

*THE SAVING
OF IRELAND*

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL, K.C.M.G.

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THE SAVING OF IRELAND

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THE SAVING OF IRELAND

INDUSTRIAL, FINANCIAL, POLITICAL

BY

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DE STATISTIQUE

Ἰερνὴ καὶ Ἀλβίων Βριττανικαὶ λεγόμεναί

(Temp. Aristotle *circa* 300 B.C.)

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

EDINBURGH AND LONDON

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P R E F A C E.

I PUBLISH the following facts and reasons in the hope that primarily they may assist in paving the way for the passing of a sound Local Government Bill for Ireland, and ultimately in securing the industrial, financial, and political salvation of Ireland.

By-elections clearly prove that Home Rule is the one plank to which the shipwrecked Gladstonians must cling. Mr Gladstone's unequalled genius has stereotyped Home Rule in his three Bills. Unionists will desire to have the condemnation of Home Rule also stereotyped for reference.

Comment is made that the great leaders of either party have refrained from declaring definitely on the question of the financial relations. Reasons of State no doubt intervene, and Reasons of State

are those which cannot be stated. Nevertheless, Unionists demand a full and fair examination of, and a fearless judgment on, this urgent question.

Moreover, British public opinion, fair-minded and generous, but shrewdly suspicious of Home Rule and every other form of Separatism, is anxious to understand alternative solutions of the Irish problem. In the following pages the endeavour is made to present one practicable alternative.

In polemics plain speaking is necessary, even at the risk of the wrath of political opponents. I shall welcome corrections in the cause of truth. I shall welcome abuse in the cause of justice, as the surest indication that my opponents have lost their case and know it.

G. B.-P.

CARLTON CLUB, *Jan.* 1898.

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THE SAVING OF IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE SCHEME OF THE BOOK.

1. "GOD save Ireland!" is a prayer which Unionists deem to be ancillary to, and Separatists to take precedence of, the national, the imperial prayer, "God save our Queen!"

2. Some of us have been told, especially in the heat of political elections, that Conservatives and the Unionist wing of the Liberal party are no friends to Ireland, and that the union of hearts is to arrive only on the Repeal of the union of institutions. Even Mr John Morley has spoken as if the only recognised alternatives to Home Rule were "repressive legislation and repressive administration."

3. It is not, therefore, out of place to put before the public some of the thoughts and expressed opinions of one of the rank and file of the Conservative party, by way of vindicating the genuine

and long-felt desire of that party to be a true friend to Ireland, and to all legitimate and useful Irish aspirations and hopes. And I would add that among my own greatest friends are many Irishmen, and that of the excursions and visits I have most enjoyed, those in Ireland and among Irish people of all ranks and classes take a foremost place. No one can have mixed as I have done over so many years with Irishmen of all classes in Ireland,—with the splendid seamen on the west coast; with nature's sportsmen, too often in rags, in the Leitrim mountains or the Shannon bogs, who will gleefully take you right up to a woodcock with all the certainty of a true Norfolk spaniel; with the best of soldiers and companions; with the most eloquent of statesmen and shrewdest wits among the judges; with the most successful of business men and manufacturers,—without entertaining for them and their affairs the most ardent sympathy.

4. The times are ripe for such action, for it is devoutly to be hoped that the session of 1898 will see Parliament at last tackle and complete a task which, if some of us had had our way when first we Conservatives stood up to combat the Home Rule scheme, would long ere this have been a task accomplished.

5. As minor proof I may state that my own Conservative constituents (on the 1898 Register 5961 have declared themselves Conservatives, and only 156 as Liberal or Radical Unionists) have in 1886, 1892, and 1895 warmly and distinctly supported

the plea I put in the forefront of my election addresses on each occasion in favour of Local Government for Ireland.

6. In my 1886 address I stated :—

“Mr Gladstone confines his appeal to all who are politically ignorant. He makes the astonishing statement that the plain bare question before the electors is, ‘Shall Ireland be given the right to manage her own affairs?’ But Ireland in her elective boards and municipalities, and in her full representation in the Imperial Parliament, already enjoys this right in common with other parts of the United Kingdom; and all parties—whether they follow Mr Gladstone, Mr Chamberlain, Lord Hartington, or Lord Salisbury—are willing, nay, eager, to reform the present system of local government in Ireland. Mr Gladstone’s real programme, as he has solemnly avowed in Parliament, is to reintroduce and carry through the particular scheme for granting autonomy in Ireland embodied in the two bills which the House of Commons has already rejected, and ‘from the main line and purport of which he will not depart one hair’s-breadth.’ This scheme would degrade and insult Ireland by depriving her of representation in the Imperial Parliament, and of all control over taxation in the two great items of Customs and Excise. . . . It would burden Great Britain with an annual grant of one and a half millions on the taxpayers’ liability. . . . It is a scheme which is only accepted grudgingly and conditionally by the Parnellite party, and the only certain out-

come of which would be a renewed lease of absolute power to Mr Gladstone severed from the Liberal party. . . . I hope to have the pleasure of addressing you at greater length in a day or two, especially as to alternative schemes for administrative reform in Ireland."

7. In 1892 I stated in my address:—

"The electors of Kirkdale will turn from such uncongenial associates and programmes to the proposals of the Unionist party, which include among others the following items: . . . (2) Equal laws for all parts of the United Kingdom, including local government for Ireland on lines similar to those already established in England, Wales, and Scotland. (3) Continuance to Ireland of that rule of law and order which has made her to-day more prosperous than she has been for many a long year, and thus of increasing commercial value to Great Britain. . . . Such are the leading items of the essentially practical programme which I will support . . . enables us to extend just and equal treatment and opportunities to all classes and creeds within the boundaries of the United Kingdom."

8. In 1895 I stated in my address:—

"The Unionist party has now triumphed, and with this new appeal to the constituencies the dawn of better times is already visible. The principles and measures which I have advocated and supported as your member are once again in the ascendant. . . . Ireland will again prosper under

the fair and firm administration of the law, and be given equal duties and rights in local administration to those of the other parts of the United Kingdom. Commercial and industrial confidence will be restored. . . . In the future as in the past I am prepared to do all I can to further this truly Conservative programme."

9. I may add that having had occasion, and that from behind the scenes, to study and investigate officially each class of Colonial Administration in the locality where it was at work, as well as in its relations to the Imperial authority, and having had frequent opportunities in Ireland of studying Irish political phenomena *in situ*—I do not approach the subject in a mere amateur spirit or in any purely theoretic frame of mind. My life has been spent, and especially my official life, amidst hard facts and actual figures, and the bent of my mind is away from hypothesis and theorem and towards induction and problem. Q.E.F. has an abiding supremacy with me over Q.E.D.

10. This is all objectionably personal, but it is a necessary accident to the thesis I have in hand, and will lead readers, I trust, to see that what I write and publish is a work attempted with no light heart, but with a full cognisance and appreciation of the difficulties as well as the responsibilities of all attempts at a solution of the Irish problem.

11. That the solution I would advocate is possible, and especially possible just now, can be

proved without difficulty. Ireland can be saved from herself, from her enemies (and her worst enemies are those of her own house), and from a disastrous future.

12. I propose in this volume, firstly, to describe in sufficient detail the economic, the financial, and the political conditions in Ireland; and secondly, to consider the rival remedies known as the Home Rule and the Self-Government remedies.

13. In collating the material I have gathered together I find many articles and letters from my own pen which, although written years ago, seem in their very words to be strangely applicable just now. History marches apace in these days, and as a direct outcome and result of the pace we live, and the facilities which printing-presses, steam-engines, and electricity have wrought, political memories year by year grow shorter. Perhaps this is why facts collected ten or twelve years ago already have a close resemblance to ancient and completed history. Perhaps this is why anticipations then stated have already become actually verified in the event, and therefore fall into the category of proven prophecies.

14. For these reasons I shall not hesitate to reprint in this volume articles and letters which appeared originally thus long ago. I know the dire risk I run. On the highest authority we are told that no prophet has honour in his own country. Still less can he expect any such honour when by the mere restatement of his prophecies

he proves that they have, so far as is yet possible, become proved true and correct by the event.

15. At first it was my intention, for instance in regard to the Financial Relations, to rewrite and bring up to date my original contributions to that problem in 1886. But a mere republication of the original statement will prove that twelve years ago the bed-rock facts of these Relations were in men's minds, and were stated at length in days when a settlement of the difficulties of that particular question would have been easy. But these statements and these facts were ignored by those in office: the little flame thus neglected became in due course a big conflagration, devouring much around that we could ill spare; and a grave parliamentary and public contest of an unfortunately bitter nature has arisen before, during, and around the Report of the curiously constituted *ad hoc* Royal Commission on the Financial Relations.

16. Again, it may be ancient history to republish, however succinctly, the economic and financial objections to Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. But this renewed statement of ancient history has its uses. It differs from modern history in that it describes a completed episode. And, after all said and done, those who believe in Mr Gladstone must believe that the wit of man, *quâ* politician and statesman, is not capable of devising any more ingenious solution of a political problem, especially in its financial aspects, than Mr Glad-

stone's. Unlike the "Gas and Water" Bill of 1893, the scheme of 1886 was designed to be a complete and full settlement of the question, and was accepted by Mr Parnell and his followers as a complete solution. It is the only scheme we have setting out, in black and white, the final and completed design for the new edifice by our greatest architect in constitutions. Wherefore the exposure of its financial unsoundness and inexpedient character remains a permanent exposure of all similar schemes, and a permanent guide to methods of exposure or standards by which such attempts must be judged.

