as regards land-tenure, as in many other respects, 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 connexion of landlord and tenant resembled the relationship of tribal chief to tribe, rather than that existing between landowner and tenant-farmer in England. Feudalism gradually developed in England into the existing system, which may be shortly described as a business arrangement, tempered by sentiment and tradition—an arrangement under which the duty of providing permanent capital accompanies the rights of ownership. In Ireland the transition from tribal rights to feudalism, and from feudalism to absolute ownership in the modern sense, was never acquiesced in; and, in spite of modern

requirements, the necessary changes of tenure and custom took place only partially; the physical, social, and economic conditions of the country being against them. 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 conferred 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 series of twenty-five enactments,—*twenty-five attempts by England to solve the Irish land problem!!*—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 demoralized 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 has conferred 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 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 should be able to obtain under the Act—but are not obtaining—what they greatly need, capital for the improvement of those lands. There are many and excellent reasons why the resident gentry should continue to live in Ireland; and, fortunately, the reports of the Estates Commissioners show that they are continuing to be resident, farming their own land, and retaining the amenities of their position. They will find, as the

country settles down, as large a field for pleasure as and a larger scope for usefulness than they have hitherto enjoyed.

The Land Act of 1903 was incomplete in one respect; and is not working satisfactorily in others. It was incomplete in so far as it made no provision for the agricultural labourers. This deficiency has been made good by the measure which has been passed by Parliament. It is unsatisfactory so far as it relates to the congested portions of Ireland—the uneconomic West—and the reinstatement of evicted tenants. These two problems to some extent hang together. In the latter, money will probably be found to be the best solvent. The quantity of land that can, under any circumstances, be purchased is not likely to suffice to satisfy all the requirements of migration, the enlargement of uneconomic holdings, and the settlement on other holdings of sitting tenants of evicted farms. It is probable also that in most cases such tenants would prefer the equivalent in cash to a farm in some part of the country in which they are strangers. With the cash they could wait the opportunity to purchase a tenant's interest or a free-hold farm in their own original locality, or they could invest it in some other business. The total fund at the disposition of the Estates Commissioners for the purposes of enlargement of

holdings, migration, the improvement of estates purchased, and of the restoration of evicted tenants, amounted, when the Act came into operation, to £250,000. Such a sum is manifestly inadequate. The whole unexpended balance should be devoted to the evicted tenants. Money laid out on reinstatement is a good investment, for neither the purchase clauses of the Act nor the general policy of peace and conciliation can have fair play until a question so provocative of irritation is set at rest. Down to March 31st last 5,287 applications had been received, and of these 5,077 were applications coming within the Act. According to the Commissioners' report only 103 of these tenants had been reinstated or provided with holdings by the Land Commission, while 284 are known to have been reinstated or provided with holdings by landlords. The Estates Commissioners believe that others have been reinstated by the landlords or otherwise without their knowledge. But so far as the Commissioners are concerned the sections of the Act dealing with evicted tenants have been practically a dead letter.

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 bankers' 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

lamentable fact that its salutary operations are seriously 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 is vexatious to both parties, and this should by some means be avoided. 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 $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the purchase price pending completion, and are naturally anxious to enjoy without protracted delay the benefits of the Act. Owners cannot make a loss of the difference between $3\frac{1}{2}$ and $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 per cent. payable on mortgage debt. It is not to be expected that mortgagees will reduce interest to $3\frac{1}{2}$. 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 period elapsing between the sanction of the agreement and the payment of the purchase price; if administrative machinery does not work with smooth rapidity; if unnecessary attention to minute details is suffered to produce interminable delays, a situation may be created which will seriously imperil the results of an Act so potential for good. It is a thousand pities that the Land Commission were not em-

powered to guarantee title, charging a sufficient fine to create an insurance fund. That agriculture will improve under the operation of the Act of 1903, 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.

Unhappily the whole of the legal machinery connected with the solution of the Irish Land problem is clogged. The work of fixing judicial rents is greatly in arrears. During last year the entire number of fair rents disposed of by the Commissioners, Special Commission, and the Civil Bill Courts was 5,513; but the records show an arrear of undisposed cases amounting to no fewer than 17,816. From these figures it will be seen that the business of fixing judicial rents is hopelessly behindhand, to the extent of about two years' work at the present rate of progress. This must have a most deterrent effect upon tenants, particularly as the hearing of appeals is also most seriously in arrears. In 1905 3,505 appeals were heard, and 2,197 were withdrawn, making a total of 5,702 appeals which were disposed of. Whether this large number of appeals were withdrawn because the applicants realized the delay entailed, or whether they were withdrawn

owing to any action taken under the Land Act of 1903 by landlords or tenants, is not revealed. The main point is that, including withdrawals and appeals which were adjudicated upon, 5,702 were dealt with, and over 9,000 remained unheard on March 31st last. The cumulative effect of these two delays is very appreciable. A tenant coming to the Land Court to have a judicial rent fixed has the prospect of waiting two years for a decision; and if he or his landlord gives notice of appeal, there is a prospect of over two years before a final decision is arrived at. In view of the proceedings under the Land Act of 1903 these facts are noteworthy.

Turning to actual Land Purchase, from the latest Report of the Estates Commissioners, bringing the story of their operations down to March 31st last, it appears that at that date applications had been received for loans on land sales amounting, in round figures, to £35,500,000 since the Act came into operation on November 1st, 1903, a period of two years and five months. These figures are significant when it is borne in mind that under all previous Land Acts the total sum advanced amounted to only £25,000,000. This rush, if I may use the word, to take advantage of the measure of 1903, bears conclusive testimony to the strong wish of the landlords, on the one hand, to sell, and the tenants, on the other, to buy; and it might be

imagined that, in the face of a great national response of this character to the enactment of Parliament, the executive authority would strain every effort to further the work of social amelioration which must result from the conclusion of the sales of those 3,596 estates, embracing 97,245 holdings, included in these applications. First impressions always make a deep mark; and, in the interests of the future of Ireland, it was most desirable that the operation of the Act from the very first should proceed rapidly and smoothly, in order to preserve the feeling of trust in the good intentions of the Imperial Parliament which the Land Conference and the passage of the Land Act had engendered. The summary return of the proceedings of the Estates Commissioners shows that these legitimate anticipations have not been realized. Down to the end of March last, loans had been sanctioned in connexion with only just over one thousand of these estates, and the actual amount of money paid over had reached a sum of less than ten millions, or a little over one quarter of the total sum applied for. In the first two years and five months, the Commissioners were apparently able to deal only with something over three millions sterling a year, even with their present staff; whereas, when the Act was introduced, it was confidently hoped that the minimum sum would be five millions in each of the three first

years, and that subsequently the amount would be increased. When the Land Act was introduced, the Government expressed a belief that its operations might be completed within a period of fifteen years, and that, by that time, the whole of the land of Ireland would have passed from the present landlords into the hands of the occupying owners. Unless, however, the present rate of progress of the Commissioners is very greatly expedited, it would seem probable that the process of transfer will still be in operation thirty years hence. During all this period not only will Ireland remain in an unrestful state, inevitable during the progress of such a colossal and unexampled measure of land reform, but the country will fail to gain those collateral benefits from the Land Act of which a good deal was heard when the measure was under discussion. On the introduction of the Land Bill, Mr. Wyndham stated that economies, amounting to a quarter of a million a year, would be carried out in the succeeding five years in the administration of Irish Government; and the anticipation, whether well founded or not, was entertained that this "perpetual" reduction would be only the beginning of an era of economical administration in the central government of Ireland. It is important to know what progress has been made in carrying out this policy of administrative economy which was

to have proceeded *pari passu* with the operation of the Land Purchase Act.

Again, another avenue of economy is closed so long as the operation of the Land Act is delayed. The Land Judge's Court and the Land Commission are costing annually upwards of £133,000 and nearly £180,000 respectively; and the Congested Districts Board, so far as land purchase is concerned, is painfully and expensively crawling along the same path as the Estates Commissioners. The functions of the Land Judge's Court, the Land Commission, the Estates Commission, and the Congested Districts Board overlap; they are all pursuing similar objects with separate staffs. It is evident that the sooner the tenants become occupying owners, the sooner the expensive operations of the Land Judge's Court and of the Congested Districts Board, and the rent-fixing work of the Land Commissioners, will be brought to a close. These are points to which adequate attention has not, I think, been given hitherto.

Turning to a more detailed examination of the proceedings of the Estates Commissioners down to the end of March last, several points of great importance are suggested as meriting official elucidation. It will be seen that almost all the applications received by the Commissioners have been for direct sales between

landlord and tenant; and in only fifty-four cases have applications been received under sections 6 and 8. These sections of the Land Act were originally regarded as of great importance, in that the former authorized the Commissioners to buy estates for re-sale to the tenants, and the latter to acquire untenanted land for redistribution, so as to render uneconomic holdings economic. It was thought that these facilities would promote a swift and equitable adjustment of the basis of sales; whereas, experience seems to have shown that these sections of the Act have been comparatively inoperative.

According to the report of the Estates Commissioners, only 54 cases of sales to them have been concluded. This failure under section 6 of the Act has very prejudicially affected the reinstatement of evicted tenants. It is to be accounted for—at any rate to a large extent—by the relative disadvantage to both owners and occupiers, involved in sales of that description as compared with sales direct from landlord to tenants. In the latter case the status of the tenants is changed on signing agreements. They cease to pay rent, and pay, in lieu thereof, interest on the purchase price to the Estates Commissioners. The status of the owner is also changed. He receives interest on the purchase price from the Estates Commissioners until the money is allocated. In the former case rent is

payable during the whole period—possibly many years—over which proceedings may extend, even though owners and occupiers may have provisionally agreed upon terms. The acceptance by the owner of an offer from the Commissioners does not constitute a binding contract: an indefinite period may elapse before absolute completion, after which any rent due is uncollectable by process of law. On completion, the Commissioners have to deposit the purchase-money; they cannot, therefore, complete a transaction until they have the cash in hand. These causes discourage sales to the Estates Commissioners, and as a consequence retard the restoration of evicted tenants. The Land Conference, when it met again in the autumn of 1906, recommended—and I need hardly add I entirely agree—such alterations in the rules governing the Estates Commissioners, or, if necessary, such amendment of the Act, as will remove the disadvantages to all parties at present entailed in sales to the Commissioners.

Under sub-section 4 of section 6, the Estates Commissioners were also given power in the case of a congested estate to certify to the Lord Lieutenant that the purchase and re-sale of the estate were desirable with a view to the wants and circumstances of the tenants. In this circumstance the Commissioners were empowered to purchase the estate for a price to

be agreed upon; and the condition as to the re-sale being made without a prospect of loss might be relaxed to such an extent as the Lord Lieutenant might determine. Under this important provision little has yet been done, while under section 7 only sixteen estates have been acquired from the Land Judge.

Notwithstanding that free grants or repayable advances may now be made out of the reserve fund in the case of sales by landlords to tenants, as in the case of sales to the Land Commission, and that the area of useful work has been thereby considerably extended, during the period covered by the Act a total sum amounting to only about £14,000 had been expended. Of this sum £9,122 was given by way of free grants.

In spite of the fact that the staff at their disposition has been considerably increased, the Estates Commissioners, even now, are not keeping pace with the fresh applications. In the year ending March 31st last the advances made amounted to £5,202,000, while the applications for advances, mostly for direct sales, lodged during the same period of twelve months amounted to £15,854,000. The net result of the operations under the Land Act, with reference to the direct sales to tenants only, is that, whereas at the end of the financial year 1905 the applications undisposed of amounted

to just over twelve and a half millions, on March 31st last the arrears were nearly twice as heavy.

All the sections of the Land Act have failed to become actively operative. This means that in one of its main purposes the Land Act is not carrying out the wishes of Parliament, and that the wounds and bitterness consequent upon a protracted agrarian struggle are not being healed and assuaged as Parliament intended that they should be. Small progress is being made in dealing with bankrupt estates in the Land Judge's Court; and comparatively little has been done with a view to improving estates.

The Act of 1903 must not be regarded as merely an Act to facilitate the sale and purchase of land. It was designed to make a quick and permanent settlement of a great national question, and, as such, it has to deal with three distinct phases of that question: (1) With the transfer of ownership generally—the sale and purchase of estates which may be designated economic; (2) With sale and purchase in the uneconomic districts, mainly in the West, and with the betterment of the population in those districts; (3) With the reinstatement of evicted tenants. Viewing the operations of the Act from the impersonal standpoint of the State, it may safely be said that, in regard to the first phase, it is working fairly well. It may be

that, owing to a natural reaction against ill-advised attempts to "bear" the market, prices are ruling high; but, be that as it may, the State is perfectly safe. Advances anywhere within the zones are well secured on what may be termed economic holdings. The number of applications proves the willingness of owners to sell, and of occupiers to buy; and, were it not for the vexatious complications and miraculous delays that occur, the Act might be pronounced successful so far as phase one is concerned. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of phases two and three. Little progress has been made in the uneconomic West. The problem is different from that existing throughout the country generally, and consequently requires different treatment. There the Commissioners have to deal with the occupiers of numerous small holdings, paying rent, as is alleged, of the character of an accommodation rent. The tenants are anxious to buy, actuated by many motives, and among them the desire to escape, even momentarily, from pressing difficulties. It may be only a leap from the frying-pan into the fire for them, poor creatures, but there is respite during the leap. Purchase relieves them from the strangle of arrears, and they may be willing to buy on almost any terms. If the terms are based on a rent in excess of the actual value of the land, it is improbable that an advance would be properly secured, and the

interests of the State must be safeguarded. Rent must be the basis of purchase, and the first step is, as it seems to me, to have fair rents fixed speedily, and at whatever cost, over these impoverished and congested districts. That would enable the lender, whether it be the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board, to estimate the value of the security and the amount that could be advanced upon it. In the neighbourhood of these uneconomic holdings lie considerable tracts of good land, let to graziers on the eleven months' system, which does not constitute a tenancy. A sufficiency of such untenanted land is urgently required by the Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners, and is, in fact, necessary for them if anything is to be done towards the improvement of these uneconomic regions. A good price should be paid; but inflated prices, due to a corner in land, are not justifiable. Whether terms of purchase are calculated on accommodation rents, and exorbitant prices are asked for untenanted land, or not, it is impossible, in default of evidence, to say. As regards the second failure of the Act—the reinstatement of evicted tenants—here again the cause of failure cannot be postulated owing to lack of evidence; but it seems clear the Commissioners are starved for want of funds. It would be manifestly unjust to ask a landlord to

restore as tenant a man who had been evicted years ago for non-payment of rent, owing, probably, large arrears. The only result would be that the tenant would in a short time have to be evicted again. Reinstatement should be dependent upon, and preliminary to, purchase. In the case of evicted holdings remaining in the landlord's hands, or under his immediate control, it would be equally unjust to assess the value of the holding on the basis of the former rent. The farm was probably completely run out when the eviction took place, and money—and in many cases large sums of money—may have been laid out upon it since it came into the landlord's hands. It is only equitable that a purchase price should be based upon the farm as it stands. I admit that I am groping round these subjects in the dark, or, at any rate, in the dusk. Evidence, which is scanty now, will doubtless be abundant when Lord Dudley's Royal Commission has concluded its labours. All that I wish to emphasize is that the Act of 1903 was passed as a great instrument of settlement, and the credit of the State pledged for one hundred and twenty millions on that presumption; and that as a settlement it is bound to fail unless, either through its operations or by some other means, the restoration of evicted tenants and improved economic conditions in the West are effected.

The financial aspects of the Land Act are most unsatisfactory. Last spring a further issue of Irish Land Stock was announced, postponed, and then hastily decided upon, with the result that the Stock already issued was depressed; and when the Chancellor of the Exchequer changed his mind, and suddenly asked the money market to absorb seven millions of the new Stock, the price had fallen to about £89 per £100 stock. Is it not due to the Irish people, and not less to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom, that they should be given some explanation of the vicissitudes through which this particular Stock has passed, and the reasons which have really led to the delay in the working of the Act? On the one hand, it is repeatedly stated that the Land Act cannot be worked more quickly, owing to want of funds; yet it appears that on February 26th last, whereas cash amounting to over eleven and a half millions had been raised by the issue of Stock, the Commissioners at that date had paid over only eight and a half millions. The deplorable fact is that this sum of eleven and a half millions was obtained at a loss of over one and a half million sterling, the issue price ranging from £92 to £87. From the Land Act itself it appears that this Stock enjoys a security equal to that of Consols, in that, under section 29, it is laid down that "the dividends

on the Stock shall be paid out of the income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, and, if that income is insufficient, *shall be charged on and paid out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom or the growing produce thereof.*" Consequently the Stock is issued on the same security as Consols, but returns to the investor five shillings per cent. more interest. In spite of this equality of security and advantage in rate of interest, this Stock, raised for the purposes of the Land Purchase Act, is to-day quoted on the Stock Exchange within a fraction of the same price as Consols, and Ireland is poorer to-day, including the latest issue of stock, to the extent of over two millions sterling. Under the Land Act this loss apparently falls, not upon the people of the United Kingdom, but upon the Irish Development Grant. Surely, if the security upon which the stock rests had been adequately explained at the time of its issue, there is no reason why this colossal loss, which on the last issue amounted to as much as 11 per cent., should not have been almost entirely avoided. In the Act the Stock was officially described as "Guaranteed Two and Three-quarters per Cent. Stock," but it has become known as "Irish Land Stock." By what ill fate has Ireland's unhappy condition become associated with a security the value of which depends in

no way on Ireland's prosperity, but enjoys the same security as Consols while returning an appreciably higher rate of interest to the investor? This is a matter which deserves careful inquiry, in order that steps may be taken to determine this ruinous mode of financing the Land Act. If, instead of creating "Guaranteed Stock at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.," the Government had provided the money required by issuing Consols, a large part of the loss to which I have called attention would have been saved. By the time the operation of the Land Act is completed, certainly not less than 120 millions sterling will have to be obtained from the money market, and, at the present rate, *an unnecessary loss of upwards of 12 millions sterling will be incurred.* As the market price of Consols is now just under £90, the Guaranteed Stock, issued under the Land Act, and carrying 5s. per cent. higher interest with the same security, should stand at about £100. Surely it is time the Government glanced round to see whether the continuance of this drain upon the Irish funds cannot be avoided.

Evidence is accumulating to show that, from first to last, the administration of this great Act of social amelioration has been greatly and unnecessarily retarded, and the sympathies of the Irish people in a large measure alienated, owing to the manner in which the Act is being

carried out; and I appeal for a full and complete statement which will set at rest the anxiety which is naturally felt as month succeeds month and apparently little progress is made. In particular I would appeal to the Government to state whether the loss incurred in floating the Stock has been in their opinion unavoidable, and if so, why? and whether the delay in working the Act is due to legal difficulties, which Irish solicitors deny, to lack of staff under the Commissioners, which the Government have repeatedly promised to increase, or to inadequate funds, as has been frequently and, as it seems, quite inaccurately represented. In fact, what is the root-cause of the delay?

CHAPTER IV.

IRELAND'S INDUSTRIAL FUTURE.

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 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 with 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. In comparison with Great Britain, Ireland has but little of the best quality of raw material—coal; and in Great Britain the coal is 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. Notwithstanding the proclivities of the people towards almost every form of industry other than agriculture, it is safe to say that the tendency of the new motive-power must have been towards forcing Ireland into the position of a country largely dependent on agriculture; 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 ruthlessly interfered with, there is little doubt that the influence of steam-power and machinery upon the industrial population would have been greatly mitigated. Even if the great industries went under, a transference of labour would have taken place. Ireland would have retained a more or less considerable business in small trades, and in industries of a minor kind. That Ireland could not have become the home of a vast manufacturing community is, I think, true, and due to natural causes, nor do I regret it. 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 and of some coal; a country extremely well adapted to agricultural industries of all kinds, but containing a large 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 under the load of local rates, feeling the burden of indirect taxation more acutely than any of the other units of the United Kingdom, 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.

Though Ireland is essentially an agricultural country, there is no reason why it should not develop many industries, and place them on a footing which would enable their products to compete in the world's markets. Not only in the North, but throughout Ireland, there are to-day a number of struggling industries upon which technical education would have an energizing influence. According to evidence which Mr. Arnold Graves gave before the last Royal Commission on University Education,

¹ If at any moment the British markets are re-opened 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.

the following trades would benefit by the extension of technical education:—

TRADE.	Number following Trade.	TRADE.	Number following Trade.
Linen Manufacturers ...	88,503	Bookbinders ...	1,853
Woollen Trade ...	5,338	Weavers ...	1,823
Cotton Trade ...	2,331	Ship Carpenters ...	1,430
Carpenters ...	23,668	Miners ...	1,382
Boot-makers ...	21,353	Brewers ...	1,367
Tailors ...	16,113	Plasterers ...	1,872
Blacksmiths ...	13,569	Maltsters and Distillers	1,031
Fishermen ...	11,278	Braziers ...	700
Bakers ...	8,931	Basket-makers ...	667
Masons ...	7,058	Wood Turners ...	625
Painters, Glaziers ...	6,065	Lithographers ...	598
Printers ...	4,366	Jewellers ...	406
Coopers ...	4,253	Glass Manufacturers ...	358
Ship- and Boat-builders ...	2,587	Silk Weavers...	369
Stone-dressers ...	2,556	Paper-makers ...	213
Bricklayers ...	3,380	Sail-makers ...	184
Cabinet-makers ...	2,096	Coppersmiths ...	159
Plumbers ...	2,140	Wood-carvers ...	59
Coach-makers ...	1,989	Soap-makers ...	69
Tin-workers ...	1,925		

Apart from these trades, it may be recalled that Ireland possesses fields of coal of good commercial quality, and great potentialities in its water-power, and thousands of miles of peat land, which could be turned to commercial advantage by the fairy hands of science.

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 fertilizers. The by-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, except one to be hereafter mentioned, 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 may surely be possible to do a profitable trade in such articles produced in the South-west of Ireland, if cheap, rapid, and reliable transit is provided. Agriculture is at present terribly handicapped by want of means of communication, uncertain transport, and heavy charges for freight.

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 meat and milk 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, but 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 realized depends 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, are 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 organization 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. High freights discourage agriculture. Old-fashioned methods in agriculture encourage high freights. Manual labour is an expensive item. If railway companies would do their utmost to assist farmers, and if farmers would do their utmost to assist railway companies by bulking their produce, and thereby cheapening the process of handling goods, something might be done to ease the disabilities under which producers now labour; but more energetic measures will be found necessary. 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, in the case of Ireland, precede it. This subject is too large to be gone into here. It has been examined and reported upon in a pamphlet published by the Irish Reform Association, and a Royal Commission is engaged in a thorough investigation of it.

The inefficiency of the Post Office, evidenced by the delays in delivery of small quantities of perishable articles by parcels post, 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

¹ In Great Britain the proportionate burden of direct and indirect taxation is always balanced fairly evenly; but in Ireland 71·2 per cent. (figures for 1906-7) of tax revenue is raised indirectly. (See Appendix II.)

the rich, and Ireland feels it more than Great Britain, for the 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 re-creation of manufacturing industries, perhaps not on the largest scale, 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.

CHAPTER V.

IRELAND'S FINANCIAL BURDENS.¹

FROM debates which have taken place from time to time in the House of Commons upon the financial relations of Great Britain and Ireland, it might be supposed that Ireland was most generously treated in matters of finance. True, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, did admit that the Royal Commission, which investigated this subject about ten years ago, reported, practically unanimously, that the taxable capacity of Ireland was not to be estimated as being more than in the proportion of one to twenty of that of Great Britain; but he proceeded to say that the actual contribution of Ireland towards Imperial purposes was only in the proportion of one to forty-five; and the cheers with which this comparative statement was received would seem to indicate that he was considered to have effectually and satisfactorily disposed of the question. But what has the quota contributed by Ireland

¹ Reprinted with corrections, by permission of the Editor, from *The Nineteenth Century* of July, 1905.

towards. Imperial expenditure to do with the question whether the ever-increasing load of taxation under which her aching shoulders are giving way is or is not too heavy for her to bear? Nothing whatever. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's simple sum has really no bearing upon the contention that a larger amount in taxation is taken out of Ireland than she can afford to pay; that the contributions of Great Britain and Ireland are not in proportion to the relative capacity and resources of the two communities; and that the spirit of the Act of Union, and the very letter of the arguments recommending it, have been broken thereby.