17. Her Majesty's Opposition are without doubt pledged to reintroduce Home Rule. Mr John Morley, speaking in the autumn of 1897, told us plainly that whatever the Local Government Bill of the Unionist Government may enact, the necessity will not be removed for Home Rule in the future to complete the edifice. Mr Asquith has now told his constituents in his most definite manner:—

Can any one, does any one, suppose that the great purposes for which we have been fighting in years past—the emancipation of the Imperial Parliament for Imperial duties by the granting of what is called Home Rule . . . are dead? and that we are going to apostatise from them merely because we happen for the time being to be in a minority in the House of Commons?

18. It is quite true that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, while vehemently repudiating any de-

sire to be classed with “programme-mongers,” did in Edinburgh, just before Christmas 1897, make a “statement of policy” which the unthinking might well mistake for a programme. He said:—

The questions of the representation of the people, the power of the Second Chamber, local self-government, the relations of Church and State, the liquor traffic, and the questions of privilege as against the interests of the community—let them go over the whole gamut, and they would not find a single point upon which there would be any doubt upon which side the Liberal party would be ranged.

In this “whole gamut” not a note is sounded as to Home Rule, but the speech itself was in deprecation of the recent action of the Political Committee of the National Liberal Club in producing the notorious Derby Programme—a variation on the Newcastle Programme—from which Home Rule was explicitly excluded.

19. Mr Dillon and Mr Redmond at once took up the cudgels. The latter declared that the “English Liberal party had abandoned their solemn pledges, and so placed Home Rule in the background.” Mr Dillon declared:—

With such a programme there could be no alliance whatever between the Liberal party and the Irish Nationalist party, nor could the support of the Irish party be given to any party in England that accepted the Derby Resolution and its policy. . . . He had demanded pledges from the Radical party, and had obtained these pledges, which were that they should stand by the original contract to keep Home Rule as their foremost and immediate object.

20. The 'Westminster Gazette,' with its usual force and ability, in a particularly strong leader, brings Mr Dillon to book:—

Does Mr Dillon himself quite realise what this means? It means, and can only mean, that Liberal members are asked to give a pledge that whenever the Liberal party is in a position to take office again, it must start once more as it started in 1886, and as it started in 1892, with a Home Rule Bill. More than this. No one supposes that a Liberal Government can again stand by while a Home Rule Bill is rejected by the House of Lords and not appeal to the country. Therefore, what Mr Dillon asks is that the Liberal party shall pledge itself before an election to take Home Rule immediately afterwards, and dissolve upon it within six months.

21. Every indication goes to show that the wisest heads, the ultimate leader of her Majesty's Opposition—whatever may be in the intermediate steps or the immediate measures in a new Parliament—are resolved on reintroducing Home Rule when and so soon as the proper occasion arises. It is therefore no mere beating of the air to review in concentrated form the facts and arguments which are at the bottom of the whole of this controversy, and are, after all, the real basis of any adequate reform of Local Government in Ireland.

22. Finally, it might be said that the republication of efforts made in 1886 and 1888 to expose the fallacies of the Colonial analogy were behind the times. But as is shown later on, leading lights of no less modern authority than Lord Rosebery, Sir William Harcourt, and Mr John Morley have all in

the last few months explained that they—the leaders of many who are Radicals—remain lamentably ignorant of the conditions and history of the grant of self-government to our greater Colonies. Repetition, as is proved in this instance, becomes a much-needed instrument of correction in the matter of these misleading oratorical vagaries.

23. I would also briefly analyse here the true character of the support which Irish Nationalism receives from the United States. It goes without saying that the Nationalist programme would remain a mere unconsidered cipher but for the money that flows in support from the United States.

24. In recent visits to America, and especially to Americans away in California and Virginia, or in the essentially Yankee districts of Massachusetts and the back of New York State, I have found the one great dominating idea of honest Republicans: “Can any good thing come out of a monarchy?” The corollary of this honest argument is, that you are in turn bound to oppose all monarchies as being the negation of a government of the people by the people for the people. Irish grievance-mongers seize on this Republican simplicity, and develop the idea that Ireland must be assisted as against the effete monarchy of England to obtain her freedom and to secure the right of self-government. Many a kindly Yankee has expressed to me his own absolute conviction of the gross and grave injustice of this denial of liberty to Ireland, and the consequent triumph of pure despotism. Well do I remember,

at a banquet given in Washington to the well-known Mayor Hewitt of New York, an orator from Kentucky placing in beautiful language before us what he supposed to be the condition of Ireland on the analogy of a second Poland—a simile one had often before heard in America. I had to take my part in the speech-making afterwards, and thought it best to state a fact or two: such as that in our reading of the history of Poland we had never yet discovered that Poland had more than her fair share among the representatives of a free and supreme Parliament. And what actually startled some in my audience as an entirely new revelation was my brief description of the county cess, town commissioners, poor-law guardians, municipalities, and even lord mayors, who everywhere controlled and worked local government in Ireland. I record this as an instance where strange ignorance combined with commendable sympathy has led, and to-day leads, many earnest men among our cousins across the Atlantic to give practical aid to grievance-mongers who fraudulently remain silent when they hear Ireland's position spoken of as that of a second Poland. That the responsible Yankee mind can be so misled tells indeed that the sympathetic heart is there as of old, but makes us in the mother-country dread lest it be proof of a sad falling off in the quality of hard-headed and clear insight, which had been at the first the most conspicuous attribute of the genuine Yankee. But however this may be, American money continues, and will continue, to flow so long

as agitators can be found to preach the Poland analogy, for the heart of America is readily accessible, especially if the appeal is clothed in the garb of an attack on any monarchy.

25. Such, then, are some of my incentives in placing this book before the public at the present juncture. The economic, the financial, and the political conditions will be successively taken in hand, and then, with perhaps an adequately full knowledge of their fundamental circumstances, remedies will be considered in detail, and the final problem summarised which shall issue in the "saving of Ireland."

DIVISION I.

E C O N O M I C S

CHAPTER II.

FINANCE AND ECONOMICS.

26. THE bed-rock of human affairs is the L. S. D. of them. Money represents to the human mind the measure of all that is won from nature to the use of man. Some have regarded it as little less than a miracle that for the moment all sections in Ireland last autumn seemed to combine and actually appear in public together as if animated to united action. But this was no miracle. It was simply that suddenly an appeal had been made that Ireland was overtaxed. At once every resident in Ireland was on his feet. The "bottom fact" of L. S. D. had been reached. Politics and Finance, as Mr Sydney Buxton has so admirably shown in his valuable book, are and remain indissolubly chained the one to the other.

27. Especially is this apparent in recent Irish history. Whether, on the one hand, the appeals have been made with regard to private money-making, to trade, to manufacture, to agriculture, or, on the other, to public expenditure and to the exactions of

the tax-collector, it is the money aspect which is found to lie at the root of all things, evil or good. And this aspect of the question is one that will be fully and fairly faced by the wise.

28. Before, however, taking in hand the pressing problem of what is known as "the Financial Relations," I will set out the arguments and the facts of the industrial position; before taking up the public, I will deal with the private division of this bed-rock problem.

29. Appeals are so constantly made to the poverty of Ireland; Nationalist members over and over again arrogate to themselves, as representatives of Ireland, the right to sue *in formá pauperis*; we hear so much of the time-honoured grievance that Irish prosperity was sacrificed, and remains sacrificed, to the overbearing greed of English manufacturers,—that it is high time once and again to set out the actual facts of the case. I will attempt this task by reproducing some articles on the industrial situation which appeared in the 'Times' in March 1886, and then a letter indicating the economic value to Ireland of the Union, and dealing with the effect any move in the direction of political separation must have on private credit and private industry and enterprise in Ireland. I reproduce these, by kind permission of the editor, in their original wording, so that they may speak for themselves.

CHAPTER III.

IRISH DISORDER.¹FERMOY, *March 1.*

30. MR GLADSTONE was recently advised to read, for a period, 'United Ireland.' Lord Salisbury has amused us all by his happy sarcasm in pointing out that Mr Gladstone may be busy for "two and three-quarter years to come in the fascinating occupation of perusing the epistolary communications he has invited from every inhabitant of Ireland." Writing from this centre of dairy-farming—whence pork and butter and live stock are annually sent in such vast quantities to England—I would ask Mr Gladstone to call for, say, ten different local papers of any recent dates, chosen at random. He will find them almost entirely devoted to three subjects—boycotting, evictions, and the National League. If he can spare ten minutes even to skim these ten papers, which will fairly represent what is proceeding, he will see at once that social order is a thing of the past, except in so far as it exists on the sufferance of the new, irresponsible, secret,

¹ From the 'Times' of March 6, 1886.

but all-powerful dispensation that has superseded the old, responsible, too public, and weak Government of which Mr Gladstone, with a brief interval of a few months, has been the despotic head for six years past. Moreover, he will notice that his own concessions to agitation have emboldened and encouraged agitation on behalf of schemes that are altogether outside the scope of any Government that retains the slightest respect for justice or for the prosperity of its subjects. He will at once find that the language of the Queen's Speech is more than justified, and that "there is in many places a concerted resistance to the enforcement of legal obligations," and that "the practice of organised intimidation continues to exist."