One of the difficulties met with in attempting to open the eyes of the public to the fact that Ireland is overtaxed lies in the argument that, Ireland being an indistinguishable portion of the United Kingdom, the basis of inquiry by the Royal Commission on Financial Relations, namely, that Ireland must be looked upon, for the purposes of inquiry, as a separate entity, is false, and the findings of the Commissioners worthless. Such a contention is merely burking the whole question; for if it be desirable to ascertain whether the poverty, lack of industrial pursuits, and general backwardness of one portion of the United Kingdom are due to the inability of the people inhabiting it to bear the weight of taxation imposed upon them, it is

obviously necessary, for the purposes of comparison, to deal with that portion as a separate entity. By no other means can any comparison possibly be made. But if Ireland is not to be deemed an entity, then the same problem merely presents itself in another and somewhat more complicated shape ; for, in that case, it is certain that the system of taxation adopted throughout the United Kingdom presses disproportionately upon the poorer classes of the community ; and as the proportion of poor to well-to-do is far larger in Ireland than in Great Britain, it presses with extremely disproportionate severity upon the inhabitants of the former island. It really matters nothing to the people of Ireland which theory is adopted, so far as the fact of their suffering is concerned, though perhaps the remedy to be applied in the one case may differ somewhat from the remedy which would be most suitable in the other.

Another argument brought forward against the conclusions of the Royal Commission is that, although taxation has greatly increased and population has greatly diminished in Ireland, the existing smaller population is as well, or better, able to bear the existing higher taxation than the former larger population was able to bear the former lower taxation ; in other words, that the taxable capacity of the individual has enormously increased. This theory is scarcely

worthy of notice. Since 1820, taxation has increased from £5,256,584 to £9,477,000 a year, or about 83 per cent. During the same period population has diminished from 6,801,827 to 4,414,995, or 35 per cent. If the pressure of present taxation is no heavier upon the existing population than was the pressure of taxation in 1820 upon the population then existing, we must assume that the taxable capacity of the individual has increased by over 170 per cent.—a proposition which no sane man will accept. Even since 1890 taxation has increased by 25·09 per cent., while population has fallen by 6·56 per cent.

That the case of Ireland is quite peculiar must be admitted. The taxable capacity of her inhabitants constitutes quite a different question from the taxable capacity of submerged populations in our great cities, or of the twelve millions who are, according to Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, chronically on the verge of starvation. We must in common justice go back to the origin of the existing condition of things. The Act of Union, and the conditions expressed or implied in it, must be considered. The Union was a contract—a bargain—between two independent Legislatures, and it was made subject to certain conditions. The financial principle adopted in the Act was that each country should contribute to Imperial expenditure in

proportion to capacity and resources. Throughout the debates it was repeatedly affirmed that Ireland should receive exceptional treatment until such time as, by the reduction of the National Debt of Great Britain and other changes, the two countries should reach a condition of parity.¹ Lord Castlereagh stated that "as to the future it is expected that the two countries should move forward and unite with regard to their expenses *in the measure of their relative abilities*." No one can read the debates on the Act of Union without realizing that the essential principle was that taxation should be in accordance with the relative capacities of the two countries to bear the burden. That taxation is not in accordance with the relative capacities of Great Britain and Ireland to bear the burden, and that Ireland is overtaxed to her own detriment and to the detriment of Great Britain and the Empire, is my contention; and it is not, I think, difficult to sustain.

A point too repeatedly forgotten is that the question should be removed from the stormy wrangles of opposing political parties, for Unionists and Nationalists, Conservatives and

¹ Ireland at this date contained one-third of the population of the United Kingdom; now it contains about one-tenth.

Radicals alike wish Ireland to thrive. It is essentially a matter of business arrangement between Ireland and Great Britain; and any political economist, to whatever school he may belong, will agree that if the Imperial Parliament is taking more in taxation from Ireland than she can legitimately afford to pay, injury is being done not only to Ireland, but indirectly to Great Britain, in so far as over-taxation limits industrial development, and thus perpetuates and aggravates the distressing tendencies in the condition of Ireland, to which attention is directed elsewhere in these pages.

The poverty of Ireland is the great factor in the case which demands the serious consideration of statesmen and of the whole British people, who since the Union are responsible for her. Unfortunately it has been obscured by the somewhat confused findings of the Royal Commission on Financial Relations which reported ten years ago; and it may be well to endeavour to assess the relative wealth of Great Britain and Ireland without much reference to those reports, bearing in mind, however, that the Commissioners agreed that, as compared with Great Britain, Ireland was taxed far above her capacity to bear taxation.

In commending the articles of the Treaty of Union to the Irish House of Commons, Lord

Castlereagh admitted that "he considered the best possible criterion of the relative means and ability of two countries to bear taxation would be the produce of an income tax levied on the same description of incomes in each, and equally well levied in both." This criterion was not available in 1800, because Ireland at that time did not pay income tax; but having been admitted to that privilege by Mr. Gladstone in 1853, it is available now. Owing to the patient researches of the Treasury, and the copious returns with reference to the finances of the two countries which are now issued, but which were not issued ten years ago when the Royal Commission sat, it is not a difficult matter to compare to-day the resources of the two countries. A good working estimate of the relative condition of two communities can be arrived at by contrasting:—

- (1) The net produce of income tax;
- (2) The salaries paid to corporation and public company officials;
- (3) The relative populations;
- (4) The excess of births over deaths;
- (5) The wage-earning capacity of the labouring classes.

(1) As a test of the condition of Ireland, the available statistics as to income tax may be

taken. As soon as this aspect of the question is approached objections are raised by financial experts of various schools as to the difficulty of arriving by such means at an *exact* indication of the taxable wealth of Great Britain on the one hand, and Ireland on the other. That may be so in detail, but in detail only. For the purpose of comparison between the social condition of the two peoples, it is essential only to give the salient figures, and refer to the general deductions to be drawn from them. The simple and convincing argument, surely, is that the net receipt from income tax may be accepted as a general indication of the wealth or poverty of communities in which the same tax is levied, on the same general principles, and with the same stringency. This applies to the whole United Kingdom, over which the rate is similar; and the tax is levied by the same executive machinery. If this comparison indicates that one country has a very much larger income-tax-paying section than the other country, and that the net payments *per capita* are also larger, it may surely be taken to show that in that country a freer movement of floating capital, a healthier condition of industry, and probably also a higher standard of comfort exist. Some recent statistics are contained in the report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Inland Revenue for the year

ended the 31st of March, 1906; and on p. 194 is a table showing the net receipt of income tax in the three main divisions of the United Kingdom. From this we obtain the following figures for the year 1905-6:—

	United Kingdom.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
Net receipt ...	£ 31,200,000	£ 27,423,061	£ 2,883,330	£ 983,361
Net produce of a 1d. rate in the £ (about)	2,600,000	2,287,000	240,000	83,600

It is sufficient to call attention to this remarkable difference between the net receipts in the three divisions of the United Kingdom. The absence of tax-paying incomes in Ireland is strikingly revealed by the variation in the produce of each penny in the pound in the tax in the year 1905-6, and is further borne out by the calculation that Ireland pays only about one-thirty-second of the total produce of the income tax of the United Kingdom.

Turning from the total net receipt to the figures given in Schedule D, we have a further striking illustration of the industrial condition of the Irish people. Under this schedule, which is the section of commerce and industry, returns are made of the "profits from businesses, concerns, professions, employments, and certain

interest," and the following information is given:—

	United Kingdom.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
Number of Assessments ...	577,524	481,374	72,152	23,998
Percentages of above totals ...	100	83·35	12·49	4·16
Net gross amount of income assessed	£504,567,700	£438,583,596	£52,768,680	£13,215,523
Percentages of above totals ...	100	86·92	10·46	2·62
Income on which tax was received	£365,234,308	£319,045,872	£38,208,297	£7,980,139

These figures show that Ireland has a small proportion of persons, firms, and public companies assessable to income tax. The actual sum contributed by Ireland in income tax in 1905-6 was £1,085,000, whereas Scotland contributed £3,121,000, and England £26,682,000—surely an indication of the relative wealth of the several parts of the Kingdom.

Ireland pays about 3·73 per cent. of the total income tax of the United Kingdom, and, roughly, this may be accepted as an index figure indicating the relative wealth of the country. When we turn from direct taxation to the statistics bearing on indirect taxation, we find, however, that the proportion is completely changed. The latest Treasury returns show that in the year ended the 31st of March, 1906, the

“true revenue” paid by Ireland amounted to £9,477,000, while Great Britain contributed £139,825,500. Ireland contributed 6·33 per cent. of the total revenue of the United Kingdom, whereas she contributed only 3·73 of the total amount due to the operation of the income tax. Assuming that her financial condition is more or less accurately revealed by the produce of the income tax, Ireland’s true contribution to the revenue of the United Kingdom should be about £5,500,000. She appears therefore to be paying about four millions sterling in taxation more than she should contribute. This conclusion does not strictly agree with the finding upon which the Royal Commission was “practically unanimous”; but nearly ten years have elapsed since the Report. The Commissioners found that “while the actual taxed revenue of Ireland is about one-eleventh of Great Britain, the relative taxable capacity of Ireland is very much smaller, and *is not estimated by any of us as exceeding one-twentieth.*” This is the practically unanimous conclusion of the Commission; but it must be noticed that a number of its members held that the taxable capacity of Ireland was very much less. No doubt, owing to the war, and the taxation which has been imposed since the Commission reported, the burden of increased taxation has been very much more severe upon Ireland

than upon other parts of the United Kingdom, because the indirect taxation imposed is felt by the poorer classes, who form so large a proportion of the population, with great severity. In view, therefore, of the present heavy burden of indirect taxation, any unbiassed investigator would now, I think, come to the conclusion that the taxable capacity of Ireland in relation to the present Budget arrangements is much smaller than it was at the time of the Royal Commission's Inquiry; and probably he would agree that the proportionate taxable capacity of Ireland, with her present population, which has fallen, since the Royal Commission was appointed, by over two hundred thousand, is now about one-twenty-seventh of the whole of the United Kingdom.

(2) To turn to the salaries of Corporation and public company officials. The following table for the year 1904-5 will be found instructive:—

TABLE showing for each Part of the United Kingdom the Number of Assessments and the Gross Income Assessed in respect of Salaries of Corporation and Public Company Officials.

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.
Number of Assess- ments ...	265,924	30,284	12,128	308,336
Gross income assessed	£57,661,275	£6,694,584	£2,693,334	£67,049,193

It would appear, therefore, that the wealth of Ireland, as indicated by the number of officials in the employ of municipalities and public companies, is, as compared with that of Great Britain, very small.

(3) As to the relative population. The decline of the population of Ireland, which has been going on for the past sixty years, has been again and again dinned into the ears of the British people; but they fail apparently to appreciate that the depression which crushes Ireland is still driving out of the country an increasing proportion of the physically and mentally fit. English people are apt to imagine that the great flow of emigration which occurred after the potato famine has since dwindled down into a comparatively insignificant current. The exact opposite is the case. In proportion to the present population of Ireland, the emigration is almost as serious a social drain as it has ever been in her history. The continuous decrease in the population of Ireland is one of the most remarkable social facts in the modern history of the world. The full tale of national loss is shown in another chapter.

(4) Another striking indication of the condition of Ireland is supplied by the figures as to the excess of births over deaths.¹

¹ See Appendix III.

Statisticians generally admit that a good indication of wholesome conditions of living in a community is furnished by a moderate birth-rate, a low death-rate, and a considerable excess of births over deaths. It is held that in a well-favoured community marriages are deferred owing to the saving habits of the people; and although the birth-rate is low, the infant mortality is very small. Sir Robert Giffen, in the evidence which he gave before the Royal Commission on Financial Relations, dealt convincingly with this aspect of life in Ireland. He said :—

When we take the comparison on this head between Ireland and the other countries of the United Kingdom, we find, according to the latest statistical abstract, the births in Ireland were 106,000; the deaths, 83,000; and the excess of births over deaths, 23,000; giving a proportion per thousand of the population of the excess of births over deaths of five per thousand. In England in the same year the births were 914,000; the deaths, 570,000; the excess of births over deaths, 344,000; and the proportion of the excess of births over deaths per thousand of population comes out at 11·4, or more than double the corresponding excess in Ireland. Similarly for Scotland the births in the same year were 127,000; the deaths, 80,000; and the excess of births over deaths, 47,000; giving the proportion per thousand of the population of the excess of births over deaths of 11·5, just about the same as the proportion for England, and in both cases much more than double the excess of births over deaths in Ireland.

I should say that the reason of it is, as far as one can judge, not any excessive mortality in Ireland, because the deaths, you will observe, in Ireland are very little more than the

deaths in Scotland with a somewhat larger population ; but it is a deficiency of births, and that seems connected with another characteristic of Ireland's population—that the population in Ireland appears on the whole to be an older population than that of either England or Scotland.

In Ireland no less than 18·6 per cent. of the male population are upwards of fifty ; but in Scotland and England the percentages are 13·5 and 13·7 respectively. The percentage in Ireland between twenty and forty (that is, of the male population) is 26·6 per cent. ; and in Scotland and England 28·9 and 29·0 respectively. The percentages of female population are much the same as the percentages of the male population. The conclusion is, therefore, that Ireland has fewer people in proportion in the prime of life, and more above fifty, than Great Britain has.

Sir Robert Giffen pointed out that all these figures, indicative of the small excess of births over deaths, and the composition of the population, together with the notorious facts as to emigration, corresponded, and revealed the same conclusion—that the actual population in Ireland is far weaker, man for man, counting everybody, than the actual population of either England or Scotland. It would be possible to illustrate in detail Sir Robert Giffen's conclusions by some recent statistics ; but it may be sufficient to recall the broad fact, that, while in the intervening ten years the birth-rate has practically remained stationary, the death-rate and emigration-rate only decreased to a very slight extent ; and the relative proportion between birth, death, and emigration rates to which Sir Robert Giffen called attention

remained almost the same. Ireland's birth-rate is now almost the lowest in the world. The excess of births over deaths per thousand for the estimated population in 1905 amounted to 6·3, while the ratio of emigrants was 7·0 per thousand; in other words, the proportion of emigrants who left the country in 1905, as for any of the previous ten years, was considerably greater than the excess of births over deaths. Consequently year by year the population of Ireland is actually decreasing, because emigration is proceeding more rapidly than the natural increase.

These most suggestive figures, read side by side with the statistics as to lunacy and idiocy given in an earlier chapter, prove conclusively that the condition of Ireland is becoming more and more aggravated as she loses the best of her population.

(5) As to the wage-earning capacity of the labouring population in Ireland, Sir Robert Giffen quoted, before the Royal Commission on Financial Relations, a number of most interesting statements. He held that the average wages in Ireland, when great masses of labour are compared, range from 10 to 15 per cent. up to nearly 50 per cent. lower than for similar masses of labour for Great Britain.¹ Turning to special

¹ This conclusion has since been controverted, it being held that in no case is Ireland's inferiority more than 40 per cent. The point does not, however, seriously affect the present argument.

classes, he admitted that artisan rates in Ireland are only a little less than in Great Britain ; but he pointed out that in this case the comparison is between a very small class, indeed, in Ireland with an enormous class in Great Britain. Comparing the wage-rates of Ireland and Great Britain, Sir Robert Giffen held that the average remuneration of the wage-earner, man for man, is probably only about half the average remuneration of the wage-earner in Great Britain. Sir Robert Giffen's conclusions are borne out by all who have had opportunities of observing the condition of the labouring classes in the two countries. Ireland has singularly few industries apart from agriculture ; and the Board of Trade has shown that the average wage of the labourer is 41·5 per cent. less than it is in England. This rate, it must be remembered, is for the whole of Ireland ; and the proportion would be even lower were it not for the comparative prosperity enjoyed by workers in a few districts ; in Mayo the average weekly wage, for instance, is only 8s. 9d. Judging by the above-mentioned five tests of the relative capacity of Great Britain and Ireland to bear taxation, it cannot be denied that the burden falls upon the latter with disproportionate weight. And she suffers in other respects.

The working classes of Ireland, in comparison with the working classes of Great

Britain, are greatly underpaid; and the lower the wage, the more heavily does indirect taxation bear upon the population. The duties on alcoholic liquors, tea, tobacco, and other articles which, though technically luxuries, have very properly come to be considered necessities of life, are felt more heavily in Ireland than in Great Britain, because the poor are numerous and *very* poor. While in Great Britain direct and indirect taxation are fairly evenly balanced, in Ireland the poverty of the country is so great that 72·2 per cent. of the amount which she pays into the Imperial Exchequer is raised by taxes upon such commodities as are in daily use among the poorest people.

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 two great industries 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. This is one of the penalties Ireland has paid, and it has contributed to her poverty.

Summarising all the above-mentioned statistics and figures, the facts which stand out are as follows:—

(a) The wealth of Ireland, as proved by income-tax returns, by taxed salaries of officials in the employ of municipalities and public companies, by the wage-earning capacity of the labouring classes, by the marriage and birth-rate, and by all other tests, is, as compared with the wealth of Great Britain, out of proportion to the relative amount of taxation paid by the people of the two islands.

(b) The best of the population is still flowing outward from Ireland, and seeking a future outside the British Empire; 89 per cent. of Irish emigrants settling in foreign countries.

(c) The excess of births over deaths is still so small as to point to, on the one hand, physical deterioration of a most alarming character, and, on the other, to an absence of a due proportion of able-bodied persons remaining in the country.

(d) The emigration of the most physically and mentally fit, and the hopeless life which is led by

the largest section of the people of Ireland, are resulting in an increase of lunacy which is proving a scourge to the land.

Surely it is unnecessary to probe for further indications of the accelerated speed at which Ireland is sinking into a social condition which, if not speedily dealt with, will baffle the efforts of the wisest statesmen.

The facts of Ireland's poverty and Ireland's disproportionate taxation will not, I think, be denied by anyone who reads the facts and figures which I have quoted, and studies the materials from which they have been culled. Which is the cause, and which the effect? Is Ireland over-taxed because she is poor, or poor because she is over-taxed? There is truth in both propositions. Unquestionably the crushing weight of taxation smothers individual effort and stifles energy; unquestionably also the absence of industrial employment and the general poverty account for the fact that the equal taxation of the same articles places upon her an unequal burden. What, then, is to be done? Changes in our methods of raising revenue beneficial to the poorer classes in Great Britain, and consequently beneficial to Ireland as a whole, are certainly not impossible; but they are problematical, and cannot be relied upon as a remedy for a disease demanding immediate treatment. There remains the principle underlying the

Union—exceptional treatment under exceptional circumstances. If Great Britain is to act with common justice, if she is honestly to carry out the terms of the contract entered into by the two independent Legislatures in the Act amalgamating them, she must follow one of two courses. Either she must carry out the promise of Lord Castlereagh—that taxation should be with regard to the measure of the relative abilities of the two countries to pay—and must adopt differential treatment and the remission of taxation—a policy which appears to me impracticable; or she must endeavour to increase the taxable capacity of Ireland by the wise application of public money to the development and the more fruitful utilization of the natural resources of the country.

One obvious source of supply for this most necessary purpose is in retrenchment in the expenses of administration and in the allocation to Irish purposes of the savings thus effected. Even the late Government appeared to see the advantages of such a course. Speaking in the debate on the 16th of May, 1905, the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to the fact that he had last year expressed his concurrence in the proposal of the then Chief Secretary, Mr. George Wyndham, that if further economy be made in the Irish judiciary the sum so saved should be re-spent in Ireland on

the purposes of development or of administration which should commend themselves to the Government and the people of that country. He thought that in more branches than one of the Irish administration it was probable that, with the goodwill of the Irish members, considerable economies could be made. Mr. Austen Chamberlain guarded the Treasury against the admission that, as of right, the whole administrative savings should go to Irish purposes; but when I find the subsequent Chief Secretary, Mr. Long, allowing that reform in administration is necessary, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain agreeing that it is possible to effect economies, and that a portion at any rate of the money so saved should be devoted to Irish services, I hail with satisfaction an admission—even if it be only a partial, halting, and tentative admission—of the principles for which I contend. But the principle can be brought into active operation only in one way, and that is by enlisting the direct aid of the public in Ireland. Economies will be effected only by making it to the interest of the people that such economies should be made, and that can be accomplished only by assuring them that the money so saved shall be devoted to Irish purposes. Economies will be brought about only if local knowledge, interest, brains, and experience are employed in making them, and are allowed to determine the purposes to which the money so saved is to be applied.

CHAPTER VI.

EDUCATIONAL CHAOS.

Now that the centuries-old troubles connected with the Land Question are in process of solution, a chief remaining obstacle to progress in Ireland lies in the educational chaos existing in that country, and in the delay in dealing with the grievance of Roman Catholics due to their deprivation of adequate facilities for higher education. It is probably no exaggeration to state that the irritation under which the majority of the people of Ireland suffer, and which finds expression in many ways, may be traced to the fact that they feel that the religious faith which they profess places them in a position of inferiority. They believe that their educational disabilities handicap them in the competitive struggles of life at home and abroad, and account for the fact, admitted by at least one Chief Secretary, that so many Irishmen are debarred from taking an adequate part in the executive government of their country. So far as education is concerned, they hold that the ascendancy of the minority is still maintained.

At present the whole of the educational system of Ireland is an anomalous botch. No semblance of real co-ordination exists, with the result that in no other part of the British Empire is the machinery for education so ill-adjusted to the needs of the community, and so barren in results.

On the lowest rung of the educational ladder are the schools which give primary education throughout the whole of Ireland to the children of the poorer classes—that is, of those who cannot afford to pay for education in private schools. These primary schools are managed by the Board of National Education. This Board received grants from the Imperial Government amounting, in 1905, to £1,394,000. There is a constant struggle between the Board and the Government, especially on the subject of school holdings. The school buildings are, it must be admitted, to a great extent insufficient and ill-kept, while the teachers have not had adequate opportunities for becoming efficient. The local managers possess the right of appointment and removal of teachers, and generally regulate the schools: 8710 of these schools dealing with primary education are classed as national; 30 are styled model schools; and 135 are attached to workhouses. In addition to these, there are 3000 “mixed” schools, and a large number of evening schools. Two defects in

the system of primary education in Ireland are immediately and prominently noticeable—the large number of schools with a very small average attendance, and the absence of local interest either in the way of financial support or in management. In Ireland there are upwards of 8200 principal teachers ; whereas in Scotland, with about the same population, the number is only just over 4600. Ireland has about twice as many schools as Scotland. This is to be accounted for to some extent by religious divergences, and the objection to teaching children of both sexes, even of the tenderest years, in the same school ; but it is indicative also of a faulty system, for no one acquainted with the primary education of the two countries would suggest that the Irish standard approaches that which has been attained by the neighbouring country. It should be added that conventual schools receive capitation grants through the National Board, and, like other establishments, are inspected by the representatives of the National Board. One of the most interesting groups of schools in Ireland is, however, entirely outside the control of the National Board. For nearly one hundred years the Christian Brothers have conducted schools in Ireland which are now attended by about 40,000 scholars. For a time they received grants from the National Board, but eventually decided to forego this

assistance, so as to gain full control over the curriculum of teaching and religious instruction. Consequently, these schools are now conducted entirely out of voluntary funds, and successive Royal Commissions, which have inquired into Irish education, have borne high testimony to the character of the education.

There is also a body known as "the Commissioners of Education" who manage a number of endowed schools of Royal and private foundation and Diocesan schools. These Commissioners enjoy an income, derived for the most part from rents, of just under £7000 a year, and are assisted in their duties by a Protestant and Roman Catholic Board in each of the following districts:—Armagh, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Cavan, and Donegal.

Secondary school education comes under the control of twelve Commissioners of Intermediate Education, specially chosen under the Act of 1900. Out of the Irish Church surplus, they possess a million pounds sterling, and, in addition, they receive local taxation duties which realize upwards of £56,000 annually. Dr. Macnamara, M.P., in "The Contemporary Review" (October, 1904), pointed out that the Board spent in examining 7909 pupils at the rate of £2 4s. 2d. per head; and inquired—"Is there anything like it outside China?" With the funds at their disposal, amounting to £91,166 in 1904,

the Commissioners carry out a system of public examinations, award exhibitions, prizes, and certificates, and pay result fees to school managers fulfilling certain prescribed conditions. The system of examination which the Board administers is generally regarded as the least conducive to educational efficiency. It has been abandoned in England, where it was held that it encouraged mere cramming.

The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction makes grants to Schools for the teaching of Science and Art, as under the "South Kensington" system, and it also supports technical schools in various parts of Ireland; these schools being, in the case of county boroughs and counties, under the management of the local authorities.

The principal institutions for higher education in Ireland consist of:—

(1) Dublin University, which is to all intents and purposes Trinity College. Trinity College is supported by the revenue from landed estate, and the fees of the students.

(2) The Royal University of Ireland, which is merely an examining Board. The chief teaching institutions which send students to its examinations are the Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway; Magee College, Londonderry (Presbyterian); the Arts section

of the College of Maynooth, and the group of Colleges designated in the Catholic Directory as the "Catholic University." Of these, the University College in Stephen's Green, Dublin, is directed by the Jesuit Fathers. The Royal University will examine and confer a Degree on anybody whether he has attended any classes anywhere or not.

(3) The Royal College of Science for Ireland (St. Stephen's Green), which is now under the control of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.

(4) The ancient foundation of Maynooth College, where priests for the Roman Catholic Church are educated. This institution formerly received an annual grant from the Irish Parliament, and then from the Imperial Parliament ; but in 1869 a sum of £372,331 out of the Irish Church surplus was given to it by way of compensation for the withdrawal of Parliamentary funds.

Other educational institutions in Ireland include minor Roman Catholic colleges situated in various parts of the country, receiving no State aid, and the Presbyterian Theological College for the training of ministers at Belfast. Prior to the Act of 1869, this College had a Parliamentary grant ; but under the enactment of 1869 this was abolished, and a lump sum of nearly £34,000 was granted as compensation.

Most of these colleges have from time to time benefited by private benefactions.

This brief summary hardly suggests the confusion and overlapping in education which occur throughout Ireland; but a picture of the state of affairs may be gained from the following excerpts from a speech by Mr. Bryce, then Irish Secretary (March 22nd, 1906):—

There was no branch of Irish education which could be pronounced satisfactory.

In regard to the aspects of primary education, the Irish schools were much too small; and the payments to the teachers were low partly because the schools were so small.

The bad and insanitary conditions of the school buildings were more serious than had been mentioned. One result of them was that when an epidemic broke out, all the children took it, and the whole school was disorganized, the result being that the educational results obtained in the year were not half what they ought to be. Another point was the irregular attendance, the want of compulsion, which was imperfectly applied; and the attendance was not only irregular, but was very short in Ireland.

The Government had practically no control over the National Board (which is responsible for primary education throughout Ireland).

Over the Intermediate Board they had even less control.

The Intermediate Education Board was an examining body which awarded prizes and grants, which were an incentive to examining. It was a fault of legislation which called the Board into existence; and it was a system which was utterly wrong. What they ought to do was to foster the schools, and give them the benefit of an enlightened and helpful inspection. It was also completely disjointed from the necessities of technical education, which was placed under the control of the Agricultural Department.

Coming to the question of university education, there had been a universal consensus of opinion that university education was altogether unsatisfactory. The Royal University had been generally condemned ; and he should be the last person to differ from that view, because in 1880, when the Royal University was substituted for the Queen's, he was almost the only person to oppose and protest against it, maintaining that it would have the results which had happened. But the most effective condemnation had been given by the Royal University itself. On Friday it passed a resolution with unanimity saying that experience had shown that, as an examining body, it was entirely unsatisfactory, and ought to be turned into a teaching University.

Mr. Bryce is an expert in educational matters, a graduate of Glasgow and Oxford Universities, a member of the Senate of London University, and was the Chairman of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education which sat twelve years ago. It is no wonder, under the circumstances, that so eminent an authority professed himself unable to place before the House any clear conception of the state of education in Ireland.

It would be quite impossible, he said, for him to enter into the dark labyrinth of the relations of Irish finance to the English Treasury, and especially of the relations of the Imperial Treasury to Irish education. Successive Irish and British Governments seemed to have been occupied for sixty years in tying a series of knots which it was almost impossible to unravel, and nothing short of a prolonged inquiry would clear up those relations. He confessed he could give the House no light upon the matter, and light wanted to be let in upon it ; and the whole relations of the Imperial Treasury to the Irish educational system required to be set on a new footing, made more intelligible and more practical and more conducive to the benefit of Irish education.

The fact is, the whole educational edifice requires to be pulled down and rebuilt; and, contrary to the ordinary laws of architecture, it must be rebuilt from top to bottom. The apex must be constructed first. Higher education must be satisfactorily settled in order to provide the human material—namely, the teachers—for constructing a sound system of secondary and primary education. The problem of higher education being solved, a sound and co-ordinate primary and secondary system would naturally follow. Education is, of course, a whole, and must be considered and dealt with as a whole. Primary and secondary schools must lead up to university education endowed with technical facilities. The channel must be direct and unimpeded; but the goal—the university—must be established before the human current can flow freely.

This much is certain: if the great majority of the people are to acquire that independence, self-reliance, energy, and mental equipment necessary to enable Ireland to regain the commercial activity which rendered her prosperous in former days, energetic action must be taken to bring Irish education into line with the best expert opinion, and to build up a co-ordinated system which shall serve as a ladder by which the poorest child of exceptional ability may rise from the primary school to compete for

distinctions and honours in a national university or in a technical establishment of the Charlottenburg type, and then pass out into the world well equipped to handle problems and affairs in his native land or further afield. This is no mere Utopian idea. In England it is to-day a reality ; and year by year the number of children of the poorest class who are thus enabled to make the best of their abilities is increasing. In London itself, which has a population about equivalent to that of Ireland, the County Council have adopted a scheme embracing 5,021 scholarships, which are offered annually, so that a capable child, entering the Council's Schools at an early age, may pass at the age of ten into the higher grade school, or at twelve years to the higher elementary school, or other secondary or grammar school, to proceed finally either to a university or to one of the scientific training establishments, the curriculum of which is adapted to train the scholars for a scientific occupation or for one or other of the arts or crafts.

Admitting that Ireland needs a well co-ordinated system of primary and secondary and technical education, "according to Irish ideas"—and this is widely admitted—there comes into the foreground the perennial difficulty of providing for the higher training of those pupils who are fitted by their abilities for university

education. This also must be in accordance with Irish ideas, if it is to be successful. What, however, is the present position in Ireland? In the widest sense, Ireland has one university, that is, a body which teaches as well as examines, and exercises a liberalizing influence over its students, and that is Trinity, Protestant for centuries. The function of a university is not only to impart knowledge. Oxford and Cambridge do not only instruct but educate—a very different matter. As the Royal Commission in 1903 admirably put it :—

A university is not a warehouse for receiving an assortment of goods, and testing whether they are up to sample. It has a double function. One is the discovery of new truths. The other and primary function is to supply trained intelligence which shall stimulate and guide the mind of the student along various lines of intellectual inquiry. A university helps to form a mental habit and attitude; it seeks to impart philosophic breadth and grasp; it lays down the principles of learning, and unifies knowledge. To test results is an accident, an inseparable accident, perhaps, but not of the essence of a university. Were we called upon to decide between university instruction without examination, and examination without university instruction, we should not hesitate in our choice. In Ireland the sense of collegiate life, outside Trinity College, Dublin, needs to be restored.

To the students (it was added) the decay of the old academic principle has been an incalculable loss. Private study and private coaching lack the very elements which confer on university education its ideal value, viz., the personal intercourse between teacher and pupil outside the class-room; the comradeship and *esprit de corps* of collegiate life; the generous rivalries of the field or the debating society; the

contact of minds and the play of intellect ; in a word, all that full and varied existence which remains a cherished possession in after days. If there is any country in which it appears unnatural to discourage this particular factor of university life, it is Ireland, where social and human influences enter so largely into the best qualities of the race.

Ireland has practically only one university, and that university consists of a single college. It is an institution distinctly Protestant in origin and character. Trinity College was founded in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, largely as a proselytising institution in a Roman Catholic country. The foundation of other colleges was evidently contemplated when the scheme was adopted. The Charter of James I, which conferred on the College the status of a university, foreshadowed the establishment of other colleges or halls within the university ; and this intention was more precisely indicated by the Act of Settlement, and an Act of George III distinctly provided for the erection within the University of Dublin of a Roman Catholic college. But for various reasons the original scheme was never carried out. Since the Test Abolition Act, Trinity College has, of course, been open to Roman Catholics ; but in the middle of the last century, when education throughout the world was passing from the control of the ecclesiastical authorities, and absolute secularism seemed destined to prevail, the Roman Catholic Bishops laid a ban upon Trinity

College, with the result that, however excellent may have been the intentions of the Senate, this establishment, despite the abolition of Tests, remains a Protestant establishment to this day.

Sir Robert Peel, in 1845, endeavoured to remove Catholic disabilities by the establishment of the Queen's Colleges, which were finally opened in 1849; and in the following year the Queen's University, of which these Colleges were the constituents, received its Charter. It was a teaching University; but, owing to its constitution, it was condemned as "a gigantic scheme of godless education." The authors of this scheme believed that in localities like Cork and Galway the Colleges would necessarily in the main be Roman Catholic, but in fact they never became so; and, almost from the first, the Pope, on account of their character and system of control, described them as involving grave danger to the faith and morals of Catholics; and, finally, the Bishops were directed to frame rules for withholding the faithful from frequenting the Colleges. In the apparently atheistic movement which was then spreading over Europe, the Irish Bishops made a stand against what they considered an impending danger. They failed to see any justice in placing in their midst a nominally undenominational education at a time when every university of the Three Kingdoms (except that of London) was denominational.

The Catholics were offered mixed education ; and in view of the spirit of the times, which they, perhaps, not unnaturally exaggerated, they refused the concession.

Passing over several years, we come to the establishment, in 1879, of the Royal University in place of the Queen's University. The Fellows are appointed from among the Professors of the three Queen's Colleges, of the Catholic University College, Dublin, and of Magee College, Londonderry, a Presbyterian institution. The Fellows are paid by the State, and thus the Roman Catholic College at Dublin and the Presbyterian College at Londonderry, though they receive no direct endowment, obtain indirect endowments amounting in the case of University College to £6,000 annually, while the last Institution receives a matter of £500. Similarly, Maynooth College, which is the Roman Catholic Seminary in Ireland for the training of priests, though it has ceased to profit by the annual grant formerly voted by the Irish Parliament, obtained out of the Irish Church surplus the sum of £369,040. The University College is a purely examining body in which there is room for suspicion that the Governors and Fellows are selected rather on religious grounds than for their academical distinction.

It is really beside the question to argue whether the conscientious objections of Roman

Catholics to Trinity College and the Queen's Colleges are or are not sufficiently well founded. Personally I think they are. Take, for instance, Trinity College. Trinity College is open to everyone; no tests of any sort exist; no religious instruction of any sort is obligatory. But Trinity College is Protestant to the core, redolent of Protestantism. Its governing body consists almost entirely of Protestants. It cannot divest itself of its traditions, its characteristics, its "atmosphere." Try, in imagination, to reverse the case. Conceive a Protestant community held for centuries under subjection to a small but all-powerful Catholic minority, would Protestants like to send their children to a college founded years ago for the purpose of advancing Roman Catholicism, consistent throughout in its Roman Catholicism, governed by Roman Catholics, saturated with Roman Catholic traditions, filled with Roman Catholic students? I think they would object, and I think they would be right. But whether the objections which Roman Catholics have to Trinity and the Queen's Colleges are justifiable or not, what we have to deal with is the fact, and the fact is that the vast majority of the people of Ireland are Roman Catholics, and they have the strongest conscientious scruples against allowing their children to enter upon a course of education which they think, or which the authorities of their Church

consider, to be wrong on the highest religious grounds. Roman Catholic parents are in the painful dilemma of being either compelled to deny their children higher education, or to run counter to the directions of their spiritual pastors and masters, who tell them that the existing system of higher education is dangerous to faith and morals. What, then, is it that Roman Catholics require? And what is it to which Protestants object? The common but erroneous idea is that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy insist upon a Roman Catholic University; and against the endowment of such a denominational university or college, the Protestant conscience revolts.

What do the Roman Catholics of Ireland really and truly ask for? In the first place, they certainly do not seek to enrich themselves at the expense of Trinity College. The most authoritative statement on this question was made by the Archbishops and Bishops in 1896, when they stated:—

We do not seek to impair the efficiency of any other institution. We do not want to take one shilling from the endowments of any other body. We look, apart from the consideration of our own inequality, with much admiration and sympathy upon the work which Trinity College and the Belfast Queen's College are doing. But we ask, as a matter of simple justice, that the Catholics of Ireland should be put upon a footing of perfect equality with them.

This view, the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Walsh, reiterated in a pamphlet published in

1902. The attitude of Roman Catholics towards this question is not based upon feelings of religious jealousy. They view the work which has been done by avowedly Protestant institutions with sympathy and some envy; and they ask that similar benefits may be conferred upon them. The position which the Irish Bishops have taken up was stated by the Archbishops and Bishops in the following words:—

What, then, do we claim? Simply to be put on an equality with our Protestant fellow-countrymen. We take Trinity College, Dublin, with its endowments and its privileges, and seeing what is done by public funds and legal enactments for half a million of Protestants of the Disestablished Church of Ireland, we claim that at least as much should be done for the three and a half million Catholics. We have stated on many occasions that we are not irrevocably committed to any one principle of settlement, and whether that settlement is carried out through a distinct Catholic University or through a college, we shall be prepared to consider any proposal with an open mind, and with a sincere desire to remove, rather than aggravate, difficulties.

The question is one of conscience—of the conscientious scruples of over three millions of our fellow-subjects in Ireland who ask that there may be conceded to them facilities for higher education in an establishment or establishments, free from all tests, free from the Protestant “atmosphere” which envelopes Trinity College. There is no suggestion of setting up in Ireland a university Roman Catholic *de jure*, but of some establishment which would in the course of time, through the opinions of its students and

graduates, be sufficiently Roman Catholic *de facto* to enable students of the Roman Catholic faith to pursue their studies in a Catholic "atmosphere."

In other parts of the British Empire, where this religious difficulty has arisen, a satisfactory settlement has been reached. In Nova Scotia, St. Anne's University receives a direct grant from the Government. In Quebec, the Roman Catholics were granted a charter for a university as long ago as 1852. At that time, in reply to a requisition from the Bishops of Lower Canada, Lord Elgin stated that "he had no hesitation in acknowledging the justice and propriety of securing to the numerous and important body of Catholics in Canada benefit of the University which they have been until now deprived of." In Prussia, a similar difficulty existed; and the solution is found in the Universities of Bonn and Breslau, in the Academy at Münster, and in the Lyceum Hosianu at Braunsberg, where special provision is made for the teaching of Catholic theology. In the first two universities, Protestant theology is also taught; but the Lyceum is exclusively for Catholic theology. The Fribourg University of Switzerland, though it is not a purely Roman Catholic institution, has a theological faculty, which, with the sanction of the Pope, was authorized solely for instruction based on the tenets of the Roman Catholic religion. This faculty is under the control of

the Church; but the salaries of the Professors are paid by the State.

The main principle insisted upon by Protestants, namely, that there should be no State endowment of a Roman Catholic College or University, is not imperilled, for Roman Catholics do not demand State endowment for any establishment exclusively Roman Catholic. But the further objection is, I think, entertained by Protestants that, even if that be so, any scheme satisfactory to the Roman Catholic Hierarchy would necessarily increase the influence and power of the priest. "Rome Rule"—"The Priest in Politics"—is what they dread.

Because Roman Catholic Bishops have agitated for educational equality for those in their spiritual charge, it has been hastily assumed that they hope to gain an increased hold over the intellects of their flocks. In the first place, there is no evidence that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy desire to exercise greater authority in secular matters; in the second place, it is certain that higher education among the laity would tend to restrict ecclesiastical influence to the legitimate sphere of faith and morals. On this point, Dr. O'Dea, a Vice-President of the Catholic College, Maynooth, said:—

He was convinced that, if the void in the lay leadership of the country be filled up by higher education among the better classes of the Catholic laity, the power of the priests, so far as

it is abnormal or unnecessary, will pass away. This effect stands to reason as inevitable. It is the necessary and inevitable result of university life.

That Bishops themselves recognize this fact, and are somewhat doubtful even as to the effect of higher education upon their legitimate spiritual authority, appears evident from a remark of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick. Dr. O'Dwyer said :—

As far as religion is concerned, I really don't know how a university would work out. If you ask me now whether I think that that university in a certain number of years would become a centre of thought, strengthening the Catholic faith in Ireland, I cannot tell you. It is a leap in the dark.

He protested that the Bishops had not urged the claims of the Roman Catholic party in the hope that higher education would strengthen their own Church, and added :—

We are Bishops, but we are Irishmen also, and we want to serve our country.

The belief which is, as I believe, widely entertained among the people of Great Britain, that the claims of Roman Catholics are engineered by the Hierarchy in order to impose a still stricter yoke upon the Irish people, is, I am convinced, unfounded. Bishops and priests in Ireland have quite enough to do in attending to the spiritual and moral welfare of their flocks. We have no right to assume that they desire to increase their secular authority, or to

secure any improper influence, outside their legitimate sphere of faith and morals. But, even if they were animated by that desire, how could the better education of the laity assist them? Education is far more likely to produce the opposite effect.

It is not realized by Englishmen in general that one result of the educational disabilities under which the Roman Catholic laity suffer, is that throughout a large portion of the country, the rôle of leading public opinion and the function of school management devolve almost exclusively upon the only people possessing the requisite knowledge and education—the Roman Catholic priesthood. If the reproach that Ireland is a priest-ridden country be true, the responsibility lies mainly with those who deny to Roman Catholic laymen the educational equality which they claim. It is said that in no other section of the Empire does the priesthood occupy a position of such influence. If that be so, the reason is that nowhere else has a population been so persistently and consistently starved in the matter of education. In the settlement of the whole education problem—from the lowest rung to the highest—lies the solution of the religious controversies which tend to embitter public and private life. To this opinion, almost all who have studied the conditions which prevail in Ireland, from Lord

Beaconsfield down to Mr. Arthur Balfour, have time and again given their adherence. Sir Horace Plunkett, who surely can speak with authority on Irish matters, has recorded as his opinion that:—

The demoralizing atmosphere of partizanship which hangs over Ireland would gradually give way before an organized system of education, with a thoroughly democratic university at its head, which would diffuse amongst the people at large a sense of the value of a balanced judgment on, and a true appreciation of, the real forces with which Ireland has to deal in building up her fortunes.

In the matter of university education, all that Roman Catholics ask for is equality; but it must be real and practical, not merely theoretical equality. We Protestants must remember two things:—First, that the whole educational life and mental development of Roman Catholics in Ireland and all that results therefrom, having been for centuries crippled and stunted, it behoves us to cultivate it and nourish it back to normal growth; and, secondly, that what may be equality to us is not necessarily equality to them. Nonconformists won their way into the great English universities. The removal of tests meant equality to them. Removal of tests does not mean equality to the Roman Catholic laity in Ireland. If we honestly wish to do as we would be done by, we must understand that the conscientious scruples of Roman Catholics are just as strong, and just as worthy of respect,

as our conscientious scruples, but of a different character.

It is not within my province here to propound any scheme for higher education ; but I may mention certain general principles which ought, as it seems to me, to be observed. Sectional discords stand in the way of reform and the regeneration of Ireland. Every legitimate opportunity should be offered to the people to merge sectional differences in large national conceptions. National education affords such an opportunity. One national university, in which all Irishmen can take interest and pride, is therefore my ideal, and Dublin University naturally suggests itself. Dublin University should be enlarged and developed. The university should be a teaching as well as an examining body. Trinity College, the Queen's Colleges, and a new college in Dublin should form its constituent colleges ; they should be residential. Local sentiment should be invoked in the colleges, so far as is compatible with the solidarity of the university, in order to instil life into the dry bones of education in Ireland. A college must be fully equipped to give technical instruction of the highest kind.

So far as primary and secondary education is concerned, everyone who has given an hour's consecutive thought to the matter will agree with Mr. Bryce that the National Board and the

Intermediate Board ought to be consolidated, or some one controlling body created in their place; also that technical education should be more highly organized. It will not be denied that the organic relation of primary and secondary education is one of the first things to be attended to, and the difficulty of effecting this while the control of primary, secondary, and technical education is under different and unrelated bodies will be admitted. The solution for these problems is to be found, as Mr. Bryce suggests, in the creation of one educational department for Ireland; and those who understand best the peculiar distinctive character of the Irish people, their pride of race, their history, their distinctive customs and habits of mind and method, will go a step further and urge that this new department should be made in some measure representative of Ireland, so that the Irish people may be directly interested in a matter so vitally important to the welfare of their country.

After all, this is a matter which primarily affects the nation itself and its future; and, surely, it is not necessary at this late date to urge the justice of Irishmen being allowed a voice in the working of their educational machinery. Education in Ireland has never aroused popular interest or sympathy, because the policy has always been dictated from "over the water." The

means available for equipment have been inadequate, and, owing to the lack of local interest, there has been an absence of voluntary effort, which, in the past, laid the foundations of the educational system throughout Great Britain. Education in England was voluntary long before it passed under the care of the State; but the policy which has been followed in Ireland has been to impose an educational system founded on English experience, and then we have been in the habit of deploring that the Irish people have not assisted in a work which has never aroused their sympathy because their sympathy has never been sought. In education, as in other matters, the fatal assumption that Irish needs must be dealt with by English methods is the root cause of difficulty.

Reform in the general educational system presents no really formidable difficulty; co-ordination and simplification will settle that question. In higher education, principles are involved: the solution of that problem must precede all other reform; and it is on that problem that the people of the United Kingdom should concentrate their attention mainly. English statesmen, of all parties, who have studied this question, have frequently admitted all the grievances urged by Roman Catholics; but they have failed to arrive at any solution.

It is to be hoped that a solution may be found

by the Royal Commission now enquiring into the matter; but even if they fail, we need not despair. At one time the Irish Land Question was regarded as a hopeless problem; but the conference, at which leaders of all sections of opinion threshed out the obstacles to a final settlement, resulted in an Act which is now removing this perennial cause of trouble. With this encouragement, it is not too much to hope that an informal interchange of views between leaders of thought in Ireland, animated by a sincere desire to solve the problem, and fairly representing different sections of the religious world, assisted by experienced educationists, might result in some basis of agreement leading up to a settlement satisfying the urgent needs of Ireland, and doing violence to the conscience of no man.

CHAPTER VII.

IRELAND'S NEEDS : THE PROGRAMME OF THE
IRISH REFORM ASSOCIATION.

THE Irish Reform Association was established in the hope of assisting to solve some at least of those problems in Irish affairs most urgently demanding solution. The end in view is that Ireland should become the home of a contented people, and a valuable asset of the Empire. It appears to be generally supposed that its efforts are confined to reforms of a legislative or administrative character. That is not the case. The platform is a broad one. Amendment of the system of government is advocated, because it is in itself desirable, and because without it necessary social and economic reforms cannot have fair play and produce their full results. To generalize, 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 social and economic needs and requirements of Ireland, and of the duty of "the predominant partner" towards her.

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

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

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

We claim to be truly national as regards Ireland; and national, also, in the larger 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, while pretending to be Unionists and in favour of the Union, we are really Repealers in disguise; and this in face of the fact that 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 understand our position, a true conception of the situation must be formed.