31. He will notice what boycotting has done in all the relations of life. He will find, for instance, a blacksmith suddenly lose all his custom, and all the farmers of a neighbourhood put to the great inconvenience and expense of getting all their shoeing and all their petty ironwork done at many miles' distance, for the sole reason that their local man shod the horse of a man who had paid up his rent to his greatest friend—his landlord. He will find the same secret despotism, which thus robs a whole district of individual freedom of action, inspiring some board of guardians to favour, in the granting of relief, members of the League. He will find moonlighting on the increase, the chief and sinister object being the acquisition of arms, and a second object, the keeping the public mind

alive to the continued activity of some secret despotism. Everywhere he will find a population protesting against the carrying out of contracts. Tenants come to the agents and say, "We are all ordered to band together, and we dare not disobey; wherefore, we refuse to pay rent except we be granted such and such an abatement." The farmers know that by agitation they obtained a Land Act awarding judicial rents, and Mr Gladstone, by exercising all his influence on his party, secured, four years ago, "fair rent" all over Ireland. But again this secret despotism is at work, and no tenant now dare pay even this fair rent. He must slavishly yield and agree to demand any abatement he may be ordered to demand. It is nothing to the secret autocrats of the movement that eviction must follow, and that many an individual tenant will find himself destitute at the roadside. At the same time he receives this amount of support—he is advised and assisted so far to neutralise the hand of justice as may be done by timely removal of all his possessions, so that the serving of the writ does his creditor little or no material good. The general and rapidly-growing result is that tenants find it harder day by day to obtain any credit whatever either from shopkeepers, dealers, or even money-lenders. There have been recent instances, as at Castledaly, near Athlone, where the constituted authorities go to make a seizure on a farm and find no stock—nothing in the house, and not even any representative of the tenant. So also in Donegal.

Recently, the board of guardians had to sue for a seed-rate contribution, but found the dwelling stripped completely, and nothing left but walls plastered over with the portraits of the Parnellite leaders. But such instances recur daily throughout the country, with the additional fact that the service of writs and the carrying out of evictions are in most places only to be performed with the active support of large bodies of police. The fact is, Mr Gladstone's judicial rents have dragged the law courts into the case, and their strong arm, the police, has its hands full. And the newspapers teem with detailed accounts of meetings of the Land League courts, which are rapidly taking up the threads of all affairs. Some of the more zealous Home Rulers, who, in their innocence, imagined that Home Rule meant Home Rule, rapidly developed county councils, but these were promptly suppressed by Mr Parnell as being altogether outside the secret plans of the central despotism. The Land League is busy nominating poor-law guardians, knowing well that its nomination secures election. There are ugly stories of relief work and charity cottage accommodation at the disposal of the local boards being refused to non-League men. Indeed, in Tipperary, so long ago as last August, the local branch of the National League passed resolutions that members of the League ought to have preference in the granting of these cottages.

32. Visitors to the pleasant and, at one time, lively county town of Limerick will tell you how,

in its Corporation buildings, on one side of the door you will find the town clerk and all the usual officers and officials of such corporations, but on the other you will find the court-room and offices of the National League, with its green blinds in that half of the Corporation buildings; and so everywhere this League is encroaching, but it ruthlessly sets its foot on Home Rule or the management of local affairs by the people for the people. The League is merely the outside face of that inner and incomprehensible despotism which interferes suddenly, surely, capriciously it may be, but none the less irresistibly, with all attempts at local independence.

33. It is true that the Court for Crown Leases Reserved—a court composed of the Lord Chief Justice, the Chief Baron, and four judges—has by a majority of four to two affirmed that boycotting is an offence under the “Whiteboys Act,” the special case being that of a member of the Loughrea branch of the National League who had, at a meeting of that body last October, passed a resolution condemning trades for supplying goods to an emergency-man, and threatening to boycott any traders who might do so. This is eminently satisfactory, provided in a sufficient number of instances boycotted tradesmen and labourers can establish claims for compensation against these branches of the League. At all events, boycotting is thus declared illegal, and in Mr Gladstone’s attempts to preserve social order he will find he

will have at once to deal with that organisation which is the active and only support of boycotting. Under its countenance persons are maltreated for giving evidence before law courts, the chapel door is closed against constables who have done their duty, men are belaboured in the streets of Cork for working for a boycotted company, and moonlight gangs levy by domiciliary visits the fines imposed by the League branches. Such is the present condition of "personal liberty of action." We all hope that Mr Gladstone will, now that he is in power again, act up to his professions in 1881, when he declared, "I say that liberty is a mere phantom unless every man is free to pursue his inclinations, to consult his interests, within and under the protection of the law."

34. On another point connected with the land question Mr Gladstone will find much information sent to him, and that point is, whether it is any longer lawful to be a landlord in Ireland or not—a landlord, that is, in the sense of a landowner, who allows others to make use of his land for stipulated payments. It is perfectly obvious that one result of the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881 has been to discredit altogether any such systems. In the last few years Government has allowed a new agitation to grow apace which skilfully grafts on to these Acts the final principle that all rents are illegal. It is true that the introduction of this new principle in the Constitution is to be tempered by compensation to those who had from time im-

memorial received such rents, to many who had, under the Encumbered Estates Act, imagined they were purchasing a parliamentary title to such rents, and more latterly to those who, acquiescing in the Land Act of 1881, supposed they were, at all events, once for all settled in Mr Gladstone's fair, judicial, or parliamentary rents. But Parnellism knew better. The tenants are a large item in the electorate, and they could be bribed by a no-rent manifesto, and by proclamations of such significant but in themselves unmeaning phrases as "the putting an end to landlord oppression" and "the complete emancipation of the land." The proof was indeed evident ever since 1881 that Parliament could and would dock a certain portion of the rents that free citizens had contracted to pay; and if a portion, then why not the whole? And even now the common electioneering talk throughout the South and West is that the landlords will be treated mercifully and bought out, but at prices that can be successfully manipulated by constant agitation until they fall to what irresponsible agitators may choose to call a fair value.

35. Many landowners are saying, If this is so, we will take the law into our own hands, demand our parliamentary rents, and get rid of all those tenants who refuse to pay, and take the land into our own hands.

36. Now it is absolutely certain that the Imperial Parliament, by its whole system of laws in general, and by its particular indorsements in the Encum-

bered Estates Act and the Land Act of 1881, and by its action in the matter of probate duty and income-tax, has encouraged and upheld the specific rights of those who become owners of land in Ireland to a payment of rents. Any contravention of this statute law is a direct offence against the highest authority in the realm.

37. This view of the rights of landlords is the only one that can be entertained either in law or equity. When Mr Parnell shouts from the hustings that he will abolish landlordism, he is quite within his rights. Landlordism, or the renting out of lands, may or may not be an evil thing. Mr Parnell thinks it is, and is therefore perfectly justified in using all constitutional means to abolish it. It may be that he agrees with the extreme views of some of his followers, who recently passed a resolution "recognising landlordism to be the only and immediate cause of all the misery and privation of the masses of this country." But Mr Parnell does not succeed in persuading the tenants that it will be a costly and, to them, ruinous process; for the tenants do not seem as yet to have faced the two questions—(1) What will it cost to do it? and (2) How will it benefit them? Landlordism has but one possible substitute, and that is land-owning. A farmer, no less than any one else, must either own what he uses, or use that which is another's. And if it be land he uses, he must either be owner or be under a landlord. If landlordism be abolished, according to the first point in the

Parnellite creed, then the Irish farmer must become the owner of the soil he tills or grazes. At present the annual rental paid—or rather due—from land held from landlords is certainly not 10s. an English acre all round. The farmers (under the pressure of Parnellism) profess themselves unable to pay this or half of it. If they become the owners they will not only have to pay for the right, but they will forfeit every kind and type of easement or assistance hitherto received from the landlords and their families, which led Mr Goldwin Smith to write of them, “A landlord, if he is worth anything, acts as a sort of Provident Fund in bad times.” It is, indeed, very difficult to see where or in what way the farmer will be any the better off. Moreover, with the abolition, the constitutional disestablishment, of landlordism, it will become impossible to let the land. Consequently shrewd farmers are asking, what are they to do under this new Parnellite *régime*, when, having sunk capital in the purchase of the land, and by a series of lean years being financially embarrassed—having, in short, proved to all the world that their particular farm cannot be worked at a profit—these shrewd farmers ask what sort of price will they get in the market when they are forced to sell? If they really find by experience they cannot pay 5s. an acre now in rent, even with the addition of the various aids from the landlord, how will their opportunities improve when they have to sink capital in the purchase of so useless a commodity, which at best

can but provide bare subsistence for themselves and their families, if what they now aver is the actual truth?

38. If we look to farm values in pre-agitation times we shall see that there has been, indeed, a great fall in these latter days. Figures tell that in the North, where tenant right has, of course, become customary, annual sales so lately as 1879 and 1880 proved that tenants paid each other on the average for possession of farms sums of hard cash which in annual value quite equalled the rent. A man would buy for £400 the right to pay £20 per annum for a farm of 30 acres—that is, out of that farm he must not only earn sufficient to pay £20 per annum in rent, but recoup himself at least as much in addition, because of the capital he had sunk in the purchase of the tenant right. This was all done voluntarily and without compulsion so lately as 1880. But now suddenly we are told tenants cannot even pay a very much smaller rent, and so in default they are to be made owners. Some of them cannot afford to pay 5s. an acre rent, so they are, as a remedy, to be allowed to purchase; and the pre-agitation price, according to Ulster experience, is £20, including, of course, tenant right, or at least 12s. an acre. Irish mother-wit laughs in its sleeve and asks, How is this to mend matters? It is assumed all along that if you make these people landowners, let them till the land they own and own the land they till, all will be prosperity and plenty. Actual experience,

and especially Irish experience, does not afford one particle of hope that such will be the case. Even if agitation were to achieve its fell purpose and spoliates the landowners by transferring the land free of cost to the tenants, yet, if this is really to benefit the tenant, the land will again and speedily acquire a market value representing capital the annual interest on which will be three times as great as the rent the tenant now declares himself unable to pay.