It is, I think, currently supposed that the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland 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 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 a natural movement towards unification, nor did it produce unification in the sense, or to the extent, that occurred when, for instance, 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, we need not stop to consider. 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 recognized. 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 is profoundly dissatisfied with the present anomalous position of Ireland. 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 civilized 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—slight symptoms of a healthier state of things in Ireland have manifested themselves; but, judging by all the most valid 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 other such tests—while Great Britain and every community in Europe have been going forward, Ireland alone has been falling back. That fact does not present a pleasant theme for contemplation. 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. On that hypothesis the Irish Reform Association, though it may be right in asserting that the Legislative Union is necessary for the stability of the Empire, and for the prosperity of Great Britain, must be wrong in claiming that it is also necessary for the prosperity of Ireland. That is a disagreeable dilemma to face. It must be intensely painful 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 legislative Union. It is due to excessive centralization—to a false conception of the

relations that should exist between the two contracting parties; and it is traceable to many causes which have occurred, it is true, since the Union, but which are not necessarily 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, and especially 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. That contract 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 many causes have become operative which have intensified the need of exceptional treatment to a degree that could not have been dreamed of when the contract 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 recognized to a certain practical

extent, and in theory it is recognized even now. Ireland did not pay the same taxes as Great Britain. Until 1853, 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, the necessity for custom-houses, &c., was so great as to make equalization of the duties necessary; 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 in 1853 for a limited number of years in order to balance a debt of just under four millions incurred mainly in relieving the poor during the great famine; but it has remained ever since, and is raised 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 changes were necessary in order to equalize the burden between the two islands. They constituted a deliberate breach of the spirit of the Union, and cannot be justified.

It will, I think, be conceded that, according to their relative capacity to bear taxation, the inhabitants of Ireland are grievously overtaxed as compared with the people of Great Britain. The weight of taxation upon Ireland¹ has increased enormously of late years. It may be argued that the increase is general over the whole United Kingdom, and equally affects Great Britain. That is true, but to a certain extent only. The burden is the same, but it is not equally distributed. 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, amounting to nearly four millions in the past century, and without any counter-balancing increase in accumulated wealth, in prosperity, or in capacity to bear taxation. The growth of taxation in Great Britain has been nothing in comparison with the increase in Ireland.

Ireland is grievously overtaxed, strangled by taxation. Relief must be sought for in one or two ways—reduced taxation, or increased capacity to bear taxation. The former method may be impossible; the latter is certainly possible.

¹*Vide* Appendix II.

Ireland needs development. She is forced to live 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-drainage, the improvement of harbours, cheap transit, equitable adjustment of local rates—all these, but especially the question of transit, ought to be considered by Government, 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 in other directions, of the principle animating 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 appeal to the sense of justice and to the prudence of the people

of Great Britain. We ask them to recognize 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, the taxpayers in Great Britain are now partners in the industrial life of the Irish people, and that it is to their direct advantage that that industrial life should not decay, and their security become impaired. 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. Englishmen freely admit that behind all the trouble there lies a dark page in the history of Ireland for which they are responsible. They frankly 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, willing that Ireland should have fair play in the future; but they not unreasonably expect that Ireland should devote her best energies honestly to

assisting them in the good work of repairing the errors of former days.

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 root of trouble are practical grievances that can be remedied, and that unreasonable prejudice on the part of a few irreconcilables must not block the way, it will insist upon endeavouring to secure peace by peaceful means: it will no longer rely 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. An honestly friendly attitude towards Great Britain is the second of our reforms.

Ireland needs assistance in many ways. Can she complain that she does not get the necessary help from others when she has not yet learned to help herself? 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 neutralize 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 from concerted action and from 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 just claims of the Irish people will ever bridge 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 realize 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 to 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.

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 figure-head, 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 the various 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 is not 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. As a result of an inquiry into what is known as "Castle Government" in Ireland, *The Nationalist* printed (January 11th, 1906) the following

¹ Irish Departments are fed, in round figures, 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.

instructive list of the various offices concerned in the control of affairs in that island :—

Located in Dublin Castle itself, we find the following separate Departments :—

1. The Lord Lieutenant's Household.
2. The Chief Secretary's Office.
3. The State Paper Department.
4. The Office of Arms.
5. The Treasury Remembrancer's Office.
6. The National School Teachers' Superannuation Office.
7. The Board of Conservators of Fisheries.
8. The Department of Registrar of Petty Sessions Clerks.
9. The General Prisons Board.
10. Office of Reformatory and Industrial Schools.
11. Office of Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums.
12. Public Loan Fund Board.
13. The Royal Irish Constabulary Office.
14. The Dublin Metropolitan Police Office.

In the Custom House, which was built by an Irish Parliament for the growing commerce of a prosperous nation, there are now installed the following Departments of the Government :—

15. The Local Government Board.
16. The Board of Trade.
17. The Customs.
18. The Inland Revenue :—
 - (a) Stamp and Tax Department.
 - (b) Excise Department.
 - (c) Estate Duty Office.
19. The Stationery Office.

So wonderful was the expansion of the Castle Board system during the past half century—while the emigrant ships were bearing away the people at the rate of a million a decade—that the Castle and Custom House could no longer house them, and a “plantation” of new Departments was effected in recent times in the vicinity of Merrion Square, where they have

invaded the splendid old residential quarters of the Irish nobility and gentry in Upper Merrion Street, Ely Place, and Hume Street. In this quarter are settled :—

20. The Intermediate Education Board.
21. The General Valuation and Boundary Survey Office.
22. The Board of Public Works.
23. The Civil Service Committee (Branch Office).
24. The Irish Land Commission.
25. „ Estates Commissioners.
26. „ Office of Public Trustee.
27. The National Gallery.
28. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, with its affiliated Departments, viz. :—
29. The Irish Fisheries Office.
30. The Veterinary Department.
31. The College of Science.
32. The School of Art.
33. The Science and Art Museum.
34. The National Library.

Occupying other former town residences of the Irish nobility in various parts of the city are found :—

35. The Board of National Education.
36. The General Register Office.
37. The Congested Districts Board.
38. The Registry of Deeds.

To this already lengthy list have still to be added :—

39. The Post Office Department.
40. The Irish Branch of the Geological Survey.
41. The Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests.
42. The Commissioners of Education in Ireland. (This Department is not the same as No. 35.)
43. The Ordnance Survey of Ireland.
44. Office of Inspectors of Factories.
45. War Office, Auditor's Office.
46. Royal Naval Reserve Office.

47. The Woods and Forests Office.
48. The Public Record Office.
49. Joint Stock Companies Registry Office.
50. The Registry of Friendly Societies.
51. Office of the Royal University.
52. The Commissioners of Irish Lights.

Any survey of the waste and extravagance of Irish administration would not be complete without a glance at the Four Courts. Here we find the following separate Departments, each with its own costly staff :—

53. The Lunacy Department.
54. Crown and Hanaper Office.
55. Local Registration of Title Office.
56. Record and Writ Office.
57. Consolidated Taxing Office.
58. Consolidated Accounting Office.
59. The Chancery Registrar's Office.
60. Principal Registry Offices of Probate.
61. King's Bench Division Office.
62. Lord Chancellor's Court.
63. Master of the Rolls' Court.
64. Chancery Division Court.
65. Land Judge's Court.
66. Bankruptcy Court.
67. Admiralty Court.

These sixty-seven Departments constitute the Civil administration of Ireland. Among the numerous military Departments in the capital may be enumerated the Headquarters Office, Kilmainham, the Army Ordnance Department, the Army Medical Staff, the Army Pay Department, and the Army Veterinary Department.

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 heads of the Treasury. The Board of Works and other departments in similar cases 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 1905, the sums placed upon twenty-six Irish votes amounted to about four

and a half millions, of which about three millions were 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 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, uncontrolled 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 civilized 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 protest.

That a great saving of expenditure can be effected is certain. The Government in Ireland is carried out through a number of departments which do not represent, and are not in the remotest degree under the control of, those who are governed. Year by year the expenditure proceeds at an extravagant rate despite the protests of the Irish people; and in such circumstances surely it is unfair to taunt them with the fact that the balance of revenue available for Imperial purposes is very small.

The latest available figures from the Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Inland Revenue throw some light upon the cost of government in Ireland, as a glance at the following table will show:—

TABLE showing for each part of the United Kingdom the Number of Assessments and the Gross Income Assessed on Government Officials for the year 1904-5.

	England, Total.	Scotland.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.
Number of Assessments ...	74,272	940	2,794	78,006
Gross Income ...	£20,995,179	£301,075	£1,028,844	£22,325,098

It will be seen that Ireland, with the same population approximately as Scotland, is blessed with 2,794 Government officials in comparison with 940 in Scotland; and that the total payment in Ireland for Government officials assessable to income tax amounts to over £1,000,000

per year, while in Scotland the gross outlay is about £300,000. Ireland has, as compared with Scotland, the privilege of entertaining many more Government officials, and of paying a good deal more per head for them.

The ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer dismissed the subject of Ireland's overtaxation with the taunt that Ireland contributes but little to Imperial expenditure. Ireland cries aloud and bitterly that she is choked and smothered under taxation altogether beyond her capacity to pay. And what is the cause of both complaints? A scandalously extravagant system of financial administration, and the divorce of the people from the conduct of their own affairs. To insist on burdening Ireland with a system of government the most expensive in the world, the most irresponsible, and the least reflective of the wishes of the people of the country; to refuse to allow public opinion to be brought to bear upon departmental administration, to deny the people the right to make economies, and to devote the proceeds to the needs of the population and the development of the country, appears to me a policy fatuous, irrational, and incompatible with the democratic spirit of the form of government under which we live.

The non-political propositions of the Irish Reform Association are not likely to meet with serious disapproval. 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 Irish Reform Association that the conflict of opinions has arisen. The question which I commend to the earnest consideration of all moderate men, and especially of Unionists, is—Are those proposals, not viewed in detail, but judged of by the general principles underlying them, calculated to offer a reasonable solution of some Irish problems and 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 that some authority should

be established to deal in Ireland with Private Bills originating there. On this point the Irish Reform Association has made suggestions which may or may not be the best possible.¹

All that that body maintains 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 as it now exists.

The Irish Reform Association desires also to see a delegation of legislative functions to an Irish body. It may be asked why this devolution is suggested; but surely the reasons are obvious. 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 work Parliament disposes of 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 business. Parliament has ceased to fulfil its functions as an institution for administering Imperial, English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish affairs. It is overburdened. It is becoming more and more a registration body, whose function and duty it is to put its signature to the few bills that the Government of

¹ See Appendix I.

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 cannot fail to be neglected, under the present circumstances. However willing Parliament may be, it is impotent through lack of time. It is necessary to give relief to Parliament, and to ensure that Irish business shall be attended to with full knowledge, care, and sympathy. The view of the Irish Reform Association is that power to deal with much of the business relating to Irish affairs, with which Parliament is at present unable to cope, may, with perfect safety, and with advantage both to Ireland and to Parliament, be delegated to an Irish body.

It has been asserted that the real object is to set up a separate and independent Parliament.

The idea is absurd. Such a body as has been proposed 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 proposed by the Association would be at the other end of the scale. It would be a law-making body endowed with very large and important functions ; but it would still be subordinate, for its powers would be derived from a superior source.

Of still greater importance are the proposals of the Irish Reform Association regarding finance. Money is needed for the development of the country. 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 pursuance of the policy stigmatized by some as "killing Home Rule by kindness." It is not kindness we are pleading for; we 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.

Ireland should not be swathed in swaddling clothes, and fed with a spoon by a capricious nurse. What she requires is freedom to use her own limbs and to feed herself. 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.

Money is needed for development, 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 Imperial taxpayer a penny in credit or in cash.

It has been estimated, and with truth, that economies to the extent of from one to three millions a year could 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.

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 make savings in many ways. Ireland is extraordinarily free from crime; and unquestionably in time considerable economies in the policing of the country will become possible. As it is, the time is ripe for the 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. Surely there must be something a little wrong about a system under which the legal machinery costs three or four times as much in Ireland as in Scotland, where the population is about the same and somewhat more predisposed to crime.

The Irish Reform Association has proposed 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 people. It holds that under the present system, the financial administration is wasteful and unappreciative of the needs of the country, and that the methods in which moneys devoted to the Irish service are expended do not inspire public confidence in Ireland; and it believes that this most unhealthy state of things can be remedied by the institution of a Financial Council, or some body dealing with finance, through which local knowledge, experience, interest, and talent can be applied to financial administration in Ireland.

Let me sum up the position to make it perfectly clear. The political 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 main political objects at which it aims. How far the proposals made are capable of carrying those principles into practical effect is a question about which differences of opinion must naturally arise. Those proposals will be found in Appendix I. They are not to be taken as complete or final. On the contrary, they were put forward, as is indeed expressly stated in them, tentatively to stimulate inquiry. The objections raised to them have been criticisms on details which the Association did not attempt to definitely deal with. It was not within its proper function to do so. To formulate a scheme for the better government of Ireland, and deal with finance, is, in fact, to draft a bill for presentation to Parliament—an operation which can be undertaken only by a

Government in consultation with the Treasury. All that the Irish Reform Association could do was to make certain suggestions on certain lines. Its suggestions are confined to the delegation of legislative functions, the transference of control from the Treasury to a local body, and the means of financing that body. The line it recommended was that of Devolution. Real reform—not mere tinkering departmental changes—in the system of Castle Government must proceed on one of two lines—either on the line of federation, as exemplified, for instance, in the relation between the Dominion and Provincial Governments in Canada; or by devolution, such as, for example, may be found in the relations between the Central and Provincial Governments in India. Federation might be the best line to work upon; but federation, if it ever comes, will come as part of a very much larger measure of an Imperial character, and, in the meantime, Ireland cannot wait. Federation is also open to the objection that, obviously, repeal must precede it, and repeal, in my opinion, is quite below the horizon of practical politics. There remains devolution; and the Irish Reform Association was, in my humble opinion, well advised in adopting those lines. So much for the general views of that much-abused body, the Irish Reform Association. It has not put forward any stereotyped scheme; and

on details, and details of perhaps considerable importance, some divergence in the views of individual members must naturally exist.

Speaking merely for myself, I desire to make my position clear.

In the Irish political vocabulary much confusion of language unfortunately prevails. What does "Unionism" mean? What is one to understand by "Nationalism"? Who will define "Home Rule"? "Repeal" is the only term in Irish political nomenclature to which definite signification can be attached, and, for that reason, I suppose, it is seldom used. Repeal is merely a destructive policy carrying with it no indication of what is to be substituted for the particular form of political connection that now exists between Great Britain and Ireland. Still, Repeal is a policy, and Unionism ought to imply, and at one time did imply, the opposite of that policy, but of late it has come to mean a great deal more. As used by the old ascendancy party, and as preached to the electorate at the last General Election, it means the denial of any extension of self-governing power to Ireland within the legislative union. Unionism has been degraded to a policy of mere negation.

By "Nationalism" almost anything may be understood from aspiration for complete independence to an expression of faith in the fact

that Ireland is a nation. The various ideals of Nationalists may, I think, be thus fairly described:—(1) Independence, in the form of an Irish Republic; (2) Dualism; (3) Repeal, and restoration of the *status quo ante*. To none of these ideals can I assent, so I suppose I cannot count myself a Nationalist, though firm in the living faith that the people of Ireland are a nation. Home Rule is so often used as an alternative expression for Nationalism, that I am precluded from calling myself a Home Ruler, although I advocate what I believe to be Home Rule. A Reformer is too vague an appellation. I therefore dub myself a Devolutionist.

I do not commend any particular proposals on the lines of devolution to the acceptance of those whose ideal is an independent Ireland as a discharge in full of their claims. Their ideal is not my ideal, and I merely urge my own views. 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 still 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 Great Britain has

a perfect right to protect herself. Dualism is surely out of the question, especially with the example of Sweden and Norway before us. Failing the position of an absolutely independent and self-sufficient State, Ireland, whatever her form of government may be, must be largely dependent upon Great Britain, acutely sensitive to her policy. In a war of tariffs Ireland must infallibly go to the wall. If it came to the worst, Great Britain, the consumer, could do without Ireland, the producer. Foreign countries would benefit; Ireland would perish. It would in my humble opinion be the rankest folly on the part of Ireland to deprive herself of the power she possesses in determining policy, especially in connection with trading, commercial, and fiscal matters. With the example of the ruin of her industries in the past before her, it would be madness on the part of Ireland to lay herself at the mercy of a Parliament in which she had no representation. She would sink to the ignominious position of the merest dependency. 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 distinct nationality, and should 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. She has every reason also to 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 completely independent position for Ireland. But I do not deny that I sympathize 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 methods of dealing with that condition not too fatally remote. I make no appeal to sentiment or romance. I 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 rapidly 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”? I appeal to Englishmen and Scotchmen on other grounds.

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 not singular 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 spiritualized 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 realize 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.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO UNIONS: PROSPERITY AND DISTRESS.

THE stock arguments against any political reform for Ireland that I find generally used in conversation are — (1) that what is good enough for England must be good enough for Ireland; (2) that as Scotland has prospered since her Union, it must be Ireland's fault if she has not also prospered. With the first argument I have dealt shortly, but I hope conclusively, in the Introduction. The second must be examined at greater length, for the inference is sound unless good cause can be shown against it.

Ireland's present difficulties are bound up with Ireland's past history. Her history has been advanced as the most cogent reason for redressing many of her grievances; and at the same time historical considerations have been adduced to show the impossibility of redress. Someone, Sir Horace Plunkett I think it was, alluded to this fact when he said that Ireland should tacitly forget her past history, and England should tacitly remember it. That is sound

advice, for Ireland is too fond of brooding over the past; and Great Britain is too apt to dismiss a painful subject from her mind. Into history I cannot, of course, go now in detail. Nevertheless, to understand the Irish problem Irish history should be considered; and though in a sketch such as this it is necessary to confine oneself mainly to the present, and quite modern times, I shall have to allude also, in general terms, to the past.

The modern history of the Irish political movement may be said to date from the time when Mr. Gladstone took up the cause, now over twenty years ago. One of the most remarkable facts in the struggle for the Repeal of the Union was the attitude of the majority of the people of Scotland towards the question. It is somewhat difficult to account for the strong wave of Unionism that passed over Scotland in 1893. Mr. Gladstone's was a name to conjure with until he became a convert to the policy of repeal, and embodied his policy in the Bills of 1886 and 1893; yet the expression of opinion against it was, if possible, more strongly marked in Scotland than in England. In the main it was doubtless due to a wise understanding of the value of the legislative union between the two islands, and as a protest against dismemberment. There may, also, have been a feeling of disgust with the methods employed to enforce repeal, and with

the admission that the Home Rule Bills were introduced in deference to outrage. But other influences were probably at work. It was not unnatural for a practical and logical people to argue that as Scotland had prospered greatly since the Union with England, Ireland ought to have prospered under the Union with Great Britain; and that, if she had not done so, it must be due to some inherent defect in the Irish character, or because she had obstinately refused to avail herself of opportunities which Scotland wisely utilized for her own great benefit. On this point something must be said, because the same ideas may influence the Scottish people still, and may prejudice them against all reform. A truer conception of the spirit of the Act of Union, coupled with wise and beneficial reform in the whole system of government in Ireland, is necessary in order to make the Union justifiable in its results. By such means the Union between Great Britain and Ireland can be made to justify itself in the prosperity of the latter country, as the Union of Scotland has justified itself; and I must therefore endeavour to prove that it will be arguing on false premises, reasoning on a false analogy, to attribute the failure of the Union in bringing prosperity to Ireland to any particular defect in the Irish character, or to a double dose of original sin. Quite intelligible reasons exist why

Ireland has not prospered under the Union with Great Britain, although Scotland has prospered under the Union with England.

In making any comparison between the relative results of union upon Scotland and Ireland, the whole sum of circumstances—historical, ethnological, and others—must be taken into consideration. The political history and social condition of Scotland and Ireland at the time of their respective Unions were absolutely dissimilar. In no important particular whatever can they be considered to be alike. Scotland had long before entirely emerged from the tribal state, and had arrived at the condition of a homogeneous people. She enjoyed a stable form of government under hereditary kings, and had, indeed, given a king to England. She had an absolutely independent Parliament of her own. At the time of the Legislative Union she, as a self-dependent kingdom, and as a community that had long been self-dependent and independent, entered on equal terms with another kingdom of the same character. That was the condition of Scotland. Compare it with that of Ireland. Independent Ireland had over-kings, but they exercised at best a very vague and shadowy authority. Independent Ireland never really emerged from the tribal state. Her condition was one of perpetual war within her borders. She had all the makings, if such a term may be used,

of a nation, and, so far as size of territory would permit, of a great one. She created an architecture peculiar to herself; she had arts of her own, and an abundant literature. For a time she was foremost in civilization among the people of the West; but her development was arrested. Politically and socially she did not work her way up to the condition of an independent homogeneous State, with an ordered society under a settled, stable, and continuous form of government. She had at various times Parliaments of a kind, and a Parliament in the modern sense for a few short years before the Union, but it was not representative of the people; it did not control the executive, and was independent only in name. Such was her condition when she entered into Legislative Union—a very different one from that of Scotland.

England never succeeded in anglicizing or colonizing Scotland. She did not impose an alien system of land-tenure upon her, or an alien Church. She did not persecute her or confiscate her lands, as in Ireland. Scotland, of course, suffered persecution and confiscation; but, speaking generally, it was Scot persecuting and confiscating Scot. Across the Channel, it was English persecuting and confiscating Irish. The difference in permanent effect is very great. Ireland had very early progressed far on the path of civilization. In religion, architecture, literature,

and the arts, she was ahead of what is now Great Britain or of any European peoples ; but socially and politically she never rose to the condition of a settled, self-sustaining, independent State. Her people were never united, and they fell an easy prey. She was not really conquered in the sense of being brought into complete subjection throughout. Spasmodic local struggles were kept up, but her territories were perpetually overrun, and wave after wave of planters were settled upon the land. For centuries the Irish people were under the heel of England, and England struggled to stamp out the distinctive nationality of the country. The consequences of the essential distinction that exists between the geographical position of the two countries in respect to England must be fully realized also. In the one case a more or less arbitrary borderline exists between England and Scotland, territory and race merging gradually together. In the other, the storm-tossed Irish Sea between England and Ireland definitely marks differences both of territory and race.

When the Union between England and Scotland was carried into effect, Scotland was fully equipped with her own commercial institutions, and accumulated capital ; and Scotsmen were showing a tendency to found, under the authority of the Scottish Parliament, offshoots and separate colonies of their own.

English and Scottish interests were, to some extent, clashing; but, on the other hand, the commercial relations between the two countries were very close, the sense of community of interests was strong, and it was felt that, as some solution of the problem had to be found, the best lay in closer political relations through the union of the Parliaments. Scotland possessed the means of utilizing the Union for her own benefit; and her people were fully capable of doing so. Ireland had not the means: she had few industries and no store of capital; the nation was demoralized; and the people were smarting under a deep sense of injury, owing to the fact that their commercial enterprise and their industries had been deliberately crushed out.

For many years after the Act of 1707 was passed, it was viewed by some persons with little favour. They feared that Scotland would lose her distinctive nationality, and become anglicized. They were wrong; and those who viewed the Act of Union with cordial anticipation of good for Scotland were right. They realized that the Scottish people were more likely to conquer the English than the English were likely to conquer them; and this has proved to be the fact. Year by year England and the British Empire have passed more and more under the sway of the

all-conquering Scot. Lord Rosebery, a Scotchman, was the last Liberal Prime Minister; Mr. Balfour, a Scotsman, held that exalted post for four years; and now Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, another Scotsman, holds office as the First Minister of the Crown. In many respects, in science and commerce, and especially in mechanics, the Scotsman holds a high place, not only in the United Kingdom, but throughout the Empire; wherever an engine is at work, by land or sea, there a Scotsman is to be found. He has taken a great part in the colonization of the daughter lands overseas. Scotland, having had the means for doing so, has worked the Act of Union greatly to her own advantage. And Scotland owes much to the genius of two of her sons—giants in literature—Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott—who popularized her romance. She became the fashion. Old feuds, such as they were, have been obliterated by the interchange of opinions and intermixture of peoples, by intermarriage, by commerce, and by the healthy respect which the Scottish people have been able to win for themselves throughout the British Empire.