39. People in England and Scotland must remember that Irish landlordism does not only involve individual landlords, but it includes in effect London city companies, insurance and other societies, trusts of many kinds, advances and loans on mortgage and otherwise, jointures, charges, corporation and municipal property, Church property, and, in fact, all the processes and forms of landownership which the Constitution and the law allows, and which it has, indeed, provided special facilities for acquiring, and which have hitherto been protected. If you abolish landlordism you are not abolishing a class; you are abolishing an institution, and an institution which has a very wide network of roots throughout the length and breadth of the land. This network can be best illustrated by a single reference to valuations for probate duty. Rents are by law acknowledged to be, and claimed to be, a portion of the legal assets of an individual or a corporation. In Ireland Mr Gladstone has legalised parliamentary rents. Economists jeered at him

for his folly, and told him he was a mere tool in the hands of those whose aim it was not to pay low rents, but to introduce the system of no rents. In 1881 Mr Gladstone, as I say, established a system of parliamentary, of judicial, of fair rents. In 1882 a League, altogether outside the Constitution, by its own means of terrorism, with which the authorities hesitate to cope, enacts that these parliamentary rents are not to be paid; it enacts that all tenant-farmers must combine to claim reductions of specified amount in their parliamentary rents. And to many landlords who refuse to accept this ultra-constitutional threat the reply is to be, "Very well; then you get no rent at all."

40. It is important that it should be clearly understood by the general public that the Imperial Parliament is thus made of no effect whatever. Englishmen must remember that the House League is already in active operation. The Land Act has set the guinea stamp of parliamentary sanction on evasions of contract for the hiring of lands. Already similar indulgence is demanded for contracts involving the hiring of houses. We have not yet heard that a Labour League is to follow, to give a parliamentary title to employers of labour to withhold what is due for the hire of labour. But it is becoming generally acknowledged that all this legislative interference is disturbing the very foundations on which our civilisation is built up.

41. This upsetting of old traditions is a canker that is rapidly eating into the agricultural pros-

perity of these districts. Under the old system a very vigorous export business developed all over Munster in butter and pork and live stock. Already men are afraid of adventure, afraid to look forward to any harvesting of what they sow. Not only is the law of the land overridden by the self-assertion of a League unknown to the Constitution, but men are no longer confident but that the law of the land may any day be itself so altered that what they have bought with the savings of a lifetime they may find suddenly transferred to others.

42. What the agricultural interests of Ireland call aloud for is security and rest, and the supremacy of some Constitution which shall infallibly secure to any man the results of his own labour whensoever he shall invest them as the law allows. It is indeed strange—it is more than strange—that in this nineteenth century, and with a so-called Liberal Ministry in power for six years, there should have come over all these portions of Ireland an utter degradation and a complete annihilation of that liberty of the individual to enjoy freedom of action within the four corners of the law. If Mr Gladstone will only bend his penetrating intellect to the urgent task, he will find that the greatest cause of misfortune to Ireland, and of discontent and distress, is the total eclipse of social order. There are, unfortunately, many influences busy at work contributing heartily to this eclipse, and they have been encouraged and assisted by the purblind charity of certain English

statesmen who, overcome by ignorant sympathy, discarded common-sense, and are thus themselves to blame, themselves responsible for that social disorder which, like some canker, is eating into the very heart and life of Ireland. And of this the most prominent example is a league or combination which has been formed for the purpose of abolishing landlordism; and the means it advocates and adopts is refusal to pay parliamentary rents—means which many are of opinion involve, as against Parliament, an obvious case of *læsa majestas*.

CHAPTER IV.

IRISH POVERTY.¹GALWAY, *February.*

43. To write a letter from Ireland which is not hotly political, which is indeed in a sense not political at all, may seem absurd ; nevertheless in this letter I wish plainly to call attention to the economic condition and prospects of Ireland, although I cannot pledge myself that politics will not now and then force themselves in. Irish poverty is unfortunately a household word ; it is unfortunately an undeniable fact ; and it is a fact undoubtedly at the base of those political troubles which injure not Ireland alone but the whole British empire. But this Irish poverty, which seems almost a chronic disease, has its root firmly planted in economic wrongs, although its growth is watered by copious showers of political and legislative interference.

44. What, then, are these economic wrongs ? At first sight we find Ireland in the main an agricultural country, more densely populated than

¹ From the 'Times' of March 13, 1886.

any other mainly agricultural country, and having great portions of its area, by character of climate or of soil, unfitted for agricultural success. It may be well to enforce this fact by a few figures.

45. The three constituent kingdoms of the United Kingdom compare as follows:—

	Area. Acres.	Horses. No.	Cattle. No.	Sheep. No.
England and Wales	37,320,000	1,260,000	5,422,000	19,673,000
Scotland . . .	19,496,000	188,000	1,176,000	6,960,000
Ireland	20,820,000	491,000	4,228,000	3,500,000
	Pigs. No.	Values of Meat Stock.	Mining Products. Tons.	
England and Wales	2,252,000	£118,127,000	162,915,000	
Scotland . . .	151,000	30,336,000	24,068,000	
Ireland	1,270,000	65,860,000	263,000	

And again—

	Area under crop. Acres.	Area pasture. Acres.	Area waste. Acres.
England and Wales	10,409,000	17,203,000	9,718,000
Scotland . . .	2,100,000	2,792,000	14,604,000
Ireland	2,840,000	12,279,000	5,701,000
	Sea-fisheries. Value.	Fishing-boats. Number.	Tonnage.
England and Wales	...	8,320	197,300
Scotland . . .	£3,000,000	13,730	123,065
Ireland	1,000,000	8,724	33,041

46. These figures indicate at once how essentially Ireland is at present an agricultural and grazing country—a country that grows, principally, pigs and cattle, and produces butter and salted pork.) In addition to this there is proof that manufactures and mining and fisheries can and do exist in Ireland. But the statistics of poverty, destitution, and distress in Ireland tell clearly that whatever the industries are, they fail to make a sufficient

return to prevent the apparently chronic poverty of large masses of the population. One of the reasons of this is that these masses are so large. In Ireland there are no fewer than 170 persons to the square mile, an average that is much above that of any European country except Holland, Belgium, England, and Germany, where great manufacturing, mining, and commercial activity is the rule. The average for all Europe, including these busy countries, is under 80, or not one-half of that of Ireland. But, before answering the question as to whether Ireland has reached any Malthusian limit of population, it is as well to be sure of the intensity and the character of this poverty. There is, no doubt, much positive destitution along the wilder parts of these western coasts, and, sad to say, this is by no means the first winter of such an occurrence. Then, too, we hear of the unemployed, and of scarcity and want in many inland centres. For instance, from Tullamore it is reported working men are asking only 6d. a-day, and can get no employment. But even worse news is it that in some cases the poor-law guardians are forced to refuse extra help because they are convinced that the ratepayers are unable to contribute any higher poor-rate.

47. Be it noticed, however, that the destitution on the coast has nothing whatever to do with the Parnellites' great complaint as to rack-renting and the iniquities of landlordism, because there are no rents or tenants or farms. But these inland evils

are in purely agricultural districts where a beneficent English Parliament, by compelling landlords to show cause for their nominal rents, has lowered a proportion of these nominal rents of £2,750,000 to real, judicial, or parliamentary rents of £2,293,457. In other words, all that judicial inquiry into the supposed iniquities of landlordism succeeded in doing was to substitute rents, fixed and liable to no abatements, which were in the gross a reduction of at most 17 per cent on rents that were customarily liable to very considerable abatements, often exceeding 25 and even 30 per cent in bad years or special cases.

48. The pressure of distress, not only on the coast but inland, is being felt now not only by tenant-farmers, but by shopkeepers, traders, mechanics, artisans, and labourers, and this for the one main reason that there is a sad and rapidly increasing lack of purchasers and employers.

49. Let me recount one typical description of what has occurred in a district not one hundred miles from Galway. For reasons which are out of place in a non-political letter, certain individuals, under what particular legal authority has not transpired, banded themselves together and told the foxhunters of the district that the hunt was to be put an end to. All inhabitants of the district were warned that if they did not assist in putting down the hunt they would be forced so to do. The hunt is stopped. But it was estimated at the time that this favourite pack attracted each winter into the district

strangers of all kinds, who expended each winter at the least £12,000 or £15,000 in supplying themselves and their friends and their followers with good things. But the hunt is stopped; and hotel-keepers, horse-breeders, blacksmiths, shopkeepers, and all the corner-boys who, as stable-helps and attendants on mishaps in the field, had been accustomed for years to pick up no inconsiderable earnings, all these classes find themselves suddenly deprived of their livelihood.

50. But it is trenching upon forbidden political ground to point out that this particular form of boycotting is cutting off one supply of money to Ireland. And there is danger that similar causes may achieve similar disastrous effects in three other social sources of national employment—if I may be allowed the expression. Nature has signally favoured Ireland as a place of residence, as a sporting-ground, and as an interesting and health-giving tourist resort. Dwellers in the many comfortable country towns in Ireland bear willing witness to the large amount of money that flows into the tills and the pockets of the inhabitants of those towns from these three sources. Is not the tourist season the period of harvest for the railways, the hotels, the car-boys, and many other such purely Irish interests all over the land? And is it not a fact that large sums are annually expended by those who come from all quarters of the globe to endeavour to bag Irish salmon, trout, snipe, or grouse? All country shopkeepers, horse-breeders, and farmers

well know the difference in money value to them of any great house being open or shut up. To inhabitants of the west these social sources of income, minor if you will as compared with the great feeding or exporting industries, are none the less of great present importance. In these respects some parts of Ireland are experiencing in some degree the effects which would accrue were Mr Parnell to succeed altogether in "chucking the landlords overboard," to recall his own emphatic words. In another respect, too, people are compelled to attend to another fact. In some districts the sole remaining funds in the hands of the labourers are wages earned in England by harvest-work. But with the Parnellite idea of severing all connection with England, will this stream of wealth also be cut at its source?

51. There are signs, however, that all this poverty is threatening rather than actually present. It is true, as in the hunt district I have described, that in many cases the pinch is already felt in full force, but this is not so as yet in all places. An amusing and indeed typical case has recently occurred, in which, with full Irish licence of logic, the tenant-farmers enable us to judge them out of their own mouths.

52. At Ballyseedy (an ominous name, for "Bally" means town), near Tralee, in the beginning of February, the tenantry were called upon to pay up their rents. Their united reply was as follows (the italics are mine) :—

Owing to extraordinary depression in prices of all agricultural produce, and the *alarming destitution that prevails in consequence*, the payment of our September rents is regarded by this meeting as *an absolute impossibility*. . . . All the tenants are at present suffering from *intense poverty*. . . . We, *the tenants, are willing to purchase our farms* at twenty years' purchase on Griffith's valuation. . . . While desiring to maintain friendly relations with our landlord, we cannot and will not consent to any proposals except the above.

An examination of a very considerable number of experiences in various localities leads me to assert this general conclusion—that on the average the present population of Ireland is too dense (in numbers) to do more than secure bare subsistence out of the land all round, unless they change their occupations.

53. We are thus brought back to the question as to whether Ireland has reached any Malthusian limit of population; and the answer depends entirely upon the solution of the further problem—Are the capacities, natural and acquired, of both country and people stretched to their fullest development?

54. In the first place, as to the natural and acquired—or to be acquired—capacities of the land itself. As for natural capacities no country has better natural grazing lands, arable areas, water communication, harbour facilities, fish supply (both sea and fresh-water), than Ireland. The climate is healthy, if somewhat exciting, for human beings, and is admirably adapted to all classes of stock, to all vegetable growths, to forest growths, and even to textile manufactures. There are also ample evi-

dences of considerable mineral wealth, and at all times there is an abundant supply of water-power. And then as to acquired capacities—railways and roads and bridges are now well and fairly distributed over the land, and canal and river navigation has also been efficiently cared for. In the numerous arms of the sea and along the many navigable rivers, piers and landing-places are abundant. There remains the one crying need, and that chiefly on this west coast, exposed as it is to the full force of the perennial Atlantic swell, that a judicious but extensive system of breakwater and harbour works should be set on foot—a complete system to be carried out in detail year by year. And it is to be hoped that whenever there are convicts to spare they may be set at these works. Harbours such as are needed are not of the extensive character called for by ocean traffic; what is necessary is a chain along the coast of places of shelter for fishing-vessels, for the wealth of fish on this coast is an enormous untapped mine, close to hand as compared with Newfoundland or the North Sea, and lying along a well-indented coast-line affording numerous havens, requiring but little aid to adapt them to become the bases of a gigantic fishing industry. The Irish fishing-boats—as the returns under the 1868 Act tell us—are most of them of the lowest class, “propelled by oars only,” or at best of the second, or that of 15 tons and under. This is because there is no shelter available for larger vessels at all times of tide and in all weathers, and

yet large boats are a necessity if the wealthy sea-fisheries are to be developed.

55. Such is, in brief, the nature of the country itself, and the natural and acquired—or to be acquired—capacities of the inhabitants afford at least an equal ground for hope that no Malthusian limit has yet been reached. Any visitor to Galway should not miss a visit to the Claddagh, or fish-quay, and get into talk with the tall, straight-backed, downright crews of the powerful trawling-smacks he will see there. No better or more confident sailors exist than those along the west coast of Ireland. Inland, too, all over the agricultural districts, we find a race by tradition and nature among the most efficient breeders and caretakers of stock of all kinds. In Lancashire and Cheshire and other parts of England all farmers know how well the Irish harvesters work; while the world-wide fame of Irish navvies tells of their sterling muscle and endurance. Again, as factory hands Irish men and women are known as both willing and skilful. Nor is it only in other lands that these qualities are shown. The great industry of linen manufacture finds its chief home in Ireland, which country enjoys nearly one-third of the total linen manufacture of all Europe, as the following figures testify:—

LINEN MANUFACTURES.

	Ireland.	Scotland.	England and Wales.	All Europe.
Power-looms .	21,000	17,000	4,000	84,000
Spindles .	890,000	284,000	219,000	3,000,000

56. But in spite of these natural and acquired capacities of land and people, Ireland undoubtedly languishes, and cannot boast of industrial and economic prosperity. The diffusion of wealth among the labouring classes of the three kingdoms may, perhaps, be illustrated by the following figures relating to trade unions and provident societies for last year :—

TRADE UNIONS.

	Number.	Members.	Income.	Funds.
England and Wales	210	250,000	£385,300	£530,000
Scotland	14	13,000	12,000	17,000
Ireland	22	3,000	8,000	3,000

PROVIDENT SOCIETIES.

	Number.	Members.	Profits.	Capital.
England and Wales	870	576,500	£1,926,700	£8,000,000
Scotland	287	104,300	391,000	1,000,000
Ireland	8	870	2,000	9,000

57. These records illustrate a dearth of widespread wellbeing; and the more one goes into figures the more one sees the necessity not of forcing the Irish to become owners of unprofitable acres, but of providing them with profitable occupations. The capacities, natural or acquired, of both country and people, are by no manner of means as yet stretched to their fullest developments.

58. To ask the question, How are they to be? involves a preliminary inquiry, Why are they not so developed? To answer this is at once to plunge into the fierce vortex of political strife; but the plunge need not be long to show how great is the economic evil resulting from the ever-lively political

strife of this most distressful country. Small blame to any men, but great blame to their natures, has been an old but remains a very true criticism.

59. In the valuable correspondence that appeared in the 'Times,' many experienced and known authorities recorded their opinions on this point. One wrote, "The strength of Parnellism lies in keeping a mass of distressed people in the country." Another wrote:—

The Parnellite cry only commends itself so long as prosperity and order are dormant in Ireland. The Parnellite members would find their occupation gone were Ireland again prosperous and peaceable. Already their cry has driven from that luckless island many sources of wages to the poor and of wealth to the general body of the people. The vitality of the cry depends on the continued decrease of prosperity, and it can only end in the industrial ruin of Ireland.

And others wrote to the same effect. It is not that blame is directed personally against the members of the Parnellite party. Mr Parnell himself, no doubt, sincerely wishes to achieve the good of Ireland. But it is the incidental economic effects of this political agitation which all men who are not blind clearly see to be working disaster to Ireland.

60. I may take this occasion to state that I am not a member of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, and have had no communications whatever with its leaders or its members; but I see from the documentary evidence they distribute that many merchants, financial firms, and traders complain

sadly of the disappearance of confidence and credit. We find it boldly set out in black and white :—

The result has been a paralysis of enterprise, a rapid fall in the price of securities, and worse than a fall in prices, such an absence of buyers as has obliged railway and other public companies to suspend operations involving the outlay of capital.

Here we see another source of wages and employment cut at its source by this unwholesome political agitation.

61. It is improbable that Mr Parnell and his chief lieutenants could just now, even if they would, pause in their course to consider, but they are unconsciously teaching their present supporters a very harsh lesson. The path along which they are forcing the pace is one that involves the arbitrary denial to any man to reap or store the harvest of his own exertions. The country car-drivers are not allowed to hire out their services and their properties to the police. Such facts are eating into the heart of the Irish race. The very manhood of the Irish nation is at present in guiding-strings, differing from slavery only in this respect—that the results are profitable to no one, not even to the master. It may be that there is at the moment little open crime, but that is because terrorism has established too firm a hold. But I do not believe that the Irish race has as yet lost that mother-wit which must teach it that the tyranny of self-seeking agitators, even though they work through the hands and tongues of single-minded patriots, is a tyranny far

more detrimental to their national and individual prosperity than the iron rule of the most despotic Government conceivable.

62. And there is another political influence almost equally as baneful in effect, although inspired by good motives. Probably very few Englishmen are aware for what a length of time and at what great cost the Imperial Government has endeavoured to bolster up the economic position in Ireland. Grants from the Consolidated Fund (there was, for instance, £150,000 granted in relief of fishermen between the years 1812 and 1864), and loans authorised by the Imperial Government, have succeeded each other all the century, for all manner of purposes—relief of distress, inland navigation, fishery piers, reclamation of waste lands, building of cottages, teaching of agriculture, repairing and purchase of fishing-boats and nets, promotion of oyster-cultivation, and various other purposes included in the title reproductive. More recent in its initiation, but as widespread in its effect, is the Liberal land legislation, which has brought yet other classes to depend on the Government for aid. No doubt some good has been done by all this well-intentioned charity from England. But all this Government assistance has, without doubt, taken out much of the little ballast there was in the Irish nature, substituting English credit, and leading one class after another of Irishmen to look to Government to carry them through all loss and times of depression.