From beginning to end the case of Ireland has been entirely different. She never had a fair start. Her growth was stunted, her natural development arrested; and, such is the irony of

fate, in the interests of religion an English Pope issued a Bull to Henry II, directing him to assume authority over Ireland, in order that Ireland might be made more dutifully Catholic than she was. For centuries English pretensions were enforced by all the power of both State and Church. The Norman adventurers won their way into the country, and received grants of great tracts of land. The feudal system—a system which was quite uncongenial to the people, and never took root—was introduced, and the land struggle of the centuries commenced. In succeeding years, this attempt to colonize Ireland was renewed again and again; and after Cromwell's victorious march through the country, he initiated a great scheme of anglicization which left deep marks. Practically the whole of Ireland, with the exception of Connaught, was portioned out among British settlers. Connaught, the poorest corner of Ireland, became what Americans, with reference to the native Indians of their continent, would call "a reservation." The Irish people were driven into this part of their native land, and an attempt was made to coop them up, while large numbers of Irish women and girls were shipped to the West Indies in a state of slavery or little better.

The extraordinary thing about all the schemes for the settlement of Ireland is that they have

always failed. The Irish people may not have revealed the strong, sagacious qualities and capacity for united action which enabled the Scottish people to hold their own against anything and anybody, and to resist the English until they saw an opportunity of conquering England by the peaceful arts of civilization; but the Irish have shown extraordinary vitality and tenacity, great recuperative power, and a marvellous capacity for assimilating, moulding, and absorbing foreign elements introduced among them. Ireland has always laid successful siege to the hearts of all the settlers upon her shores. Her people possess qualities and characteristics which can never be obliterated. Normans and other settlers became more Irish than the Irish. Ireland to-day is populated by a people of probably more various origin than can be found in any other island of the same size in the world; but in the Irish people of to-day the old Celtic qualities remain. The original characteristics of the early inhabitants of Ireland, in spite of all the incursions of settlers coming across the Irish Sea, have been preserved. In a sense, Ireland has also conquered England.

To turn to more modern times, Ireland suffered from civil war and dynastic troubles in common with England and Scotland, but she quickly recovered. The people showed great com-

mercial ability. Possessed, as she was, of many potential sources of wealth in her splendid waterways, in the fertility of her soil, and in her geographical position, Ireland quickly developed important textile industries and manufactures of all kinds. The progress made in the years succeeding the Restoration showed 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 country. Irish success aroused English jealousy, and Ireland was at England's mercy, while Scotland never was. Textile and other industries were interfered with. Her trade in live cattle was put an end to by the English Parliament. Ireland then turned her attention to the provision trade with England, the Continent, and the Colonies. Again Ireland was successful, and, as a result, Irish shipping commenced to grow rapidly. Again England stepped in, and gradually the whole of the Irish industries were swept out of existence. Ireland was treated as a foreign country and a dangerous rival. England used the authority of her Parliament, which even before the days of the Scottish Union had never extended to Scotland, to cripple Irish industry, and the Irish people, denied the opportunity of developing their

trades, fell back upon agriculture, and struggled along as best they could under a weight of legislative restrictions from which even agriculture was not exempt. Gradually they lost their high technique, and were robbed of confidence in themselves and in English justice.

To come down to recent times, the Fiscal Policy, commonly called Free Trade, was detrimental to Ireland. It was eminently suited to Great Britain at a period when she had practically gained the command of all the markets of the world; but it was disastrous to agriculture in Ireland—the only industry which English statesmen had permitted to survive—and, consequently, it was disastrous to Ireland. The revolution effected by steam, and the success of Mr. Cobden, led to an immense development of manufacture and of trade in England, and the country was transformed from an agricultural into the greatest industrial country of the world, because she possessed, not only a great mercantile marine, but also, in a larger measure than any other nation developed at that time, the raw material essential to manufacture. Scotland, to a large extent, shared in this advantage. Ireland, on the other hand, suffered without any compensating advantage. She possessed no very large mineral deposits of assured commercial value; and at the time the great change in the commercial policy of England came, and

Ireland was thrown open to the traders of the world, as England and Scotland were thrown open, the Irish people had no established manufacturing industries and no accumulation of capital, and had lost, under British restrictions, that hereditary technical skill which at one time had rendered their manufactures successful even against the favoured productions of England. They had also been robbed of that inestimable advantage—confidence in themselves.

From this brief review of some of the salient facts in the history of Ireland, it will be seen how very different has been the course of events in the “Island of Saints” and in the “Land o’ Cakes.” Scotland, long before the Union, had developed into the status of an absolutely independent, ordered State, under a constitutionally restricted monarchy. Scotland was always Scotland, and as such her policy has always been successfully defensive against aggression, colonization, and all forms of oppression. The common Crown was not synonymous with a common Parliament. So long as the two kingdoms remained under distinctive Parliaments, she held what she possessed; when the two Parliaments were united, she kept what she had, and proceeded to acquire more by spoiling the Saxon. Owing to the absence of any well-defined line of demarcation between the two countries, Scotland has been able to impress her

nationality upon England to a large extent ; and, for the same reason, England knows and understands Scotland. Ireland, on the other hand, never achieved the position of an independent, homogeneous State under a settled form of government. Ireland was never Ireland in the contest against England. From want of unity, the country gradually lost its independence, and, from the same cause, all its power of self-defence. As a consequence, Ireland was misused in the past to suit the temporary requirements of English trade, as she is now too often misused to suit the passing requirements of mere party politics. Owing to a boisterous Channel, Ireland has not impressed her nationality upon England as Scotland has done ; nor does England understand her as she does Scotland. What is the average Englishman's conception of Irishmen ? A cross between the jovial stage Irishman—a comical creature in knee-breeches and a frieze tail-coat, capering with a pipe in his hat-band, a whiskey-bottle in his pocket, and whirling a blackthorn stick—and the weird being with black mask and blunderbuss, who looms, with such ridiculous inaccuracy, in the columns of "The Times." England has not understood, does not understand, has not taken the trouble to understand, Ireland ! The assertion by its people of their claim to distinctive nationality, religion, and language has only served to irritate

the English people into acts of domination and repression. An alien land system, an alien language, an alien Church, an alien judiciary, an alien administration, were all in succession forced upon Ireland.

I hope I have said enough in this bare, sketchy outline of events in proof of my contention that no analogy is to be found in the circumstances of Scotland and Ireland at the time of their respective Unions.

We cannot judge fairly of the Irish problem unless we realize that we cannot argue what Ireland ought to be from what Scotland is.

CHAPTER IX.

MODELS OF DEVOLUTION IN THE BRITISH
EMPIRE.

AN unsophisticated stranger chancing lately to visit the United Kingdom might well imagine that those who have suggested that a large devolution of power would be greatly to the advantage of both Ireland and the Imperial Parliament had committed a treasonable act against the Commonwealth. The extraordinary misconstruction placed upon "devolution" dates from a meeting in Dublin in August, 1903, when it was decided to establish the Irish Reform Association. In the first report which was circulated, it was 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." The mere suggestion that Ireland should have a greater voice in the management of her own affairs fired the wild

imagination of extreme Unionists on both sides of the Channel to the folly of asserting that devolution was the same as repeal; and even moderate and sensible men, who were aware that devolution, whatever it might be, could not possibly be repeal, objected to it on the ground that it must lead up, through violence and persecution, to repeal and independence. It is curious how prejudice can blind the eyes of men to all the lessons which may be deduced from the history of the British Empire.

The story of that Empire is the record of political devolution. The Empire consists of a series of communities enjoying various amounts of self-governing power derived from the sovereign Legislature. They are joined together by the tie of loyalty to the Throne, and by the sense of fellowship which has arisen from common enjoyment of the widest possible political, religious, and social freedom. The only occasion upon which the right of free government was strenuously denied to a portion of the British Empire was followed by a revolt which culminated in the formation of the United States of America. The lesson which the rebellion of the American colonies taught has had a most powerful influence for good; and to-day the British Empire affords the most conclusive testimony to the benefits of those free institutions which had their birth in the United Kingdom, and have

been gradually planted in the daughter lands oversea, and in the Indian Empire itself.

It may be as well to remark at the outset that the suggestion that the Imperial Parliament should delegate to a local body the control of purely Irish affairs has no parallel in any of the foreign federations, and that consequently the lessons which may be learned from such examples of autonomy as exist abroad have no real bearing on the Irish problem as it presents itself to the people of the United Kingdom. In the case of Ireland, the Irish Reform Association has proposed merely that certain powers of control should be delegated by the Imperial Parliament to bodies representing local opinion, and responsive to local requirements. Where can a parallel to such a simple measure be found? The United States is a federation of a number of states, only nominally independent and sovereign, as the Civil War revealed. In Switzerland we have a republic constituted out of a number of territories whose perpetual neutrality and inviolability are guaranteed by the Great Powers. The cases of Sweden and Norway, as of Austria and Hungary, can be quoted only as illustrations of the failure of Dualism—of Home Rule of the type of Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1886.

For anything like a parallel, we must search much nearer home. Autonomy in varying degrees

is the keynote of the British Empire. The processes which have been at work for so many centuries within what is now the British Empire may be summed up thus:—

(1) The success—the fact of Empire—results from the application of two analogous principles: (a) the reservation to ancient communities of their distinctive characteristics, usages, laws, languages, and governing powers; (b) the delegation of power to new and developing communities.

(2) The one failure of the British Empire—Ireland—is due to the negation of these principles, and the attempt to obliterate distinctive characteristics and usages, and to produce absolute homogeneity by force.

The twin policies of reservation of rights and customs, and devolution of varying measures of self-government to new communities, have been pursued in face of conditions which, to the theoretical politician of to-day, might seem to contain the seeds of inevitable failure. Under our very eyes we may see the most extraordinary lengths to which local self-government has been safely carried in the present position of the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man in relation to the Imperial Government. These small islands off our own coasts are practically independent. They make their own laws, manage their own affairs, and, unless specifically mentioned, Acts of the Imperial Parliament do not

apply to them. The Channel Islands frankly acknowledge the sovereignty of the Crown and the authority of the Imperial Government, and yet racially the people are French to their very marrow-bones. They retain their own language ; they have a system of military service ; and a coinage of their own. They remain loyally attached to the British Empire because the Imperial Parliament has never attempted to stamp out their language or customs, nor sought to force British institutions upon a people who are non-British in their cast of mind. The same may be said of the Isle of Man. These islands exist at our very doors as illustrations of the wise statesmanship of our forefathers. Theoretically, it would not be difficult for a political extremist of the Unionist type to prove that the large measure of self-government enjoyed by them must result in disaster ; yet the story of self-government in these small divisions of the British Empire conclusively disproves such arguments as are applied to Ireland when it is suggested that the people of that island should have delegated to them the management of their own affairs.

The position of affairs in the Channel Islands is this :—Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark are grouped together under a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the Crown ; but otherwise their Governments are separate. Jersey has a

Lieutenant-Governor of its own. Each island possesses a legislature of its own, known as the "States," and each of these assemblies is presided over by an official styled a "bailiff," who is a nominee of the Crown. The States are partly elective and partly nominated; and the Government of the island has been, and is, conducted in accordance with the traditions of the people and with a view to preserving their individual character, their customs, and their language.

The circumstances of the Isle of Man well merit investigation. It is inhabited by a Celtic race, whose characteristics are not dissimilar from those of the people of Ireland, showing distinctive peculiarities of race and system of government. The history of this island, as related by Sir Spencer Walpole, a former Governor, and for some time Secretary of the Post Office, is a story of political development full of interest. Since 1866 the ancient House of Keys—which it is claimed had its origin before the British House of Commons—has been a representative body—indeed, the British Government would only consent to preserve to the island its right of control over local finance on condition that the old autocratic and unrepresentative House of Keys should be reformed and constituted a representative assembly, responsive to the wishes of the islanders. At that time the island was

little better than a department of the Home Office in London, and had no voice in the management of its finances; but with the introduction of representative government the island acquired a very large measure of autonomy under a Governor, appointed by the King, and assisted by:—(1) An Upper Chamber, consisting of a Council nominated by the Crown, and composed chiefly of ecclesiastical and judicial dignitaries; (2) a representative Chamber, the House of Keys.

The story of the development of the constitution cannot be described better than in the words of Sir Spencer Walpole:—

In the course of ages, the constitutions and functions of the House of Keys have been wholly altered. The assembly, which had originally been chiefly a judicial body, has become a branch of the Legislature; the House, which had been usually selected by the "Lord's" officers (when the Isle of Man belonged to the Stanleys), and none of whose members could sit without the "Lord's" will, has been converted into a Representative Chamber. But time, which has played such pranks with the Keys, has added another important element into the Manx Legislature. By a process, which can only be dimly traced, but whose effects are plainly visible, an Upper Chamber has been added to the Tynwald. . . . It was only by gradual process that the Council acquired its present name. In some statutes it was called the "Lord's Officers," in others the "Lord's Council." It was only gradually too that its composition became fixed. The Council now consists of the Bishop, the Attorney-General, the Clerk of the Rolls, the two Deemsters, the Archdeacon, the Receiver-General, and the Vicar-General. . . . It can only sit on the summons of the Governor, who presides at its meetings. With the exception of

the Vicar-General, who receives his appointment from the Bishop, all the members are appointed by the Crown ; but the odd rule prevailing in Crown Colonies, under which official members of the Council are required to vote with the Governor, has never been applied to this body.

The two branches of the Legislature are of co-ordinate authority. Public Bills may be introduced in either of them, though, as a matter of fact, legislation usually emanates from the Council. In the Isle of Man, as in the United Kingdom, the work of legislation tends to fall more and more into the hands of the Government, and the Chamber in which the Governor sits, and in which his chief adviser, the Attorney-General is present, naturally tends to become more and more the House in which new laws originate.

Continuing, Sir Spencer Walpole records :—

The course which is followed with legislation is similar to that pursued at Westminster. In the Council, Bills are read a first time, a second time are considered clause by clause, and read a third time, and passed. In the Keys, leave is asked for the introduction of a Bill ; the Bill is subsequently read a first time, considered on the second reading clause by clause, and is then passed. In the event of a disagreement between branches, conferences are usually held. These conferences are always held in the Council Chamber, and the Governor, as a general rule, represents and explains the views of the Council. The Keys are represented in the Conference by a deputation of five, six, or seven members, one of whom usually acts as spokesman, but whose views are frequently supported by his colleagues. The Conference, therefore, closely resembles what used to be known as a free conference in Parliament ; but it usually proves an efficient contrivance for reconciling differences. . . . Private legislation embraces, or may embrace, most of the subjects dealt with by Parliament in what are known as Public Local Acts, as well as in Private and Personal Acts. Public measures deal with almost every subject connected with the public welfare of the island. There are certain points, however, with which Tynwald does not deal,

and which it leaves to Parliament to determine. For instance, matters affecting the post office and telegraphic service, the regulation of the army, the conduct of the mercantile marine beyond the territorial limits of the island, and others, are almost necessarily dealt with by Imperial legislation. Even in these matters, however, there is an increasing indisposition on the part of Tynwald to allow Parliament to legislate; and the members of the Court are always ready to supplement an Act of Parliament by an Act of Tynwald to prevent the necessity of seeing the Isle of Man expressly included in Imperial legislation. . . . The Imperial Parliament acts on the principle that the island should be suffered to regulate its own affairs, and does not attempt to include it in Imperial legislation.

Wherever the British flag waves, the empire-building system of devolution will be found in active work. It may be traced in all Crown Colonies and dependencies, which are, for the most part, small communities under the control of the mother country through the Colonial Office. Government is carried on from home through the medium of governors and other public officers assisted by councils. The amount of devolution and representation varies. Take as an illustration the state of affairs in Malta. In this island the Governor is assisted by an Executive Council and by a Council of Government, which consists of six official and thirteen elected members. When the latter body acts contrary to Imperial policy, as interpreted by the Governor, the right is used to legislate by order in council, and this course has been followed in recent years in dealing with the language question, which was

the subject of local agitation and legislative inaction. As in the past, Italian continues to be the official language of the law courts; but parents may exercise the right of deciding whether their children shall be taught English or Italian in the schools.

Across the Atlantic we find another illustration of devolution even more amazing in its inconsistency with the political theories now advocated by official Unionism. The province of Quebec enjoys political autonomy with very few reservations. As a province of the Dominion its local Legislature cannot interfere in specified large questions which affect the welfare and unity of the whole of British North America. Quebec has ceased to be a problem to British statesmen, because she has been trusted with free institutions. Quebec is more essentially French than France itself. The religion of the people is Roman Catholicism of an almost mediæval type. French is the official language, and the language spoken by the majority of the people throughout the length and breadth of a colony controlled by French laws interpreted by French jurists. Quebec remains to-day French to the backbone; and it takes a legitimate pride in the unique position which it occupies. Had the Imperial Parliament interfered to apply to Quebec those principles which it has forced upon Ireland, it is probable that Quebec would

be either a distressful country, dragged after the Imperial chariot against its will, or that it would ere now have severed its connection with the United Kingdom. Under a wise system of devolution, which has made the British Empire what it is, Quebec is to-day happy and prosperous, loyal to the British Throne, and yet French through and through. Quebec is surely a remarkable illustration of the results which can be achieved by a system of devolution.

Less remarkable, but noteworthy, is the position which the Dominion of Canada and its other provinces, and the Commonwealth of Australia with its provinces, occupy under British rule. Year by year, Canada is being invaded by citizens of her southern neighbour. For every 1,000 people who proceed to Canada from the United Kingdom, 2,000 cross the border from the United States; yet no one doubts the loyalty of the Dominion; and why? Because Canada enjoys the largest possible amount of political freedom. The British Empire has never been held together by formal and inflexible paper agreements. Year by year the formal bonds binding the Colonies to the mother country have been relaxed with the consent of both parties. It has been realized that the British Empire is founded upon freedom. The whole story of the relations of the United Kingdom to its Colonies and

Dependencies has been one long process of devolution of political authority.

The over-sea confederations of the British Empire are amalgamations of separate Colonies enjoying a large measure of self-government. Without sacrificing any material part of their local autonomy, these Colonies were erected by an Act of Union into a federation, enjoying delegated authority under the Imperial Parliament. In Australasia, as in North America, the change consisted in the upbuilding of one great federation out of several smaller communities, and was possible only because, on the one hand, the Colonies guarded their powers of local government jealously, and, on the other, because the Federal Government had no wish to meddle in purely local concerns.

Each of the seven provinces forming the Dominion has a separate Parliament and administration. They have complete power to regulate their own affairs and dispose of their revenues, provided only that they do not interfere with the action and policy of the central administration. The responsibility of exercising a general control over subordinate provinces has been vested in the Federal Government; but, with this reservation, the Colonies forming the Dominion enjoy autonomy. In the Federal Scheme, the legislative machinery familiar in the United Kingdom is reproduced. The Governor-General represents the King; the

Upper House is the Senate, the members of which are nominated for life by the Governor-General in Council; and the House of Commons is the popularly elected body. Consequently the provinces have a voice in the Dominion affairs through the presence of their representatives in the Federal Legislature, while still retaining legislative functions over their own provincial affairs. Each province is presided over by a Lieutenant-Governor, appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of his Council. In Quebec and Nova Scotia the Legislature consists of two Chambers; in the other provinces of one only—the Legislative Assembly, which is popularly elected. In Quebec the Upper House is nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor for life; but in Nova Scotia both Houses are elective. In the Dominion of Canada the Imperial Parliament has gone so far as to waive its claim to control the affairs of the individual provinces. Todd, in his “Parliamentary Government,” records that :—

By the British North America Act, 1867, section 90, it is provided that the ultimate authority for determining upon the expediency of giving or withholding the Royal assent to Bills passed by the provincial Legislatures shall be the Governor-General of Canada, and not the Queen. This declaration of the Imperial Parliament has been construed by the Imperial Government itself to be a virtual relinquishment of the right to interfere with provincial legislation under any circumstances, and as vesting in the Dominion Governor in Council an absolute and unlimited responsibility for deciding thereon.

It is unnecessary to discuss the constitutions of the Commonwealth and Provinces of Australasia, as they closely follow the analogy of Canada. The main difference is that the Federal authority is more essentially the dominating body in Canada.

It may be said that in the case of these great over-sea Federations, the principle at work has been evolution rather than devolution; and that is theoretically true, as the process has been one of building up. But the great principle of devolution is manifest in the result. Authority is delegated from the Imperial Parliament to the Parliament of the Federation, and from it to the Parliaments of the federating Colonies.

Another remarkable instance of devolution under the British flag, although it differs in some important respects from the other examples which have been given, is to be found in India. The British people are apt to speak of the Indian Empire as though it were a concrete unit, similar in race, language, and religion, and social ideas. Exactly the reverse is the case. As Sir John Strachey has pointed out—

The differences between the countries of Europe are undoubtedly smaller than those between the countries of India. Scotland is more like Spain than Bengal is like the Punjab. European civilization has grown up under conditions which have produced a larger measure of uniformity than has been reached in the countries of the Indian continent, often separated from each other by greater distances, by greater

obstacles to communication, and by greater differences of climate. It is probable that not less than fifty languages, which may be rightly called separate, are spoken in India. The diversities of religion and race are as wide in India as in Europe; and political catastrophies have been as frequent and as violent. There are no countries in civilized Europe in which the people differ so much as the man of Madras differs from the Sikh; and the languages of Southern India are as unintelligible in Lahore as they would be in London.

The creation of a system of government sufficiently centralized to control so vast and varied an Empire, and sufficiently decentralized to meet the requirements of the numerous races and peoples composing it, presented difficulties far more formidable than those confronting us in Ireland; and, but for the far-sighted wisdom of a long line of able administrators, acting upon an intelligent and consistent policy at home, the problem might have proved insoluble under the influence of improved means of communication, leading to greater interchange of ideas, and of the wider diffusion of education. But for the circumspection which was exhibited in the past, we might be faced to-day by a problem not pleasant to contemplate. British statesmanship, which has sought to make of Ireland a geographical expression, which has denied to her people practical participation in the management of their own affairs, and has failed so conspicuously to make them prosperous and contented, has been able to evolve in the Indian Empire a

method of government which, while not subverting central authority, has delegated to localities and communities a considerable share in administrative work.

It is unfortunate that Englishmen are, as a rule, singularly ignorant of the extent to which devolution has been extended to India, because full knowledge of the political conditions which now obtain throughout the Indian Empire would widen the political horizon of the British people, and give them matter for thought and congratulation. India is not administered by any system of despotism ; nor is it under the heel of a huge army of possession. As Sir Charles Dilke has pointed out,¹ India, to a stay-at-home Englishman, appears to have a large army; but, he continues, "when we consider the number of her population, she has one of the smallest armies in the world." Not only is this statement absolutely true, but the peoples of the various great British provinces have a large share in the management of their own affairs, and the Civil Service of the Empire is almost exclusively, except in its highest ranks, in their own hands. Sir John Strachey² has stated :—

The ordinary Englishman's notion is that the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy and his council carry on, somehow or other, the government of India. Few Englishmen

¹ "The British Empire," p. 19.

² "India: its Administration and Progress," pp. 6, 7.

understand how comparatively little these high authorities have to do with the actual administration, or appreciate the fact that the seven or eight chief provinces of British India, which may be compared, in area and population, to the chief countries of Europe, have all their separate and, in a great measure, their independent Governments. Under circumstances of such extreme diversity as those which exist in India, no single system of administration could be appropriate. Instead of introducing unsuitable novelties from other countries, Indian or European, we have taken, in each province, with some unfortunate exceptions, the old local institutions as the basis of our own arrangements. Good or bad administration in India depends to a far greater extent on the Government of the province than on the distant authorities in Calcutta and London. The vast majority of the population is hardly conscious of the existence of the Viceroy and his Government.

It is unnecessary to trace here in detail the steps by which successive British administrators in India have given to the provinces placed under their control a large measure of local self-government. The fact is that nearly half a century ago the best minds in the Indian administration realized that over-centralization would prove a bar to progress, and that it was necessary to find some means of eliciting and utilising local opinion. In the Financial Statements for India more than forty years ago, one of the most far-seeing of Indian councillors (Mr. Laing) remarked :—

If this great empire is ever to have the roads, the schools, the local police, and other instruments of civilization which a flourishing country ought to possess, it is simply impossible that the Imperial Government can find either the money or

the management. The mere repair of the roads, where anything like a sufficiency of good roads have been made, is a matter altogether beyond the reach of any central bureau. It is of the first importance to break through the habit of keeping everything in dependence on Calcutta, and to teach the people not to look to the Government for things which they can do far better for themselves.

Over and over again the same truth was enforced, and in the Financial Statement for 1877-8 Sir John Strachey reiterated that the better management of the affairs of the provinces of India could be obtained only by giving to the local Governments, which have in their hands the actual working of the great branches of the revenue, a direct and, so to speak, a personal interest in the management.

It may be very wrong (Sir John Strachey remarked), but it is true, and will continue to be true while human nature remains what it is, that the local authorities take little interest in looking after the financial affairs of that abstraction, the supreme Government, compared with the interest which they take in matters which immediately affect the people whom they have to govern.

And this same writer added that—

When local Governments feel that good administration of the excise and stamps and other branches of revenue will give to them, and not only to the Government of India, increased incomes and increased means of carrying out the improvements which they have at heart, then, and not till then, we shall get the good administration which we desire, and with it, I am satisfied, we shall obtain a stronger and more real power of control on the part of the Central Government than we can now exercise.

Thanks to Lord Mayo and Lord Lytton, these primary truths met with full recognition; and gradually the Government of India was decentralized, and the provincial authorities and local administrations were given greater responsibility in financial and administrative work. Slowly but surely the Viceroys and their advisers have rolled down such responsibilities as they could from their own shoulders on to the shoulders of those charged with the administration of provincial affairs. At the same time the Civil Service of the country was, in a great measure, thrown open.

No higher authority can be quoted on this point than Sir John Strachey. Referring to the matter,¹ he says :—

Although the highest offices of control, which are comparatively few in number, are necessarily held by Englishmen, by far the greater, and a most important, part of the active administration is in native hands. Excluding all the 864 offices to which I have already referred (posts ordinarily, but by no means always, held by the Covenanted Civil Service), and excluding also all posts of minor importance, nearly all of which are held by natives, there are about 3,700 persons holding offices in the superior branches of the executive and judicial services, and among them there are only about 100 Europeans. The number of natives employed in the public service has gone on constantly increasing, and, with very rare exceptions, they now hold all offices other than those held by the comparatively small body of men appointed in England. . . . The organization of our great and highly efficient Native Civil Service is one of the most successful

¹ "India : its Administration and Progress," pp. 82, 83.

achievements of the British Government in India. Native officers manage by far the greater part of the business connected with all branches of the revenue, and with the multifarious interests in land. Natives dispose of most of the magisterial work. The duties of the Civil Courts throughout India, excepting the Courts of Appeal, are almost entirely entrusted to the native judges. Native judges sit on the Bench in each of the High Courts. For many years past native judges have exercised jurisdiction in all classes of civil cases, over natives and Europeans alike.

In the history of the Imperial Government of a dependency no analogy can be found to the breadth of view and wise generosity which has been shown in the control of the Indian Empire. If the British Government had shown the same trust of the Irish people—without reference to creed or politics—as they have reposed in the peoples of India in giving them the opportunity of personal and responsible service in the government of their country, the position of Ireland to-day would have been very different from what it is, and we should have heard less about “the English garrison.”

India is, to a large extent, defended by its own soldiers, its laws administered by its own judges, and its affairs administered by its own servants, and it now only remains to refer to the system of decentralization and localization by which administrative and legislative functions have been gradually devolved. At the head of the Indian Government is the Governor-General in Council. The ordinary members of the

Council are officials appointed by the Crown ; but for the purposes of legislation additional members are nominated to the Council. Not less than one-half of these additional members must be persons not holding office under the Government, and some of them are natives of India. Under the Act of 1861 the maximum number of additional members was fixed at twelve. The same principle was applied to the Legislatures in the provinces. In 1892 a significant change was made in recognition of the fact that the time had arrived when the administration might gain much advantage if public opinion could be brought more largely to bear upon it. "This," says Sir John Strachey, "was especially true of the Provincial Government, the ordinary business of which is of a kind in which local knowledge is necessary, and on which the expression of intelligent, independent criticism may often be very valuable." In this year the number of additional members in the Council of the Governor-General was fixed at not less than ten and not more than sixteen, at the discretion of the Viceroy. Of the sixteen additional members at present on the Council, six are official, and ten are non-official.

Four of the latter (Sir John Strachey records) are appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of a majority of the non-official additional members of the *Provincial Legislatures*, each of these bodies recommending one member. A fifth member is recommended by the Calcutta Chamber of

Commerce. The Governor-General can, if he thinks fit, decline to accept a recommendation thus made, and in that case a fresh recommendation is submitted to him. The remaining five non-official members are nominated at the discretion of the Governor-General, "in such manner as shall appear to him most suitable with reference to the legislative business to be brought before the Council, and the due representation of the different classes of the community." In the words of a despatch from the Government of India, "measures may at one time be before the Council, relating to interests which ought to be specially represented in their discussion; at another time the legislative work may be of a different description, calling for the selection of representatives from particular local divisions of the Empire, or from persons chosen to represent the most skilled opinion upon large measures affecting British India as a whole." It is desired also to reserve to the Governor-General the liberty of inviting representatives from Native States. Under the law as it stood before the passing of the Act of 1892, there was no opportunity of criticising the financial policy of the Government, except on those occasions when financial legislation was necessary. Under the rules now in force, the annual Financial Statement must be made publicly in the Council; every member is at liberty to make any observations that he thinks fit; and the Financial Member of the Council and the President have the right of reply.

In the case of the Governments of Bombay and Madras, the additional members nominated by the Governors to join their Councils for legislative purposes number twenty, of whom, under the rules laid down, not more than nine can be officials. To take the Bombay Council as an example of the method of carrying out the provisions of the Act of 1892, nominations to eight of the eleven non-official seats are made by

the Governor on the recommendation of various bodies and associations. The Corporation of Bombay and the Senate of the University each recommend one member, six members are nominated by groups of municipal corporations, groups of district local boards, classes of large landowners, and by such associations of merchants, manufacturers, or tradesmen as the Governor-General may prescribe; while the remaining non-official members are nominated by the Governor in such manner as shall, in his opinion, secure a fair representation of the different classes of the community. In India we have a strong central authority and a number of provincial governments in large measure responsive to the best local opinion. Sir John Strachey has pointed out:—

There was a time when the tendency in India was towards greater centralization; but since the Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo the current has happily turned in the other direction, and the Provincial Governments are now far more independent than they were. This change has been mainly the result of the measures of financial decentralization initiated in 1870. . . . The Government of India now interferes very little with the details of provincial administration. The fact is recognized that the Provincial Governments necessarily possess far more knowledge of local requirements and conditions than any to which the distant authorities of the Central Government can pretend.

In no particular has the principle of devolution in India been carried out with more conspicuous success than in relation to

provincial finance. The Central Government fully realize that the influence of local opinion upon local financial administration is wise, healthy, and economical. The principle which has been adopted is that each Provincial Government must be responsible for the management of its local finances; and this policy has been carried out by assigning to each province a certain income capable of expansion by good administration, and by giving the provincial authorities, subject to some general conditions, complete power to spend this income as they think best in the interests of the territory and population under their control. Periodically what is known as a "settlement" is made between the Central Government and the provincial authorities. Under this "régime" local governments possess, in respect to local revenues and expenditure, the financial power of control which was exercised by the Central Government before the system of provincial finance was introduced. All revenue and expenditure are arranged under the heads "Imperial" and "Provincial," in fixed proportion. The revenue derived from land, excise, stamps, assigned taxes, and many other sources is shared, in proportions varying in different provinces, between the Central and Provincial Governments. On the other side of the provincial ledger, the cost of administering the

various departments appears. The provinces have to meet the whole outlay incurred in the collection of the chief sources of revenue, and in the administration of nearly all the civil services of their Governments, which are charged with the responsibility of maintaining all their services in a state of efficiency, any increased expenditure being met either from economies in the administration or from the development of the revenues. Receipts and charges under some heads are treated as wholly, or mainly, Imperial ; among the former, for instance, are the Army charges, sea customs, and the public debt.

The revenues assigned to the Provincial Governments, either in whole or in part, are such as they can develop by wise administration. Reviewing this method of financial devolution, for which, as Financial Member of the Council during Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty, he was largely responsible, Sir John Strachey says :—

While no useful powers of financial control have been surrendered by the Central Government, the Provincial Governments have been freed from vexatious interference which weakened their authority and efficiency, and their relations towards the Government of India have become more harmonious. They are entrusted with the management of those branches of the revenue which depend for their productiveness on good administration, and they have now a direct and, so to speak, a personal interest in rendering that management as efficient as possible, because they know that a large portion of any increase of income that may be obtained will be at their disposal for useful expenditure within their own

provinces. There has been obtained, at the same time, a stronger and more real power of control by the Central Government than was before possible.

In 1900-1, out of a total gross revenue of £75,300,000, the Provincial Governments were entrusted with the expenditure of £18,600,000; and from this income, as has been already stated, they had to provide for the expenditure, in whole or in part, of the various departments assigned to them. The result has been remarkable in its economical aspects. Since the Provincial Governments have the benefit of any economies which they can effect in the administration, and since also they obtain either in whole or in part the increase of revenue which may accrue from a wise development of their resources, they have every encouragement to manage their finances with enterprise and foresight. Under this scheme, India has made remarkable progress; and the public burdens are to-day lighter than they have ever been. Taxation furnishes only a little more than one-fourth of the public income of the Empire. In spite of the remission of taxation, the gross revenues of India have increased from thirty-two millions in 1857, the last year of the East India Company, to over seventy-five millions in 1901. Assuredly this experiment in devolution in India has been one of the most remarkable successes in any department of British administration.

It may be asked what bearing have these illustrations of Colonial and Indian devolution upon the problem which Ireland presents to British statesmen. It is true that no exact parallel can be drawn between Ireland and the various communities above mentioned. Her political status in reference to Great Britain is quite distinct. She sends representatives to the Imperial Parliament, and the others do not. Nevertheless the political status of Ireland is analogous to that of the provinces of Canada, Australia, and India, in reference to their respective Central Governments; and a lesson well worthy of study is to be found in the instances I have mentioned of the methods whereby the friction arising from racial, social, and religious differences has been successfully overcome.

In the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, Quebec, and India, we have instances of the salutary results of non-interference with existing customs and institutions, coupled with self-governing power derived from a superior source. The Crown Colonies are cases of communities enjoying a limited amount of autonomy. To the self-governing Colonies a larger amount of autonomy has been granted; and the Dominion of Canada and the Commonwealth of Australia are examples of the development of devolution to the fullest possible extent. In all these cases

the principle works well; and the lesson to be deduced from them is that the great principle of devolution is capable of application in various degrees to communities varying to an infinite extent, and that the result is good. In Ireland we have an example of perpetual interference with existing customs and institutions, and of the negation of self-governing power, and the result is bad. The assumption that devolution cannot with advantage be extended to Ireland, may be true; but certainly it is contrary to all the evidence derived from experience throughout the Empire.

The position of Ireland is quite peculiar, and the problem to be solved consequently is peculiar also. She is represented in the Imperial Parliament, and must, for many reasons already mentioned, continue to be so represented. The mistake that has been made consists in the assumption that the amalgamation of Legislatures implied the absorption of Ireland by Great Britain, and that legislative union involved the transference of all Irish local business to the Imperial Parliament. Ireland cannot be absorbed or obliterated. Her affairs cannot be attended to by the Imperial Parliament. Her non-political position in relation to Great Britain is very similar to that of Quebec in reference to Canada, or to that of the provinces of India to the Central Government.

Ireland contains a population which is racially different in almost all respects from the people of Great Britain ; and the financial, commercial, and social problems of the two countries are distinct, and demand different methods of solution.

Ireland is an agricultural country, and Great Britain a manufacturing country. Ireland is the "Quebec" of the United Kingdom. Like Quebec, it is peopled by a race alien in customs and religion to the British people. Like Quebec, it sends representatives to the central legislative assembly ; but, unlike Quebec, it has little control over its local affairs. Quebec is contented, happy, and prosperous. Ireland is discontented, unhappy, and not prosperous. The difference is remarkable ; the cause not far to seek.

Devolution, in a sense, has been and is applied to Ireland, but it is devolution of the wrong type. Between the Parliament at Westminster and the Irish people, the most expensive, wasteful, incongruous, unsympathetic system of government ever devised by man is interposed. The government of Ireland is placed under the control nominally of the Lord Lieutenant—a nominee of the political party which happens to be in the majority in the Imperial Parliament, and exercising but little power except over the police and judiciary. In almost all essential respects,

the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland differs from the Governors who preside over the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, and the Governors-General, or the Lieutenant-Governors, who preside over the federal and provisional administrations in the Colonies. The administration of the country is in the hands of a number of Boards and spending Departments, some quite irresponsible, and others practically responsible only to the Treasury Board in London. Power has been devolved upon an irresponsible bureaucracy, a very different form of devolution from that which has succeeded so admirably throughout the Empire.

In view of the wide measures of self-government which have been universally conceded throughout the Empire, and which have been retained in the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, it is a gross absurdity for any apologist for the present inefficient administration of Irish affairs to claim that proposals to confer upon Ireland such financial control and such legislative functions as may be compatible with the maintenance of the Union, and with the supremacy of Parliament, would endanger the integrity of the Empire, or undermine the Act of Union. Ireland is to-day poor, discontented, and depressed, largely because the people of the country have little voice in the control of their own affairs, which they alone are best fitted to understand, and have

no incentive to co-operate in effecting economies. Until the healthy influence of public opinion is brought to bear upon Irish administration and Irish finance, the country will continue to be the most expensively administered in the world, and Ireland will remain a bar in the Imperial Parliament to the solution of those Imperial and British problems which urgently require attention. By conceding to Ireland some such measure of self-government Great Britain will be at least making an effort to remove a reproach from her history; and, by freeing the Imperial Parliament from the intrusion of Irish local affairs, will enable it to deal with matters more legitimately suitable for deliberation in the first legislative assembly in the world.

In the face of such amazing illustrations of the success attending devolution as those which have been mentioned, what valid excuse can be found for the frenzied opposition with which the suggestion that the Imperial Parliament should delegate to Ireland a larger measure of local government has been met? It may be said that the Colonies enjoy the highest possible measure of devolution because they are far removed from the mother country. This argument does not apply to the Channel Isles or to the Isle of Man; and in the case even of Canada, it may be recalled that the Dominion to-day is as near to London in point of time as Ireland

was fifty or sixty years ago. The British Colonies have been granted local self-government, not because of the distance which separates them from London, but from the fact that our forefathers realized that in the Colonies different conditions existed, and that local governing bodies were best able to adapt local institutions to the needs of the people. This principle has been carried out practically everywhere except in Ireland, and we see the results.

Devolution has been applied to every part of the British Empire, and it has prospered; devolution has not been applied to Ireland, and she does not prosper. The electors of the United Kingdom must sooner or later decide whether Ireland is to continue her downward tendency, whether the poorhouses and lunatic asylums are to go on enlarging their accommodation, whether the emigration ships shall continue to take away all that is brightest and best of the people, whether trade is to remain stagnant, or whether an effort shall be made to back the people in their own efforts to rescue the country from decay. Owing to the tendencies which are at work in Ireland, the problem becomes more and more difficult of solution. The intellectually and physically rich material by which the rejuvenation of the country must be carried out is becoming scarcer every day.

Year by year, a heavy load of taxation presses with increasing severity upon a waning population, and the contribution of Ireland to Imperial purposes becomes less and less. Ireland, instead of being, as she ought to be, a willing helper, will become a financial difficulty to Great Britain, a drag and hindrance to the progress and development of the Empire.

CHAPTER X.

DEVOLUTION AND UNIONISM ; A CONSISTENT
POLICY.

WHATEVER may be said of devolution on its merits, I claim for it that it is at any rate consistent with the policy which found acceptance among Unionists even at a time when Ireland was convulsed with disorder, and the chances of beneficial results following upon reform were exceedingly remote. Twenty years ago, Mr. Chamberlain and the Duke of Devonshire (then the Marquis of Hartington) were the recognized leaders of those who seceded from Mr. Gladstone ; and in support of my claim of consistency for devolution, I cannot turn to a better authority than Mr. Chamberlain himself, who was not only the first exponent of the principle, but also the author of the word "devolution," as applied to Ireland. In a manifesto to his supporters, issued on June 11th, 1886,¹ he said :—

The objects to be kept in view are :—

1. To relieve the Imperial Parliament by devolution of Irish local business, and to set it free for other and more important work.

¹ "Home Rule and the Irish Question." (London : Swan, Sonnenschein.)

2. To secure the free representation of Irish opinion in all matters of purely Irish concern.
3. To offer to Irishmen a fair field for legitimate local ambition and patriotism, and to bring back the attention of the Irish people, now diverted to a barren conflict in the Imperial Parliament, to the practical consideration of their own wants and necessities.

And, lastly, by removing all unnecessary interference with Irish Government on the part of Great Britain, to diminish the causes of irritation and the opportunity of collision.

These were the aims of Mr. Chamberlain in 1886, and they are the aims of devolutionists to-day. We appeal to the moderate opinion in Great Britain for "a delegation, not a surrender, of power"¹ on the part of the Imperial Parliament; and we, in common with Mr. Chamberlain in 1886,² consider that "if the representation of Ireland at Westminster were maintained on its present footing, if Irishmen were allowed to vote and speak on all subjects not specially referred to them at Dublin, then they would remain an integral part of this Imperial realm; they would have their share in its privileges, and their responsibility for its burdens." "In that case," said Mr. Chamberlain in 1886²—and the Irish Reform Association merely echoes his words to-day—"the Imperial Parliament would be able to maintain its control

¹ "Home Rule and the Irish Question," p. 132.

² *Idem*, p. 95.

over Imperial taxation in Ireland, and for all Imperial purposes the Parliament at Westminster would speak for a United Kingdom."

The Irish Reform Association is not prepared to quarrel with either the one side or the other as to the name which should be given to the body set up in Dublin to manage local affairs: they agree, however, with Mr. Chamberlain, that "the legislative authority in Dublin"—it may be called a Parliament—"will be a subordinate and not a co-equal authority."

Mr. Chamberlain outlined his views on Irish policy at a time when Ireland was not peaceful, when the bitter political feelings aroused by the Repeal agitation still influenced men's minds on both sides of the Irish Sea, when the land war was at its height, and when social disorder was prevalent.

It was at this period also that the Duke of Devonshire (then the Marquis of Hartington) expressed himself in favour of devolution, provided that "the powers which may be conferred on local bodies should be delegated—not surrendered—by Parliament"; that "the subjects to be delegated should be clearly defined; and the right of Parliament to control and revise the action of legislative or administrative authorities should be quite clearly reserved"; and that "the administration of justice ought to

remain in the hands of an authority which is responsible to Parliament." The Duke of Devonshire admitted that this might not satisfy the demands of the Nationalists; but "if the great majority of the people of the United Kingdom . . . firmly declare . . . that they are ready to give to Ireland as large a measure of self-government as is consistent with the Union, it remains to be proved whether the Irish people will be persuaded to maintain a hopeless and unnecessary contest."

My object in quoting these very definite statements is to show that the policy which was outlined by the recognized leaders of the Liberal Unionist party twenty years ago is in all essentials the same as the policy of the Irish Reform Association of to-day. They then desired "to relieve the Imperial Parliament by devolution of Irish local business," and "to give to Ireland as large a measure of self-government as is consistent with the Union." Our desires now cannot be more clearly or concisely expressed. This policy of moderation and conciliation was not enunciated by the Duke of Devonshire and Mr. Chamberlain as a mere party manoeuvre to suit the exigencies of the hour; nor was it confined to politics. Mr. Chamberlain in particular remained consistent in his adherence to a progressive and intelligent Unionist policy. Writing,

in 1888, a preface to a pamphlet entitled "A Unionist Policy for Ireland," he remarked :—

He must be a blind student of history, and especially of Irish history, who believes that a merely negative policy can do more than produce a temporary result, or that coercion in any form is a specific against widespread discontent, or a remedy for grievances that have a real foundation. . . . Liberal Unionists then—because there are Liberal and Conservative Unionists—because they are Unionists must alike recognize the necessity for seeking for some permanent remedy for Irish discontent, and the first step must be to discover its material cause. Does there exist a statesman or politician who is not, in his own mind, convinced that the material causes are economic and agrarian? . . . If we are to continue to govern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom, we must do for Ireland at least as much as a patriotic and capable Irish Parliament would accomplish. Because England is the richest country in the world, and because the Anglo-Saxon race is the most energetic and pushing on the face of the globe, we have no right to conclude that public works, which are safely left to individual energy and private speculation here, can be entrusted to similar agencies in Ireland.

Here, again, I must hasten to give Mr. Chamberlain credit for being the first to lay down two principles of the utmost importance which I have, to the best of my ability, consistently advocated :—

- (1) That the Imperial Parliament must do at least as much as a patriotic and capable Irish Parliament would accomplish. Has it done so in, for instance, the matter of higher education?

- (2) That the circumstances of Ireland being exceptional, she has a moral claim and, under the Act of Union, a statutory claim, to exceptional treatment. Has that claim been recognized? Only to a very limited extent.

Dealing with Land Purchase, Mr. Chamberlain continued:—

It is clear that suggested land reform must precede the political change; and until the long-standing quarrel between land-owners and land-occupiers has been compounded, it will not be safe to trust the latter with full control over the property of the former. But assuming that the social war which now exists in Ireland were terminated by a reasonable settlement, there are strong reasons for desiring, on the one hand, to relieve the Imperial Parliament of some of the constantly increasing burden of its local work, and, on the other hand, to open up to Irishmen in their own country a larger field of local ambition, together with greater liberty of action and greater personal responsibility. Such a result is surely not beyond the reach of statesmanship, and might be effected without in the least impairing the authority of Parliament, and without creating Legislatures which, from their nature, would infallibly tend to become co-ordinate powers.

There is the policy of the Irish Reform Association clearly set forth; and the time has come for its realization. The opportunity sought for by Mr. Chamberlain is present with us. He desired first to see a reasonable settlement of the Land Question. The Land Question is in course of a reasonable settlement. Why, then, should Unionists refuse to “relieve the

Imperial Parliament"? Why deny "to Irishmen in their own country a larger field of local ambition, together with greater liberty of action and greater personal responsibility"? What are the principal planks in our platform? That the spirit of the Act of Union should be acted upon; that the exceptional circumstances of Ireland require exceptional treatment; and that public money that can be profitably employed in developing the country should be devoted to that purpose; that such questions as Education should be justly and generously settled by the Imperial Parliament; that the Land Question should be settled in the spirit and according to the terms of the Land Conference Report; that Ireland should be given the largest possible amount of self-governing power consistent with the supremacy of Parliament and the maintenance of the Union. Such are our proposals, and they are practically identical with those put forward by Unionists twenty years ago.

Mr. Chamberlain described himself in 1886 as being and having always been a Home Ruler, but not in the Gladstonian sense. Mr. Gladstone's Bill was not, he said, Home Rule; it was Separation. He was a devolutionist, and even as recently as April, 1893, in the course of an article in "The Nineteenth Century," he stated that "Every Liberal Unionist will readily agree" with a desire "to give to Ireland

the management of such of its affairs as can be handed over to an Irish Assembly without any risk or danger to this country, and, I hope that I may add, without the loss of honour that would be involved if the property and the liberties of all Her Majesty's subjects were not fully safeguarded."

The proposals of the Irish Reform Association fulfil the conditions laid down long ago by the recognized leaders of the Liberal wing of the Unionist party, tacitly accepted, to say the very least of it, by the Conservative wing, and tentatively acted upon by the whole party up to a quite recent date. It is difficult to perceive any material difference between those proposals and the general terms of the agreement entered into in 1902 between Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell (Appendix VI). It is true that in the latter "the co-ordination, control, and direction of boards and other administrative agencies" is mentioned. This is a somewhat cryptic utterance, and it may well be that the proposals of the Irish Reform Association were in advance of the ideas entertained by Mr. Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell; though it is not easy to see how boards and administrative agencies at present controlled by the Treasury are to be otherwise controlled except by means of a transfer of control and direction from the Treasury to a

local body in Ireland. The aims of the Irish Reform Association—as contained in the resolution of August 31st, 1904—may be set forth here once more for the purpose of comparison. The more detailed suggestions will be found in Appendix I.