63. A case in point is the well-known Relief of Distress Loan Act of 1880, whereby Parliament sanctioned loans amounting to nearly two millions. This piece of purely eleemosynary legislation proved, among other things, that what is necessary is not temporary relief, but permanent economic change. Of the £1,750,000 applied for, only one-sixth was asked for by the industrial or commercial parts of Ulster, Leinster, or Munster. More than five-sixths of the loan went to the agricultural or the western districts of Ireland. Then, as now, distress comes periodically when the people lack employment. The secret of Irish prosperity is to promote by every means the presence and growth of capital in the country; make it a place where men will come and live, and invest, and grow rich, and spend; let there be big fisheries, and mines, and manufactures; do not despise that social source of wealth which Ireland may well claim as being a residential, a sporting, and a tourist country; in short, do all things that will promote and not discourage investment, and expenditure, and residence in Ireland.

64. I trust Irishmen, real Irish patriots, will take this view to heart; and I trust English statesmen will see that what has been the long-standing plague of Ireland is the fatal gift of political talk, the fatal taste for political agitation, which keeps so much native Irish intelligence from the more profitable works of economic development.

65. Ireland needs capital, skill, and experience to open up her mines and fisheries, and to utilise her

valuable supply of cheap labour, and she needs a market for her produce. All this is to be absolutely secured, not by severing but by drawing closer the ties that bind her to a market so suitable and to a country so overflowing with capital and enterprise as England. To entice over this capital and skill you must have law, order, and confidence. Ireland has had enough and to spare of "positive and substantial remedial legislation." Let Mr Gladstone remember that no more in Ireland than in Saturn will the pressure of low prices on agricultural or other industries be minimised by any such legislation, unless it be strictly confined to securing, to use his own words, "absence of crime, fulfilment of contracts, and personal liberty of action."

CHAPTER V.

DUAL IRELAND.¹KILKENNY, *March 15.*

66. IN discussing Irish Union there is something not a little ominous in the *genius loci* of Kilkenny. The traditions of this typical Irish centre are concentrated in the two-cat legend. But the Irish characteristics enshrined in this story have in them elements of hope as well as ominous elements. Kilkenny town, occupying a comparatively central situation in the South of Ireland, was divided into Englishtown and Irishtown so long ago as the twelfth century; and its traditions and history are certainly emblematic of Ireland in general, in that they circle round the central fact of the essential duality of the Irish people.

67. The dual nature appears in every province of Ireland and every period of Irish life. There were two distinct and at times hostile races of Celts — those of the South and West, and those of the North and East. There is, on the one hand, the race that was in occupation of all

¹ From the 'Times' of March 20, 1886.

Ireland in the eleventh century, and there is, on the other, the race that is made up of the Britons and Normans who have since that date periodically filtered into Ireland. At the present moment we have a duality in other phases of life and action only too strongly and even bitterly marked off. There are religious differences and there are political. We have Roman Catholic ascendancy in abiding hostility to Orange Protestantism, or, again, we have an Ireland of the Land League and an Ireland of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union. We have an Ireland which would have us believe that tenant-farmers and their agitators constitute the real Irish nation; and we have another Ireland that warns us that landlords, carmen, factory-hands, shopkeepers, fishermen, bankers, and merchants also exist in Ireland, and make up no inconsiderable portion of the inhabitants and the wealth of the country.

68. It is, however, necessary to remember in these days that contemporary records as well as historians have found it necessary at every period to make free use of the dual labels, loyal and rebel, native and invader, and they have applied these with seeming reason, but with the most impartial alternation, to Erse, Britons, Celts, Brito-Celts, Normans, Norman-Celts, Saxons, Catholics, Protestants; in short, turn and turn about, to all nationalities and creeds, both political and religious, that came to the surface in the eddies and currents of a peculiarly turbulent history. On one point

all records and historians agree, and that is that there has been no period in the checkered history of Ireland when it had not an actively dual existence, involving conflicts between hotly hostile elements. It has also been said that although the Kilkenny-cat legend may serve the wholesome purpose of instilling some sort of control over active hostilities, for fear of an end which shall leave behind but the two tales of the rival factions, a truer analogy for Irish history is to be found in the homely accounts of the life that must be led when cat and dog come to exist in the same sphere.

69. It has been wisely remarked by Professor Goldwin Smith that "Ireland has a distinct boundary, but she can hardly be said to have any other element of a separate nationality;" and to those who are acquainted either with Irish history or with Ireland, it does seem past comprehension how there can be any vitality or reality in the cry of Irish Nationalism. It is true that Ireland is an island, but except for this one solitary fact, that the sea surrounds it, there is no other single attribute of unity or uniformity. In race, religion, occupation, sentiment, history, and tradition, there is nothing but heterogeneous mixture of hostile elements. Ireland is, and always has been, an island inhabited by a mixed race, the various portions of which rise and fall in prosperity or power according to the support they receive from their brethren beyond the seas. This mixed popu-

lation has but one abiding tradition, and that is that it should be, at every period of its existence, ranged in two hostile camps.

70. But Mr Gladstone and his colleagues in the House of Commons will do well also to remember that in dealing with the Irish problem they will meet with two Irelands of yet another type, and these are the two to which, in this letter, I would wish to draw the very particular attention of English readers. They are the Ireland of fact and the Ireland of traditionary imagination.

71. If we judge by speeches and published writings, we notice that the average Englishman believes, in his simplicity, that Ireland is inhabited by an Irish nation; that, as Mr Sexton has lately reiterated, there are but two classes in Ireland—the avaricious landlords, who are hardly less wealthy than the English landlords, and the almost destitute poor; that, as the Parnellite faction never cease from asserting, economic decadence has set in ever since the Union, and that the main cause is the blighting influence of landlordism; that most landlords are absentees, and that until the Act of 1881 rack-renting was the rule. Then we hear a great deal about Saxon injustice, and about the unequal and unfair incidence of taxation; and Mr Gladstone himself has added (in November 1885) to this list the grievance that Ireland “has up to the present time been sadly deficient in the means of local government.” This brief list of the imaginary attributes of Ireland can fitly close with the biggest of

all—viz., that the Parnellite party is working for, or would accept as final, Home Rule as understood by the English public; that is to say, a system of local government subject to the Imperial Parliament.

72. The pleasant fiction of an Irish race rests solely on the determination of the Separatists to create such a race, and the chief material they find ready to hand for the purpose are those descendants of the conquering invaders who have spread over Ireland in successive waves of Britons, Normans, Saxons, Scotch, and other races. Most of the names of so-called Irish families are of external origin, and, whether they are English or even Continental, they none the less indicate that the preponderating portion of the inhabitants of Ireland are not by blood Irish. Still less are they so in right of any national religion, language, industries, traditions, laws, or history. Even in the far wilds of Connaught the very capital was so far back as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a centre for the administration of English law under the Anglo-Norman baron De Burgh. This Galway was the City of the Tribes, but the tribes, thirteen in number, were for the most part composed of families who, in blood-descent at all events, came from across St George's Channel. It is seven hundred years since Ireland as a country came under the British Crown, and became gradually populated by successive waves, as I have said, of immigrants, who had but one attribute in common—viz., that they were not of Irish race; and these

men brought with them in succession the Roman Catholic, the Puritan, and the Anglican religions. There is not one solitary rallying-point of common nationality. If an Irish nation is to exist, it will have to be made, for it has not grown up by nature.

73. The economic condition of Ireland is very greatly and very gravely misunderstood, not only by Englishmen, who have other things to attend to, but by those who, as the leaders of the Parnellite party, profess to champion Irish interests, but whose experience of the real life and circumstances of Ireland must be indeed fragmentary, if we are to judge by the strange exhibitions they make of ignorance of the actual circumstances. Mr Dillon argued in the House of Commons not long ago, that "it was a commonplace with respect to Ireland that the prosperous middle class was absent, and that there was a great gulf between the very wealthy class and the miserably poor. . . . Agricultural depression had been much more felt in Ireland, inasmuch as Ireland had no great manufacturing or trading class." But in regard to actual employment the census of 1881 yielded the following percentages of the population, grouped according to occupation :—

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
Professional . . .	2·5	2·6	3·8
Domestic . . .	7·	4·5	8·1
Commercial . . .	3·9-13·4	3·6-10·7	1·5-13·4
Agricultural . . .	5·5	7·3	19·6
Industrial . . .	24·5	28·	13·4
Undefined and under age	56·6	54·	53·6

Thus we see that, roughly speaking, Ireland is three times as much an agricultural but more than half as much a manufacturing country as England, and that if we group together professional, domestic, and commercial occupations, which go to make up a class certainly not "miserably poor," we find the percentage in Ireland equal to that in England and Wales, and above that in Scotland. These figures also show that while 19·6 per cent of the population are engaged in agriculture as landowners, tenants, and labourers, a much greater proportion of the population, nearly 27 per cent, is engaged in other pursuits. Tenant-farmers are not, as the Land League would lead us to imagine, the only or even the largest industrial class in Ireland, and the "Irish nation" is not made up of tenants and agitators alone.

74. And then as to the miserable poverty and the absence of any middle classes, I would earnestly ask Mr Gladstone at once to inquire of the banks, the shops, and the commercial travellers. The banks in country towns are very largely used by tenant-farmers, and it is whispered here—whispered because of the undefined terror that fills the atmosphere—that the more you get to know of the actual position of tenant-farmers, the more you discover one of two things. Either the farmer, after last year's good harvest, has a substantial balance to his credit at the bank, or he has paid up the heavy demands of the money-lender, who has recently built up a thriving business on the

basis of the new rights suddenly conferred on the tenants by the Land Act of 1881. The shopkeepers in country towns could tell the same tale that is told by the commercial travellers, that what is needed to revive trade is not so much money in the hands of these tenants as an end to the present state of tension, uncertainty, and evil expectancy.

75. Not long ago, at Carrick-on-Suir—to the south of this—a labourer applied for relief on the plea that, as the tenants on the estate of the Earl of Bessborough one and all refused to pay their rents, the Earl had been forced to stop all works, and so put an end to the employment of all labourers. One of the guardians boldly asserted and reiterated, “You all know as well as I do that it is not because people are unable to pay rent, but because they are prevented from doing so by an illegal organisation.” This was the deliberate statement, at a board meeting, of one of the poor-law guardians in February 1886. And it represents the true state of affairs. Tenants themselves are finding out very rapidly that in breaking with their landlords they are breaking with their best friends; and, unfortunately for Ireland, Mr Gladstone’s gift of parliamentary rents has created this bad breach. We hear nothing now of abatements, and nothing of extensive works and improvements, by which in former years landlords were accustomed to redistribute among the inhabitants, and to the great advantage of the tenants, the major portion of the

rents they received. All this pleasant mutuality has been banished from the land, and instead we have parliamentary rents breeding bad blood and conflict.

76. Mr Parnell told Parliament only last January that the Land League had spent "a quarter of a million of money in organising the tenantry to resist the payment of rents which were admittedly rack-rents. The movement resulted in the passing of the Land Act of 1881." Mr Parnell is perhaps quite ignorant of what this Act has proved as to rack-rents. Mr Gladstone will like to know that the full returns of adjudications of fair rents by all the processes the Act allows show that reductions of rent in the gross total are not more than 18 per cent. Bearing in mind that judicial rents imply the abolition of all abatements in bad seasons, it is obvious that the landlord and not the tenant is the gainer by the Act if the Act is to be obeyed. Parliamentary rents have been assigned by an Act which, it is the boast of Mr Parnell, his Land League movement secured. It is the duty of Parliament to see that the Act is carried out, and the results of the Act prove conclusively, in the face of Mr Parnell's rhetorical efforts, that rack-renting did not exist in Ireland in 1881 on anything approaching a general scale. Indeed the more it can be proved to have existed in individual cases, the more must we reduce the percentage of the general reductions. Indeed, if rack-renting existed in any substantial degree, it is probable that the reduc-

tions under the Act in all other cases tried would not exceed 10 per cent—a very doubtful advantage secured by the farmers as against the withdrawal of all abatements and all mutual co-operation.

77. Mr Parnell's hustings argument is that the economic salvation in Ireland is the abolition of landlordism. He scrupulously avoids asking his audiences who will pay the local rates, who employ labourers, who find capital, who support churches and chapels, when the landlords are gone.

78. There are many indications that in Ireland the popular wellbeing has become better year by year in spite of the baneful effects of agitation. For instance, the people are a long way better housed. The census of 1841 tells that in round numbers there were in Ireland 489,000 huts or houses having four rooms or fewer, and 436,000 houses with more than four rooms. In 1881 these numbers were respectively 304,000 and 1,025,000. In other words, the number of huts and cabins had declined from 52 to 25 per cent of all dwellings in Ireland, while good houses had risen from 48, or less than half, to 76, or more than three-quarters. Most notable is the fact that over the same period the number of houses with ten rooms or more had increased from 41,000 to 491,000—that is to say, were no less than twelve times as numerous; and this enormous improvement in the character of the houses had occurred concurrently with a sad falling off from eight to five millions in the numbers of the population to be accommodated.

79. Ireland is suffering from the universal depression; but to compare the Ireland of 1786 with the Ireland of 1886 is to acknowledge enormous economic improvement. It is true that the rapid growth of population subsequent to the Union outran the means of subsistence, and met with a severe natural check. But for traces of real economic decadence we have to look to periods of active political agitation. We are, let us hope, at the end of one of those cycles which periodically bring so much misery and heart-burnings to Ireland. Those who are personally engaged in the commercial and industrial life of Ireland know well that all she requires is the absolute supremacy of law and order, the felling of that upas-tree political agitation, which blights the growths that come of free and close commercial communion with England.

80. And then as to that Saxon injustice and tyranny of the English despotism, with allusions to which Parnellite orators are wont to raise the enthusiasm of their ignorant audiences. Any allusion to such fictions of the heated imagination would be puerile and absurd but for the real material hold they exercise over the actions of so many inhabitants of Ireland. In general the administration of Ireland is on all-fours with that of England, excepting only in the matter of loans (for the Imperial Government is far more generous to Ireland than to any other part of the empire); and in the matter of representation in the Imperial Parliament, Ireland has one representative for every

4000, while Great Britain has one only for every 6000 electors. Ireland is a great country for the manufacture of grievance, and this over-representation in the Imperial Parliament gives to those grievances abnormal political weight. Mr Gladstone in November 1885 himself added to this list of grievances that Ireland "has up to the present time been sadly deficient in the means of local government." No doubt there is a meaning in these words which none of us can see; but taking them as plain English, they exhibit an extraordinary and indeed culpable ignorance on Mr Gladstone's part. Ireland has, and has had for years, all the means of local government possessed by England. There are Poor Law Boards, Municipal Corporations, Town Commissioners, Harbour Commissioners, and other elected bodies for the management of local affairs, just as in England, and subject to the same control of a Local Government Board. And in place of the English Quarter Sessions there is the grand jury system to look after roads, asylums, and other county matters. It is true that other public works, primary education, and the constabulary are under central control, but that is for the reason that they are paid for out of or expend Imperial funds and not local rates.

81. It may be that all these arrangements need reform, but Mr Gladstone is utterly and ignorantly in error in asserting that Ireland is sadly deficient in the means of local government. All matters

and work supported by local rates or local moneys are administered locally in Ireland.

82. Another supposed grievance that has been exposed more than once, and that should be exposed on all occasions, is the assertion that Ireland pays more than her fair share of contributions to the Imperial revenue. This is a complex financial problem. As to actual payments, the taxes levied in Ireland are at the same rates as those levied in England or Scotland, with the exception that Ireland is exempt from land tax, inhabited house duty, and assessed taxes. On the other hand, it is a mistake to suppose that Ireland pays no local rates or taxes, for there is an annual contribution in poor-rates and grand jury cess of about two and a half millions. The share of Imperial taxes contributed by Ireland is about six and a half; but of this four millions are expended in Ireland in lieu of local revenues, so that Ireland may be said to raise a local tax revenue of six and a half millions, and to contribute two and a half millions to the Imperial revenue, or 10s. per head of population. Great Britain, with a burden of local revenue of 32 millions, contributes to the Imperial revenue 66 millions, or 44s. per head of population.

83. It is held, however, that in taxation as opposed to representation judgment must be by quality and not by tale, and that we must judge not by the numbers of the people, but by their capacity to pay. An analysis of succession duties—one of the few reliable tests—shows that Irish

wealth is to English as 1 to 13, population being as 1 to 6. The respective contributions to Imperial revenue are as 1 to 26. Moreover, it is also obvious that a great proportion of the revenue derived from taxes levied in Ireland on whisky and beer "entered for home consumption" is in reality paid by consumers in the parts of the "home" islands known as England, Wales, and Scotland. So that altogether the more we examine this complex question, the more we discover that this particular Irish grievance is English and not Irish.

84. Leaving the crowning question of Home Rule for a fifth and concluding "Indication," I would here briefly recapitulate the facts that in legislative or administrative treatment Ireland is more favoured than either Scotland, or Wales, or England; but that Ireland is divided against itself in all the attributes that go to make up a nation—race, religion, traditions, industries, sentiment, and aspirations. To leave the inhabitants of a territory so situated to work out their own independent existence would be to make the fable of Kilkenny a great fact, a criminal fact, in human history. This is the view taken by educated as opposed to uneducated Ireland—that is to say, by those of the inhabitants who can read and think and reason for themselves. Patriots there undoubtedly are who remain ingenuously blind to facts and intoxicated in the exuberance of their own patriotism, honestly incapable of seeing not only that they are compassing the ruin of those of their fellow-citizens who

follow them, but that they are themselves grossly misled, both by those who egg them on, and by many who, from the lowest motives of avarice, are ever ready to be led to revolution. An ephemeral support was given to these misguided and misguiding patriots at the last election because of the new extensions of the franchise. But, as Mr Bright wisely said, the elections are a great education, and it behoves the politically educated portion of the British nation at the present crisis not to transfer to those yet in school the full powers of graduates.

85. It is essential in dealing with the Irish question—if the settlement is to have in it any elements of justice or of permanence—to base action not on imagination but on knowledge, not on fancies but on facts; and of these facts none is greater or more appropriate than that Ireland is, always has been, and always will be, in all political and industrial aspects, a house divided against itself.

CHAPTER VI.

ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE UNION TO IRELAND.

86. I NOW reproduce a letter which appeared in the 'Times' of May 8, 1886, dealing with the effect any move in the direction of political separation must have on private credit and private industry and enterprise in Ireland.

87. *The Economic Value of the Union to Ireland.*¹

To the Editor of the 'Times.'

SIR,—In my previous letter I dealt with the effects of Mr Gladstone's proposed severance of the existing partnership between Great Britain and Ireland in relation to public burdens and public credit. In this second and concluding letter I pass briefly to consider the effect of such a severance on private credit and industry.