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 a 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 re-creating 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 the expenditure could be conducted in a more efficient and economic manner, and whereby the sources of revenue might be expanded. We believe that a remedy for the present unsatisfactory system can be found in such a decentralization or localization 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 remodelling 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 practical proposals having the betterment of that 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 ; towards their solution we earnestly invite the co-operation of all Irishmen who have the highest interests of their country at heart.

It is difficult to discover any material difference between the attitude of Unionists twenty years ago and that of the Irish Reform Association to-day ; impossible to exaggerate the difference between the former wise, constructive, Unionist policy and the foolish policy of mere

negation adopted shortly before the last General Election by official Unionism. If any of my Unionist friends in authority do me the honour of perusing these pages, I would ask of them a plain answer to a plain question. What has occurred in Ireland to justify so great a reactionary change? When official Unionism advocated devolution, the condition of Ireland was deplorable and dangerous: agrarian war was at its height; the law was openly defied; outrage was the only argument; the country was "marching through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire." Now that official Unionism repudiates devolution, the Land Question is in course of settlement; the country is tranquil; a conciliatory spirit is active and growing; and a strong disposition towards constitutional agitation for the redress of grievances is manifesting itself. No redress in deference to peaceful, constitutional methods; outrage the only remedy; crime the only cure—what a ghastly lesson to teach a people! To placate the remnant of the old ascendancy party, and secure some half-a-dozen votes at a critical moment of their waning career, the Irish policy of the late Government was reversed. To rally their scattered forces before an election, the former policy of constructive reform was dubbed repeal, and "coercion"—"no reform" are the cries. A strange method, indeed, of teaching the Irish people to appeal with confidence to the sense of

justice and fair play. Progress and construction were the keynotes of Unionist policy. In an evil moment that policy was abandoned. I deeply regret it. In a good moment the party in power took up that policy, and I greatly rejoice, for policy is more important than party in my eyes. My party, in what I trust may prove to have been a moment of temporary aberration of intellect, turned their coats inside out; I am fain to believe that when sanity reasserts itself they will turn them inside in again. They surely cannot long continue false to themselves, untrue to their tradition, to the whole set and tendency of their general policy, and deaf to the dictates of common-sense. For the present the mission has fallen into other hands, and with all my heart I wish them God speed in it; but I hope, and I think I am justified in hoping, that at long last there is a reasonable chance of continuity in Irish policy, and that it is legitimate to expect that Ireland—her problems, difficulties, and needs—will be fairly dealt with by both great political parties, and with mutual consent.

CHAPTER XI.

FINAL WORDS.

I AM a landlord, a Protestant, and a Unionist. I hold to my class, my creed, and my political faith. I know that class and creed must rely upon their intrinsic merits, and will perish under the false stimulus of privilege. I believe that Unionism must justify itself in its results, and must wither under a policy of mere negation. I repudiate with what strength is in me the iniquitous attempts to use Ireland as a mere pawn in the political game, to prejudice the people of Great Britain against her by placing an utterly false presentment of her before them, and to drive her people out of the path of conciliation, and of constitutional demand, back into the old lamentable methods of disorder and crime.

As soon as Ireland began to recover from the wounds which the struggle for Repeal had left upon her, Mr. Arthur Balfour, as Chief Secretary for Ireland, initiated a new policy of conciliation and redress. He perceived that money was urgently needed, and could be profitably employed in developing the country; and much good work was done in opening up the more

backward parts by light railways and other means. This policy was continued by Mr. Gerald Balfour, and was amplified by the application to Ireland of the Local Government Act, the benefits of which England had for some time enjoyed. The Act of 1898 substituted a democratic body—the County Councils—for the Grand Juries which had attended to county business, and the total result has proved decidedly good. I have heard it said indeed, in many quarters, that the Act works better—more economically—in Ireland than in the sister kingdom. Irish County Councillors evince, for the most part, a touching regard for the rates, and are economically inclined. On the other hand, in England, where they have more to spend, and have better opportunities of borrowing, County Councils are more luxuriously disposed. As a consequence, the amount of local taxation and local debt has now become notorious in England, and is large enough almost to shake the foundations of municipal credit.

The Local Government Act, which conceded to the Irish people the privilege, or rather the right, of self-government in purely local affairs, is working well. It is true that Councils contain some self-advertising and ignorant agitators of the Thersites type, who delight in displaying the vitriolic qualities of rhetoric in and out of season; but, nevertheless, it cannot be denied

that the County Councils do their work well, and have had immense educational value in teaching the people of Ireland the important lessons to be derived, and to be alone derived, from responsibility for the conduct of their own affairs.

Mr. Wyndham carried on the work of wise, constructive reform. His programme during office comprised endeavours to deal with many of the social problems affecting Ireland, and among them the determination to settle the great grievance, which, among all Ireland's grievances, cried most clamantly for redress, namely, the Land Question. He desired to make a gradual but complete revolution in the system of tenure, to abolish dual ownership—a pernicious system—and to restore single ownership by enabling the occupying tenants to offer a fair price for the freehold of their farms by means of money advanced to them by the State on easy terms. For such a scheme to be successful it was obviously necessary that it should meet with, at any rate, a large measure of general approval; and, to ascertain whether such was likely to be the case, it was suggested that a conference of representatives of the interested parties should be convened. When this suggestion was first mooted, great was the incredulity which greeted its chances of fulfilment. The sitting of this Conference was the most remarkable and significant

fact in Irish politics in the last fifty years. Here were to be observed representatives of the most discordant and antipathetic sections of Irishmen, sitting peacefully and amiably in conference, searching for some solution which might supply the wants and heal the wounds of all parties. Here were Nationalist and Unionist, Protestant and Catholic, representatives of landlord and tenant—discordant enough elements in all conscience—and yet the good sense and conciliatory spirit with which the leaders of all sections were imbued were such as to carry through their deliberations to a satisfactory conclusion.

The sitting of this Conference, and its successful issue, is the greatest political event in Irish history in modern times, not so much on account of the legislation which was one of its immediate results, but because the success of the Conference was a demonstration of a fact which up to that time was conceived to be non-existent—namely, that Irishmen of all shades of opinion could agree to try and settle their differences, and to heal the wounds of Ireland by a method of patriotic co-operation. If this applied in the case of the Land Question—a subject of contention more bitter than any other, and more prolific of strife—it is surely permissible to hope that other outstanding difficulties may be settled in a similar spirit. The Land Conference established a fact infinitely potent for

good; and it is my belief that if the spirit of conciliation which was there initiated and exemplified is given fair play, it will develop in the future as the great solvent of Ireland's difficulties, smoothing down differences existing between warring factions, gradually drawing Ireland into paths of peace, and turning her into the home of a hopeful people, capable of utilizing to the full measures of wise reform.

The Land Conference was quite peculiar. The granting of Local Government to Ireland was the first fruit of Mr. Balfour's policy of administrative reform; the founding of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland, under Sir Horace Plunkett, was a further advance in the same direction. But each of these concessions was the result of a particular statesman's or public man's initiative. The Land Conference, on the other hand, was due to spontaneous desire on the part of the public, to a feeling that all should combine to rectify a grievance admitted by all, and, as such, it marks an epoch in the development of Ireland. The immediate practical result of the Conference was the Land Act of 1903—an Act by no means perfect—but a great Act under which the freehold of the soil will be transferred to those who occupy and till it. In order to make a clean, clear, peaceful, and permanent settlement, the Act was also designed to reinstate evicted tenants, and to deal with the

appalling destitution and uneconomic condition existing in large districts in the West. In these last respects, the Act is not fulfilling expectations. It is working far too slowly.

But, apart from its effect in bringing about the Land Act, the Land Conference had other significant consequences. It created a feeling that Irishmen were capable of agreement and of united action on many points if only they would deal fairly and considerately with each other. A public opinion has been steadily forming which holds that, whatever may have been the case in the past, Ireland's chance of saving herself now is to be found in conciliation and reform; and that opinion will grow and prevail if only it has a fair chance. Will it have a fair chance? The struggle for peace will be a hard one. Moderation is not melodramatic; it is more difficult to appeal to the common-sense than to the passions of a people. Unfortunately, the policy of conciliation received a rude shock in the complete change of attitude of the late Government towards Ireland that followed upon or led to—I know not which—the resignation of Mr. Wyndham; and a somewhat vehement expression of anti-conciliation opinion manifested itself on both sides of the Channel. There are Irishmen who, without a shadow of foundation, seem to dread the consequences of an Ireland at peace, and to fear the effect that might be

produced upon Irish political aspirations if she were to become a progressive and prosperous, instead of a decaying and miserable, people; and a certain section of the Press in England appears to live in terror of a peaceful and united Ireland for diametrically opposite reasons, and to prefer an Ireland distracted and split up.

The policy pursued under Mr. Wyndham's administration was a wise policy; and under it Ireland was brightening with the hope of better days, and was tranquil. The disappointment on the reversal of that wise and generous policy was great; but in spite of that—in spite of the hysterics of the tattered remnants of the old ascendancy party at the bare idea of losing the monopoly of place and power—in spite of frantic journalistic efforts to create strife in order to persuade Great Britain that physical force is the only method to be employed in Ireland—in spite of the "Union in danger" crusade during the General Election—in spite of all this, Ireland continued and continues to be tranquil. I hope and trust she will remain so, for upon that everything depends. The patience of the people is sorely tried. It has proved equal to the strain; with all my heart I trust it will continue to do so, and that the people will never fall into the trap so openly prepared for them. Physical force is not the only remedy for Ireland's ills. Law and order must be

maintained: that must be the first plank of the platform of any administration, as it was in that of Mr. Wyndham; but it should not be the only plank.

Why should not principles be applied to Ireland which are applicable to all other parts of the Empire? Some men are so short-sighted that they cannot discern anything beyond the limited horizon of their parish, their county, or city, or, at most, of these islands. They cannot see, and, therefore, they cannot think, imperially. Others are so long-sighted that they fail to perceive evils that are close at hand. A statesman should have normal sight. Nothing should be too large and distant, nothing too small and near, to escape his view. What does Mr. Chamberlain claim for the Unionist party? He says it is "a powerful instrument for progressive and beneficent reform." He eulogises past leaders for their policy of "wise and constructive reform"; and what in his opinion is necessary to keep a party together? "You cannot," he says, "keep any party together merely on a policy of negation." Truer words were never spoken. A policy of pure negation can never maintain itself. It is the wise, constructive, positive policy that prevails. And why is progressive and beneficent reform to be denied to Ireland? On what grounds are we asked to admit that Ireland forms the one

exception to a universal rule, and that in her case alone a policy of pure negation can be successfully applied?

Mr. Chamberlain describes himself as a Radical, and defines Radicalism as the creed of "one who, seeing a grievance anywhere, will pluck it out by the roots." If he could for one moment confine his gaze to so small an object as Ireland, he would find grievances ready to his hand. He could appeal to a whole procession of Lords Lieutenant and Chief Secretaries and Under Secretaries. Let him ask them if the present undemocratic, purely bureaucratic system of government in Ireland works satisfactorily, and they will say that it does not. Yet the idea of "administrative changes and reform in the system of government" is denounced by the greatest democratic statesman of a democratic age! We are urged to foster a wise, constructive policy—beneficent reform throughout the Empire—with one exception. Pure negation, no reform, the policeman's baton, is the prescription for Ireland. Surely this is a strange policy for one whose sole object in life is the strengthening and consolidation of the Empire. I agree with Mr. Chamberlain in that I look upon the strengthening of the ties of Empire as the noblest task to which any man can apply his intellect, his energy, his life. But consolidation, like charity, should begin at home. While

labouring for consolidation with remote portions of a United Empire, I should have thought it not unwise to labour also for conciliation with a very near partner of the United Kingdom. While strengthening the members, it might be well to see that the heart—these islands—is healthy and sound. Constructive reform was the policy of the Unionist party, and must become their policy again. Fortunately it is adopted with a whole heart by the political party now in power.

Of course, it may be argued, and is argued, that, as Ireland enjoys the same amount of self-government in county and municipal affairs as Great Britain, and as she is fully and, according to population more than fully, represented in the Imperial Parliament, she can have nothing to complain of. There is truth in the premises, but the conclusion is false. The old fatal fallacy is involved—the idea that that which works well and is satisfactory in England must work equally well and be equally satisfactory in Ireland. The differentiation between the two peoples is far too great for this argument to hold good; and it is to the fact that we fail to understand these differences and to make allowances for them, that England's failure in Ireland is due. Representation in the Imperial Parliament does not convey to Ireland the same intimate control of her own affairs as the representation of England, Scotland, and Wales in

Parliament gives to the people of England, Scotland, and Wales. Differentiation has been recognized to a certain extent, and Ireland has a form of government peculiar to herself; but it is a form of government unsuited to the country, out of date, and faulty in itself.

This subject has been dealt with before. Suffice it now to say that, as a matter of fact, while representation in Parliament does, to a very large extent at any rate, meet local requirements in England, Scotland, and Wales, it does not in any degree meet local requirements in Ireland. Between Parliament and the Irish people exists the most incongruous form of government that has ever been devised by man. A pernicious system of bureaucracy is interposed. A condition of things exists which is intolerable; and the only living question is whether the painter should be cut altogether and Ireland should be cast adrift to sink or swim, or whether some means can be devised whereby the democratic principle can be introduced into Irish government, and the people can be given sufficient and efficient control over their own affairs; in fact, whether the principle of devolution is not applicable to Ireland.

I am not arguing against the Union. On the contrary, I look upon legislative union as the outward and necessary sign of the close union

which, from natural causes, must exist between the two islands. Great Britain is Ireland's chief market, and must ever be so. Ireland is too small and too poor to stand alone. She requires the backing of a great power like the United Kingdom, and of a great empire. If she were able to stand alone, the position would be intolerable. These narrow seas could not contain two independent States; and Great Britain is perfectly justified in safeguarding herself. The Union is necessary; but I believe that Ireland could have prospered under the Union, and could still be made to prosper under the Union, if the principles underlying the Union were properly carried out, and if the principle of devolution, which has succeeded so admirably throughout the whole Empire, were reasonably applied. The animating spirit of the Act of Union has never been acted upon except tentatively by Mr. Balfour and Mr. Wyndham. It was acknowledged at the time of the Union that the circumstances of Ireland were exceptional; and it was stipulated and agreed that exceptional treatment should be accorded to Ireland under exceptional circumstances. If anything, the position has tended to become more and more exceptional since the Act of Union was passed. Free Trade, whatever its general benefits may have been for the whole of Great Britain, has acted very prejudicially upon

a portion of the United Kingdom devoted entirely to agriculture. The population of Ireland has decreased enormously; and the burden of taxation has enormously increased. The country is very poor, and urgently requires, in many directions, judicious outlay of capital for remunerative purposes upon the natural resources of the country. But the root-cause of trouble and discontent in Ireland consists in the futile attempts that have been made to anglicize her—to convert Ireland into so many shires of Great Britain. Ireland cannot be anglicized. She always has, and does, differentiate from Great Britain to a far larger extent than is the case between the other component parts of the United Kingdom; and unless this fact is recognized, and Ireland is allowed to develop herself according to her own ideas and on her own lines, she cannot become prosperous and contented. The system of government in Ireland does not permit this. It lacks public confidence, and it must be changed.

Concerning the policy, commonly called “Home Rule all round,” which is advocated by a good many people, I have nothing now to say, except that there is a great difference, in degree at any rate, between the case for devolution in general and the case for devolution for Ireland in particular. English, Scotch, and Welsh affairs are fairly well attended to

in Parliament; Irish affairs receive but scant attention. England, Scotland, and Wales are prosperous; Ireland is perishing. Her case is very urgent, and some remedy must be speedily applied. The people are anxious to work out their own salvation. Ought they not to be given a chance? In considering whether devolution cannot be safely and with advantage applied to Ireland, we must not forget the change that is taking place. The leaven of land-purchase is working in Ireland. The policy of conciliation, of Irishmen co-operating for the common good of their country, is alive and will prevail. No doubt, causes of friction still exist; sectarian animosity and class animosity are not dead, but they are dying. Patience is required. Let us be fair. It is not easy for the great majority, for centuries held in complete subjection, to be absolutely moderate, absolutely just. It is not easy for a minority, once all dominant, to cast utterly aside all lingering regret for a past ascendancy of class and creed. But the bitterness arising from differences of religion and of class is rapidly diminishing in intensity under the sense of toleration, consequent upon a strong and growing sense of common nationality. Let us feed the sense of nationality, and give it something to do. The more the people become interested in the management of their own business, the more control they have over affairs,

the more self-control will they acquire, and the sooner will the last flickering flames of class and sectarian animosity die out. A broad and comprehensive view of the situation must be taken.

We must not be in a hurry. Neither Land Acts, nor Education Acts, nor any other Acts can work a miracle. The sad results of centuries of misrule cannot be obliterated in a day. It may well be that exacerbated instances of bitterness will occasionally manifest themselves. The growth of moderate sentiment is apt to excite irreconcilables of all kinds to more vehement expression. Such instances, if they occur, must not be exaggerated. The sense of the ideal of nationality, of the necessity for co-operation, of the wisdom of moderation and conciliation, is steadily increasing in strength and volume, and may be depended upon.

The main cause of discontent in Ireland—land-tenure—is being removed, and a body of public opinion, which, if the education question were fairly dealt with, would receive an immense accession of strength, is growing in volume every day in favour of conciliation—inclined to look to Parliament for justice, and to seek to work for political ideals by constitutional means. The time is favourable, the opportunity is ripe, for reform.

That reform in Ireland is desirable will not, I think, be denied by candid Unionists; and I

take it that their main objection to extension of local self-government is based on the assumption that any extension must lead up to repeal.

Such an assumption is quite untenable, and may perhaps be sufficiently disproved by the fact that two distinct schools of thought object to the extension of self-governing power involved in devolution, and to the general policy of conciliation between the two countries, on diametrically opposite grounds. Extreme Nationalists object because they fear as an inevitable result the indefinite postponement of their ideal—independence. Extreme Unionists object because they fear as an inevitable result the rapid realization of their bugbear—independence. They cannot both be right; and it is not unreasonable to suppose that, in extending the principle of local self-government, a point of natural equilibrium will be reached somewhere between the two extremes. But be that as it may, the practical answer to the question whether devolution must necessarily lead up to repeal is supplied in the negative by the statesman from whose utterances I have already so copiously quoted.

In the fiscal controversy an objection of precisely similar character has been raised by free-fooders against Mr. Chamberlain's proposition of preferential treatment. It is admitted that a 2s. duty on foreign wheat would have no appreciable

effect upon the price of the quartern loaf. The danger lies, it is contended, in the insertion of the thin end of the wedge. If a duty, however small, is placed upon wheat imported from certain countries in particular, it is argued that a principle is introduced which will lead to the imposition of duties, however big, upon all sea-borne wheat. The syllogism may be theoretically sound; but what is Mr. Chamberlain's reply? That the self-interest and common-sense of the people may be safely relied upon to prevent the principle being carried to dangerous or improper lengths. That devolution would be beneficial both to the Imperial Parliament and to Ireland will scarcely be denied; but in this case again the danger lies, as we are told, in the insertion of the thin end of the wedge. How, we are asked, is the principle—once it has been introduced—to be prevented from extending to repeal or complete independence? In this case the logic is not sound, and does not bear out the deduction that nothing should be done, for the principle of local self-government—the thin end of the wedge—has been introduced long ago. But, ignoring that fact, is not the same answer applicable? Why cannot the people be relied upon to confine the principle of devolution within the limits of safety? The thin end of the wedge argument is of all arguments the most absurd; according to it all

progress, moral, material and physical, would be precluded; if a man walks towards Dover, does it follow that he must precipitate himself into the sea? If the thin end of the wedge argument were to be suffered to prevail, reform in any direction would be impossible. Parliament, in its long history, has never passed a single constructive measure to which this argument was not applicable. If men are to refuse to do that of which they approve because it may be argued that, according to strict logic, the principle involved might lead up to that of which they disapprove, they would never do anything. Absolute stagnation would prevail.

Devolution of power from the Imperial Parliament is the great principle which has made and consolidated the British Empire. I can see no reason why it should not be applied to Ireland. That no exact parallel can be drawn, I, of course, admit. Autonomy in the great self-governing colonies is not accompanied with representation at Westminster. The relations between the Provincial and Dominion Parliaments in Canada and Australia, and between Provincial Governments and the Central Government in India, are more analogous to the case in point; but they do not constitute an exact parallel. The case of Ireland is peculiar. But we boast, and with reason, of the elasticity of our Constitution, and of our adaptability to circumstances. To tell

me that there is no middle course, no alternative, to be found between severing the connection between Great Britain and Ireland, and administering Irish affairs by means of a vast number of irresponsible Boards, irresponsible to the wishes of the people and ignorant of the needs of the country, is to my mind equivalent to asking me to admit the incapacity of Parliament, the failure of democratic principles and of a representative system of government.

I hold strongly to devolution, because I believe that it will enable Ireland to work out her own salvation, and because I am convinced that by no other means can she do so. I think it should come gradually; too great a strain ought not to be thrown upon a people with only a few years' experience in the management of affairs derived from popularly elected County Councils; but I look for devolution of the greatest amount of self-governing power that is compatible with the maintenance of the Union, and the supremacy of Parliament. I hold to the Union because I believe it to be essential to the welfare and prosperity of both islands. They are too closely connected by natural causes to be politically disunited—such a divorce would be unnatural. But even were my ideal that of an independent Ireland, I would take a practical view of the present situation. Ireland is very sick: her decay is terrible and rapid. An independent

Ireland is a dream, to my mind, impossible of attainment; at any rate, it is not within the range of practical politics *now*, and in the meantime Ireland is perishing, and something must be done.

I fully admit that, in the alternative I offer, there are difficulties to be overcome. It is a principle of our unwritten Constitution that a minority must not persecute or oppress a majority. That was the position as long as the ascendancy party held sway. It is also a recognized principle that minorities have their rights, and may not be persecuted or oppressed by a majority. That the Protestant minority would be exposed to any danger of ill-treatment under any extension of local self-government, I do not myself believe. The vast majority of Roman Catholics are tolerant; the sense of nationality and of the advantages of co-operation is strong, and gathering strength; the natural divergence and conflict of opinions in any national assembly would render combination against any section of the community difficult, if not impossible. Nevertheless, the fears entertained on this point are, even if unfounded, perfectly genuine, and must be allayed. In any scheme of devolution efficient guarantees for the protection of the minority are desirable in the direction indicated years ago by the Duke of Devonshire, when he said that "the administration of justice ought to remain in the hands of

an authority which is responsible to Parliament," and by the introduction of a nominated element. The electoral basis must be broad and democratic. It may, of course, be possible to secure the representation of minorities by some method of proportional representation; but, even so, the presence of a nominated element is expedient. Ireland has enjoyed local self-government in the form of District and County Councils for only a few years. She is more accustomed to objecting to her affairs being mismanaged for her than to managing her own affairs. With the best will in the world on the part of members of an elected body to do their duty by their country, the advice and assistance of men familiar with procedure, of administrative experience, especially as regards finance, and educated in the conduct of affairs, would be of advantage to them.

Another argument urged against the political proposals of the Irish Reform Association is that, even if they are not pernicious, they must at any rate be useless, as they fall far short of the aspirations and demands of the leaders of the Irish people, and cannot, therefore, be taken as a discharge in full. That is so, and the most that can be hoped for is that they will be taken on account, and honestly made the most of.

I can see no reason why, without abandoning any of the ideals entertained by Nationalists in Ireland, or by sections of Liberals or Radicals,

or anybody else in Great Britain, a step should not be taken towards giving the Irish people greater control of their own affairs. I do not ask men to abandon whatever political ideals they may cherish; I do not propose to set bounds to the march of a people: but I submit that before a people can march they must walk, and before they can walk they must learn to stand upon their feet; and I do ask all Irishmen to recognize Ireland's necessities, and to consider whether it is not possible, whether it is not advisable, whether it is not necessary, to institute reforms which, though they may not fully satisfy their ideals, may, at any rate, give to Ireland that hopefulness, confidence, and self-reliance which are essential if she is to work out her own salvation.

As to the future, who can tell what the result of an honest attempt to set Ireland on her feet may be? With the great and pressing questions connected with land, education, and transit settled, or in course of settlement; with the sense of responsibility for the management of their own affairs full upon them, and relieved of the constant irritation caused by a singularly defective system of government, it may be that the great majority of the Irish people will gradually come to take a calm and practical view of the situation and of the prospects of their country. They may recognize that her

future lies in their own hands, and depends upon their own energy, common-sense, and prudence. The conclusion may be forced upon them that to deprive themselves of representation at Westminster would be madness, in view of the fact that, owing to natural and unalterable causes, Ireland is and must ever be intimately connected with Great Britain. If so, the tendency will be towards contentment with such control of Ireland's affairs as is compatible with representation at Westminster and the ultimate supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. Such control will, I believe, satisfy the practical requirements of the case. Sentiment is very strong—the root and origin of all action.

Against a sentimental desire for absolute independence in the form of a republic, or of dualism in the shape of a sovereign independent Parliament, and an executive responsible to it, must be set the practical value of British credit, of British power by sea and land, of the Civil Service, of the protection of the flag in every quarter of the globe, and of representation in the Imperial Parliament. Without that representation, Ireland would be again, as she once was, entirely at the mercy of Parliament. The people of Great Britain, acting through Parliament, ruined Ireland, lock, stock, and barrel, in the past, and could do so in the future if Ireland ceased to be represented at Westminster.

Ireland would not be safe for a day except under one of two conditions—either she must be rich and powerful enough to stand alone absolutely unsupported, or she must have her say and her vote in the Parliament at Westminster. That the latter is the only possible alternative will, I think, in time, at any rate, commend itself to the Irish people. But if not, if devolution—reform of the system of government within the Union—does not satisfy Ireland, what then? Shall we be the better or the worse for trying the experiment? Assuredly the gain will be great.

Short of the interference of some national catastrophe, the social, economic, and political condition of Ireland must be greatly improved through the operation of the social, economic, and political reforms which have been outlined. The farmers will be tilling the soil under the inspiration and stimulus of absolute ownership. Class animosities arising from the long land struggle will gradually be forgotten. With the question of education satisfactorily settled, sectarian bitterness will flicker out. Under a wise development of the natural resources of the country, agriculture and such other industries as the country is capable of supporting will receive healthy encouragement. By devolution, the people will become trained in the management of affairs, and will be enabled to form a sounder judgment than they at

present do upon political problems and questions of an Imperial character. The Irish people will have learned to put trust in Parliament; and the people of Great Britain will recognize that the Irish are not the inferior, incapable, and unpractical race that in the past they have considered them to be. Prejudice on both sides will die out. Both peoples will come to respect each other, and a broad Imperial spirit will manifest itself. The desire in Ireland will be to let by-gones be by-gones, and, in the prospect of a brighter future, to forget the miserable past.

If Ireland makes further demands, it will be in a very different spirit. If she pleads for a still further extension of self-governing power, it will be based on the ground of the successful use made of the self-governing power granted to her. She could never again say that violence was the only road to concession, or that in independence lay the only escape from an intolerable yoke. But it is idle to speculate as to the future. Who can attempt to say what changes may take place within the Empire, necessitating a recasting of the relationships existing between its components? The most we can do is to do that which is right, because it is right, not as a bargain for value received, but for the right's sake, and await results. Let us, as practical, common-sense people, act in the present, deal

with the problems at hand, and be content to let the future take care of itself.

To sum up, my ambition is to see—

(1) Cordial, honest co-operation among Irishmen for their country's good. A true living sense of Irish nationality is necessary. Ireland united can accomplish anything in reason.

(2) The exercise of moderation and common-sense on the part of Irishmen.

(3) The creation of friendly, fraternal relations between Great Britain and Ireland on both sides—let the dead bury their dead.

(4) Recognition by Ireland of (*a*) her Imperial mission, her share in the larger nationality covered by the flag, and her consequent duties and responsibilities; and (*b*) of the political necessities of Great Britain.

(5) Recognition by Great Britain of (*a*) Irish nationality; and (*b*) of the economic and social requirements of Ireland, and of her just claim for exceptional treatment.

Ireland has both a moral and a statutory claim to State assistance. Ireland must be looked upon as a poor, undeveloped, neglected portion of the estate. Development of her natural resources should be on the following lines:—(*a*) cheap and rapid transit for produce to British markets; (*b*) main-drainage and reclamation;

(c) harbours and piers; (d) afforestation and the preservation of timber. In estimating profit or loss upon capital thus invested, the effect upon the whole estate—upon the United Kingdom and the Empire—must be considered.

The Land Question is in course of settlement.

There remains education. Ireland must be provided with a system of education satisfying the needs of the people from top to bottom. With these two problems—namely, the land and education—solved, the State will have done all that is possible in the social field. By a recognition of the fact that employment of public money, as occasion permits, is desirable for the development of the country in the directions above mentioned, but especially in respect to railway transit, the State will have done all that is economically possible. The rest will be with Ireland. Her fate will be in her own hands. But if responsibility lies with her, she must be allowed to exercise responsible powers. She must develop on her own lines, and in her own way. She must exercise responsibility in the application of money allotted to her. Money must no longer be spent by Boards over which the people can exercise no real control. Social and economic reforms will fail or will only very partially succeed unless accompanied by drastic reform in the system of Irish government.

Political reform should, indeed, precede all

other reform, for it is the most important of all in the sense that, without it, the seed sown in social and economic fields cannot fructify and bear good fruit. What, then, is it that I propose in the direction of political reform? What is the circumference of my desires?

Great Britain and Ireland are necessary the one to the other. Great Britain cannot afford to divest herself of all control over the destinies of Ireland. Ireland cannot afford to lose the control she possesses over the destinies of Great Britain. 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 anglicized. She cannot be happily governed, nor can her prosperity be assured by purely English methods and on purely English lines. She understands her own affairs best, and she should manage her own affairs. The problem is to reconcile local and Imperial interests. The solution may be sought on the lines of either federation or devolution; it is in devolution that, in my opinion, it will be found. Be that as it may, my political creed is clear and simple. 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.

APPENDICES.

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APPENDICES.

I.

THE IRISH REFORM ASSOCIATION'S PROGRAMME.

FOR all practical purposes the policy of the Irish Reform Association may be said to have originated in a memorandum privately circulated on March 3, 1903, and signed by the following five members of the Land Conference Committee :— Colonel W. Hutcheson Poë, C.B. ; Mr. Lindsay Talbot Crosbie, Mr. R. H. Prior Wandesforde, D.L. ; Mr. A. More O'Farrall, D.L. ; and Mr. M. V. Blacker-Douglas. In view of the fact that the Land Conference Committee had been appointed for a definite purpose, and that purpose had not then been attained, no action on the lines suggested was at the moment taken. When, however, the Land Conference Committee had finished its task, the question was discussed as to the practicability of applying to other Irish problems the same policy of compromise and conciliation as had led to such gratifying results in the case of the Land Question.

On the 25th of August, 1903, a meeting was held at which two resolutions were passed, one dissolving the Land Conference 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. This programme is as follows :—

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 re-creating 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 expanded. We believe that a remedy for the present unsatisfactory system can be found in such a decentralization or localization 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 remodelling 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.

In order to complete the history of the Reform movement, appended is the further and more detailed report of the Association, which 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.

1. 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 exclusion 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 localized to Ireland.

COMPOSITION OF THE FINANCIAL COUNCIL.

5. 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 Council 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 re-appointment.

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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. (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 interdependence of interest between the two countries. We see no objection to the adoption of either plan (b) or (c).

10. (b) requires no further explanation.

11. 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 localized 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 expenditure 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.

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. 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 communication, 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.

15. 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 of power to deal with Irish Parliamentary business,

16. 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 well-being, 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.

17. 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 distinct classes of matters to be referred to the Statutory Body.

18. 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.

19. 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 condition 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.

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. (Summarized 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	8 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
1903-04 ¹ ...	1 10 7	1 8 3	1 11 4	0 10 10	3 1 11	1 19 1
Increase + or decrease - since 1820 ...	-0 18 0	+0 17 3	+0 9 8	+0 7 5	-0 8 4	+1 4 8
Increase + or decrease - per cent. since 1820 ...	-1 17 7	+7 16 8	+2 4 6	+10 17 0	-0 11 7	+8 11 1

¹ Figures supplied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (House of Commons, April 13th, 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. Austen Chamberlain gave the "true revenue," as usual under such circumstances.

In the House of Commons on May 21st, 1906, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that it was estimated that the tax revenue to be contributed by Great Britain in 1906-7 (excluding Coal Duty, but including the local taxation revenues) would consist of 52·3 per cent. direct taxes, and 47·7 per cent. indirect taxes. For Ireland the estimated proportions were 28·8 per cent. direct, and 71·2 per cent. indirect. The proportions of direct and indirect taxation in 1904-5 were—for Great Britain, 50·8 per cent. direct, and 49·2 per cent. indirect; for Ireland, 27·4 per cent. direct, and 72·6 per cent. indirect. In 1905-6 the proportions were approximately—for Great Britain, 51·7 per cent. direct, and 48·3 per cent. indirect; for Ireland, 28·3 per cent. direct, and 71·7 per cent. indirect.

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	32·0
1841	18,534,332	8,175,124	26,709,456	31·0
1851	20,816,351	6,574,278	27,390,629	24·0
1861	23,128,518	5,798,967	28,927,485	20·0
1871	26,072,284	5,412,377	31,484,661	17·0
1881	29,710,012	5,174,836	34,884,848	15·0
1891	33,028,172	4,704,750	37,732,922	12·5
—	—	—	—	—
1899	36,024,438	4,535,516	40,559,954	11·2
¹ 1900	36,683,879	4,466,326	41,150,205	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
1904	38,391,090	4,398,462	42,789,552	10·28
1905	38,829,580	4,388,107	43,217,687	10·15

¹ 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.

Table showing for each of the years 1895-1905 the number of Emigrants enumerated, with the rates per 1,000 of the estimated Population of Marriages, Births, Deaths, and Emigrants; and the averages for the ten years 1895-1904.

Years.	Number of Emigrants as returned by the Enumerators.	Rate per 1,000 of Estimated Population.			
		Marriages.	Births.	Deaths.	Emigrants.
1895	48,703	5'07	23'3	18'5	10'7
1896	38,995	5'08	23'7	16'7	8'6
1897	32,535	5'05	23'5	18'5	7'2
1898	32,241	5'00	23'3	18'2	7'1
1899	41,232	4'96	23'1	17'7	9'2
1900	45,288	4'77	22'7	19'6	10'1
1901	39,613	5'08	22'7	17'8	8'9
1902	40,190	5'18	23'0	17'5	9'1
1903	39,789	5'21	23'1	17'5	9'0
1904	36,902	5'22	23'6	18'1	8'4
Yearly Average, 1895-1904	39,549	5'06	23'2	18'0	8'8
1905	30,676	5'26	23'4	17'1	7'0

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

V.

BRITISH AND IRISH REVENUES.

Imperial Revenue of the United Kingdom, showing the amount retained for Local Expenditure, compiled from Parliamentary Paper 256 (July 13th, 1906), 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	£5,256,564	£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	40,998,000	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
1904-5	9,753,500	7,567,000	2,186,500	139,831,500	45,770,000	94,061,500
1905-6	9,447,000	7,635,500	1,811,500	139,825,500	47,222,500	92,603,000

From these figures it will be seen that while the population of Ireland has fallen by nearly half since 1841, the local expenditure has grown from £1,789,567 to £7,635,500, or by nearly six millions sterling, while her contribution to Imperial services has fallen by nearly one and a-half million sterling. Local expenditure in Ireland, from taxes collected by Imperial officers, is at the rate of £1 16s. 2½d. per head of the population.

CONTRIBUTION TO IMPERIAL SERVICES, 1905-6.

This Table, from Parliamentary Paper 278 (3rd July, 1906), 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 1904-5	England.	Per cent.	Scotland.	Per cent.	Ireland.	Per cent.	Total.	Per cent.
Total Revenue as contributed ...	£123,887,500	82·99	£15,938,000	10·68	£9,447,000	6·33	£149,272,500	100·00
Local Expenditure	41,523,000	75·69	5,699,500	10·39	7,635,500	13·92	54,858,000	100·00
Balance available for Imperial Ex- penditure ...	£82,364,500	87·24	£10,238,500	10·84	£1,811,500	1·92	£94,414,500	100·00

VI.

THE WYNDHAM-MACDONNELL
CORRESPONDENCE.

THE following is a copy of the correspondence (read in the House of Commons on February 22nd, 1905) which passed between Mr. George Wyndham and Sir Antony MacDonnell, on the latter's accepting the position of Under Secretary :—

September 22nd, 1902.

DEAR MR. WYNDHAM,

I told you I had been offered and accepted nomination to a seat on the Council of India, and that it would be necessary for me to consult Lord George Hamilton before anything was settled regarding the Irish appointment. I have now seen Lord George Hamilton, and understand from him there would probably be no difficulty in allowing me to retain a seat on the Indian Council, and lend my services to the Irish Government. This procedure would be in accordance with my own wishes, and it would strengthen my position in Ireland if I go there. If the matter, through Lord George Hamilton's considerateness, is simplified in this direction, there still remains the difficulty to which I alluded when I saw you. I have been anxiously passing over this difficulty in my own mind. You know I am an Irishman, a Roman Catholic, and a Liberal in politics. I have strong Irish sympathies, and I do not see eye to eye with you on all matters of Irish administration; and I see no likelihood of good coming from such a *régime* of coercion as "The Times" has recently outlined. On the other hand, from the exposition you are good enough to give me of your views, and from the estimates I have had of your aims and objects, I find there is a substantial measure of agreement between us. Moreover, I would be glad to be of some service to Ireland, and, therefore, it seems to me that the situation goes beyond the sphere of mere party politics. I should be willing to take office under you, provided there is some chance of my succeeding—and I think there is some chance of success—on this condition, that I should have adequate opportunities of influencing the policy and acts of the Irish Administration; and, subject of course to your control,

freedom of action in Executive matters. For many years in India I directed administration on a large scale; and I know if you send me to Ireland the opportunity of a mere secretarial criticism would fall far short of the requirements of my position. In Ireland, my aim would be the maintenance of order, the solution of the Land question on the basis of voluntary sale, the fixing of rents where sales may not take place on some self-acting principle whereby local enquiries would be obviated; the co-ordination, control, and direction of Boards and other administrative agencies; the settlement of the Education question in the general spirit of Mr. Balfour's views; and the general promotion of material improvement and administrative conciliation. I am sure you will not misinterpret this letter. I am greatly attracted by the chance of doing some good for Ireland. My best friends tell me that I am deluding myself, and that I shall be abused by Orangemen as a Roman Catholic or Home Ruler, and denounced by the Home Rulers as a renegade, and that I shall do no good, and shall retire disgusted within a year. But I am willing to try the business under the colours and conditions I mention. It is for you to decide whether the trial is worth making. In any event I shall be your debtor for having thought of me in connection with a great work.

Yours sincerely,

A. MACDONNELL.

25th September, 1902.

MY DEAR SIR ANTONY,

Your letter was most welcome. I accept your offer to serve in the Irish Government with gratitude to you and confidence that your action will be for the good of your country. When Sir David Harrel resigns, I shall accordingly nominate you as his successor; and it is understood between us that I make, and you accept, this appointment on the lines and under the conditions laid down in your letter.

With a view to compassing the objects which you hold to be of primary importance—namely, the maintenance of order; the placing of the Land question on the basis of voluntary sale; and, where that proves impossible, of substituting some simple automatic system of revising rents in place of the present existing expensive and costly process, entailing litigation; the co-ordination of detached and semi-detached Boards and

Departments; the settlement of Education in a form acceptable to the majority of the inhabitants; and administrative conciliation. To these I add (1) consolidation and increase of existing grants for Irish local purposes, with the view of reducing rates where they are prohibitive of enterprise; (2) if we are spared long enough, the development of transit for agricultural and other products, possibly by guarantees to railways, on the Canadian model; but this is far off. We have each of us terminated an option in the lease I have all along desired.

I ciphered the purport of your letter to the Prime Minister, and received his concurrence by telegram yesterday, and by letter to-day. It is understood that you accept a seat on the India Council, and are to be transferred when the vacancy occurs.

I shall ask Lord George Hamilton to see that the Press understands and insists upon your great administrative services in India. That will prepare the public for the further move. I can only thank you again with all my heart for coming to my assistance.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

VII.

THE HOME RULE BILLS.

THE following is a summary of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill (introduced April 8th, 1886):—

(1) A Legislative Body to sit in Dublin, and have the control of the Executive Government of Ireland and its legislative business.

The Parliament to be composed of two orders, with power in either to demand separate voting, and thus put an absolute veto on a proposal of legislation till the next dissolution, or for a period of three years.

(a) The first to consist of 28 Representative Peers, and 75 other members, elected for ten years by voters having £25 a year qualification, and possessed of a property qualification of £200 per annum. The present 28 Representative Peers to form part of this Body at their option, with limited power of the Crown to fill up vacancies within a defined period.

(b) The Second Order to consist of the present 103 University, County, and Borough members, with the addition of 101 elected for five years.

The Irish members to cease to sit at Westminster.

(2) The Executive to remain as now for the present, but subject to any changes which might be worked out by the new Legislative Body. The Viceroy to be assisted by a Privy Council, and, not being the representative of any party, he would not go out of office with the Government. The religious disability at present attached to that office to be removed.

(3) *Law.*

(a) The Judges of the Superior Court now holding office, who desire it, may demand a retiring pension. In future to hold office during good behaviour, their salaries to be charged on the Irish Consolidated Fund; to be removable only by a joint address from the two Orders of the Legislative Body; and appointed under the influence of the responsible Irish Government. An exception is made in the case of the Court of Exchequer.

(b) The Irish Constabulary to remain for the present under the same terms of service and the same authority; the British Consolidated Fund to contribute to its support anything it might cost in excess of £1,000,000, the Irish Legislature, after two years, having the right to fix the charge for the whole Police and Constabulary of Ireland, with a saving of existing rights. The question of the ordinary Police is left open.

(4) *Civil Service*.—The Service in the future to be absolutely under the Legislative Body. Present Civil Servants, after two years, to be entitled to claim a discharge on the terms usual when offices are abolished.

(5) *Finance*.

(a) Imperial Charges.—Ireland to contribute one-fifteenth to the public expenditure, instead of one-twelfth as at present, with the result that the revenue from the Customs, Excise, Stamps, Income Tax, and Post Office would amount in future to £8,350,000; the charges payable for Ireland for Army, Navy, Civil Service, Constabulary, and Sinking Fund of the Irish portion of the National Debt, would amount to £7,946,000, leaving a surplus of £404,000.

(b) Taxation. The power of taxation to be granted to the new Legislative Body, with the exception of the Excise and Customs.

(6) *Securities*.—To be formulated for :—

(a) Unity of the Empire.

(b) Protection of the minority, including landlords, Civil Servants, and all concerned in the government of the country.

(c) Protestants.

The Bill of 1893 constituted an Irish Legislature, consisting, first, of a Legislative Council, and, secondly, of a Legislative Assembly, with power “to make laws for the peace, order, and “good government of Ireland, in respect of matters exclusively “relating to Ireland, or to some part thereof.” That power was subject to the double limitation that certain heads were reserved to Parliament by way of excluding the new Irish Legislature from doing any act in relation to them, and that

certain incapacities were imposed upon the new Legislature. The exceptions from the powers of the Irish Legislature were all that relates to the Crown, the Regency, and the Viceroyalty; to peace and war, to defence, to treaties and foreign relations, and to dignities and titles; the law of treason, the law of alienage, and everything that belongs to external trade; the subject of coinage, and some other minor and subsidiary subjects.

Then, as regards the incapacities imposed, they were intended for the security of religious freedom—and there they touch upon establishments and education—and for the security of personal freedom, with respect to which they had endeavoured to borrow from one of the modern amendments of the American Constitution.

As to the Executive power: it was proposed to divest the Viceroyalty of Ireland, so far as possible, of that party character which it bore, and to provide that the appointment should run for six years, but subject, of course, to the revoking power of the Crown. The office was to be freed of all religious disabilities.

Then came a clause providing for the full devolution of Executive power from the Sovereign upon the Viceroy. Provision was made for the appointment of an Executive Committee of the Privy Council in Ireland, which should be so constituted as to be, in effect, the practical Council for ordinary affairs, or the Cabinet of the Viceroy.

As to the veto, it was provided that, on the advice of the Executive Committee of the Privy Council, the Viceroy would give or withhold his consent to Bills, subject, however, to the instructions of the Sovereign. The Legislative Council would number 48; its term would be eight years; and a new constituency would be constituted for it, which, in the first place, must be associated with a value about £20 on valuation; with that figure they hoped to secure an aggregate constituency approaching 170,000 persons. In that constituency owners were included as well as occupiers, but no owner or occupier was to vote in more than one constituency. There was no provision in the Bill to make the Legislative Council alterable

by Irish action. With regard to the Legislative Assembly, the number was left at 103. A term of five years was fixed; the bill left the constituency as it was now, and these members would be elected for the purpose of carrying on Irish Legislative business by constituencies in Ireland. The provisions as to the Assembly were made alterable with respect to electors and constituencies after the term of six years; but, in altering constituencies, the power of the Assembly was to be limited by a declaration in the Act that there must be due regard had to the distribution of population.

The proposition as to deadlock was that in cases where a Bill had been adopted by the Assembly more than once, and where there had been an interval between the two adoptions either of two years or else marked by a dissolution of Parliament, then, upon the second adoption, the two Assemblies might be required to meet together, and the fate of the Bill was to be decided by the Joint Assembly. Appeals would lie to the Privy Council alone, and not to the Privy Council and the House of Lords. The Privy Council might try a question of the invalidity of an Irish Act, or, as it was sometimes called, *ultra vires*: not, however, upon the initiative of irresponsible persons, but upon the initiative either of the Viceroy or Secretary of State. The Judges were declared irremovable; and clauses were inserted to secure the emoluments of existing Judges, and of existing civil officers generally. Two Exchequer Judges were to be appointed under the authority of the Crown for the purpose mainly, perhaps, of financial business, but generally of that business which was Imperial. Besides the appointment of the Exchequer Judges under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, it was provided that for six years all Judges should be appointed as they now are; and in regard to future appointments they did not assume to the Imperial authority any power of fixing the emoluments. These emoluments would be fixed in Ireland, and the effect would be to establish a joint control over these appointments. A clause in the Bill provided that the Legislative Assembly should meet on the first Tuesday in September, 1894. There were clauses securing the sole initiative in money bills to the Assembly, and

also providing that the Assembly should not have within itself an initiative, except upon the prior initiative of the Viceroy.

Then there was a clause about financial arrangements, providing that they might be readjusted and reconsidered after fifteen years, upon an address either from the House of Commons or from the Legislative Assembly. The principles recognized as applicable to the Constabulary were a gradual and not too abrupt reduction, with the ultimate dissolution or disappearance of the Force.

It was proposed to retain the Irish members at Westminster, but to reduce their number to 80, which was according to the ratio of Irish population to the population of the rest of the country. For these members there would have to be a new election. They would, firstly, be excluded from voting upon any Bill or motion expressly confined to Great Britain; secondly, on any tax not levied in Ireland; thirdly, on any vote or appropriation of money otherwise than for Imperial services; and, fourthly, on any motion or resolution exclusively affecting Great Britain or person or persons therein.

As to finance, the keynote to the proposals was that there should be but one system of legislating for all the kingdom on commercial affairs: unity of commercial legislation for all the three kingdoms. By adopting this keynote, clashing and friction between the agents of the Imperial Government and the agents of the Irish Government would be avoided. The Bill made, under cover of this proposition, a larger and more liberal transfer to Ireland of the management of her own affairs than could be made if it proceeded upon any other principle. For example, it was hoped to escape in this way from all collection in the interior of Ireland of any revenue whatever by Imperial authorities. The principle was that Ireland was to bear her fair share of Imperial expenditure, the word "Imperial" being defined in the schedule which gave a list of Imperial services.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



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