88. Mr Giffen has shown that in Ireland itself there is at the present little or no accumulation of

¹ From the 'Times' of May 8, 1886.

capital. But in these days no country can prosper or progress without capital. And perhaps the one main benefit conferred on Ireland by the Union has been the enormous financial advantage of the consequent support of British credit. Capital has steadily come into Ireland on the strength of this credit. It is estimated that private capital in Ireland is of a present value of 400 millions sterling. Half of this is invested in land and houses, and of this half, again, at least one-third, or 60 millions, has been invested in comparatively recent years, under the Encumbered Estates Court Acts. Mr Giffen estimates that one quarter at least of this has been invested by English insurance companies, chiefly on mortgages. Trustees, city companies, and many other corporations and individuals have invested English moneys in Ireland. This movement of capital, so invaluable to Ireland, has been in process ever since the Union until recent years.

89. More latterly a rude shock to Irish prosperity, inasmuch as it was a rude shock to the investment of English capital in Ireland, has been given by Mr Gladstone's land legislation. As I have said, under various Acts of the Imperial Parliament, such as the Encumbered Estates Acts, English capital had been freely invested in or advanced upon Irish landed property. In 1881 Mr Gladstone persuaded Parliament to deprive all such investors of the market returns on their capital, and to

substitute for these a parliamentary title to a judicially fixed rent. It is now evident that Parliament will not throw over this latest contract, but feels bound in honour and in justice to uphold rights which it has itself created. Mr Gladstone is thus forced to proceed on other lines, but in so far as his new "final" scheme includes material concessions to the Separationists, even though it endeavours to protect present investments, in so far will it effectually scare capital in the future from entering poverty-stricken Ireland.

90. As an example of what the business world is actually anticipating, I may quote the remarkable figures recently published by Professor Stubbs. He takes ten of the leading Irish investments, and finds that the total value of £1000 stock in each fell from £16,860 on January 1, 1885, to £14,800 on January 1, 1886, and to £13,800 on March 1, 1886. Over the same period the aggregate value of the whole of the ten stocks had decreased by more than four millions sterling, or nearly 20 per cent, while the aggregate value of ten corresponding English securities had materially increased.

91. Finance has its three C's. You will not get Capital or Credit unless you provide Confidence. Capital flows to where it can be surest of the three conditions—security from external aggression, supremacy of law and order, just and enduring and known laws and institutions. English capitalists

do not, and will not, trust any Irish Parliament or Executive to secure even any one of these three conditions for Ireland. Thus the inevitable consequence of any move in the direction of a severance of the Union must to that extent deprive Ireland of the inestimable advantage she now enjoys of the influx of English capital.

92. In regard to commerce and industry, I have had much difficulty in gathering a sufficient amount of information. It is a grave drawback that there are no official records of the trade between Ireland and Great Britain. The exports from Ireland direct to countries other than Great Britain do not exceed an annual value of one million. Mr Giffen shows that the exports to Great Britain exceed 20 millions. My own inquiries lead me to at least as high an estimate.

93. The two tables that follow give approximate estimates :—

TABLE I.—EXPORTED FROM IRELAND.

	To Great Britain.	To other Countries direct.
Live stock	£17,760,000	...
Butter	4,500,000	...
Salted provisions	1,500,000	...
Fish	900,000	...
Whisky and porter (excluding duty)	450,000	£102,000
Linen manufactures	3,000,000	405,000
Miscellaneous	100,000	200,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	£28,210,000	£707,000

TABLE II.—VALUE OF IMPORTS INTO GREAT BRITAIN
OF FOOD OF A KIND RECEIVED FROM IRELAND.

	From Ireland.	From other Countries.
Oxen, bulls, cows, and calves	£14,252,000	£8,271,000
Sheep	1,213,000	2,150,000
Swine	2,295,000	84,000
Butter	4,500,000	11,774,000
Salted provisions	1,500,000	10,800,000
Fish	900,000	2,302,000
Spirits and beer	450,000	2,000,000
Eggs	?	2,732,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total foods	£25,110,000	£40,113,000

94. It is thus evident that, while much of Irish produce sold to foreign countries passes along English routes, the great bulk of Irish commerce seeks the profits of exchange within the home market of Great Britain, and chiefly in supplying food to our densely populated manufacturing districts and our enormous cities. The question for Irishmen to ask themselves is, Will this market or this route be as open to them after as before separation? At present Ireland supplies nearly two-thirds of the live stock imported into England; and live stock will follow along routes where steamer facilities are best, and that means routes most used for goods and passengers. The more intimately Ireland and England are connected, the more will these facilities of communication be developed. The passage to and fro of well-to-do landlords and tourists is enough of itself to encourage good steamer communication, of which producers

can avail themselves. But the action, for instance, of the Separationists in the matter of the Cork steamers is enough to force English importers to look to Holland, and Belgium, and even Portugal for their live stock. The more the idea of separation is realised, the less hold will Irish produce have on the invaluable English market; and those tenants and others in Munster and elsewhere, who now make their living by sending over to England cattle, and pigs, and butter, and pork, and poultry, and eggs, and milk, will find that in adopting the specious advances of a theoretic Nationalism they have risked all the practical advantages of a near, rich, and great market for their produce.

95. Again, a large proportion of Irish produce finds its markets in foreign countries by the means of English commercial channels. In 1884 there were only 4000 barrels of Irish porter exported direct to foreign countries. Dublin alone turned out 400,000 barrels in the year; and Dublin stout is to be found in every respectable city or steamer throughout the whole civilised world. So, too, with Irish whisky: in 1884 only 240,000 gallons were exported direct to foreign countries, while 2,200,000 gallons passed over to England. So, too, with linens: the export direct to foreign countries was valued at £405,000, although there was sent across to England more than £3,000,000 worth. The fact is, that in the world-wide commerce of England Ireland finds her opportunity

for successful and cheap distribution of her wares. And thus every obstacle set up to the intimate commercial relationship of the two islands is so much opportunity for foreign trading lost to Ireland. All the mercantile and commercial facilities which Great Britain has established like some huge network over all the world, and holds by her vast colonial and diplomatic establishments, are now at the free disposal of Irish commerce. Separation would at one blow deprive Ireland of this invaluable economic advantage.

96. It is estimated that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland amounts to more than 40 millions sterling in annual value. The loss of this trade would mean the loss to Great Britain of 1-20th of its total external trade, but it would mean the loss to Ireland of 39-40ths of its external trade. There is no other country near by or indeed anywhere to take Ireland's live stock, butter, and provisions, but there are very many other countries only too ready to supplant Ireland as the purveyors of these commodities to the English market. I trust Irish farmers and the townspeople of such exporting centres as Cork and Waterford will take these facts to heart. No other country will take annually a million pounds' worth of fish, but England can get any value of fish from many other countries. And I would add one word as to Irish manufactures. One of the Parnellite members informed the House of Commons in February that, "owing to the state of affairs since the Union,

Ireland's manufactures had disappeared. The people had no alternative but to cultivate the land." Unfortunately for this ingenuous confession from an Irish representative, Ireland manufactures nearly as much linens as are manufactured in all the remainder of Europe, and it is well known that even in recent years woollen and worsted manufacture throughout Ireland has shown welcome signs of material revival. The census of 1871 recorded 64,000 persons as employed in linen and cotton works. In 1881 there were 86,000 so employed—an increase of no less than 36 per cent in this one division of textile manufacture. The census of 1881 classifies the population according to employment as follows: Professional and commercial, 13·5 per cent of whole; agricultural, 19·6; industrial, 13·5; undefined and under age, 53·4. Then, too, the trade with Great Britain employs seven million tons of shipping, and this is the life-blood of the several Irish ports. It is no wonder, then, that we find the commercial and mercantile men of Ireland expressing so earnestly the gravest apprehensions of political movements tending to obstruct or close the channels of commercial intercourse between England and Ireland.

97. I would add a few words as to the definite economic value attaching to the ancient reputation of Ireland as an attractive residential and sporting country. It is no inconsiderable advantage to any district that the wealthy of other parts of the world

will come there periodically. The scenery and the fishings and shootings of Ireland are thus of direct commercial value, provided those who can pay for can also enjoy the rights. Hunting, also, of the very best type is or was a national Irish "business." Among other advantages, partly cause and partly effect, was the trade thereby maintained, to the great profit of the tenant-farmer, in the sale of hunters and hacks. It has been calculated that from ten to fifteen thousand pounds are expended each winter in any one hunt. But if we look to the records of the 'Rural Almanack' or the 'Field,' we find that the number of "hunts" in Ireland has decreased from 66 ten years ago to 49 this year. Certain Irish country districts thus lose the annual local expenditure of some £200,000, and Irish tenant-farmers lose 25 per cent of their opportunities for the sale of hunters—a very palpable economic result of this fatuous political agitation. I may mention that over the same period the number of hunts in England and Scotland has increased from 274 to 289. Hunting, shooting, fishing, and scenery are of distinct economic value to Ireland. But the rights to enjoy them are distinctly denied in the Separationist programme. Irish tenant-farmers, hotel-keepers, car-boys, and labourers should awake to the fact that the Separatist agitation means for them the end of all those moneys they used to receive from resident gentry, sportsmen, and tourists.

98. To sum up, any severance of the existing partnership between Ireland and Great Britain which would at all satisfy or justify the pledges and the assertions of the Nationalist propaganda can only result in bringing disastrous loss on all Irish industries and occupations.

99. What is needed for the economic salvation of Ireland is, that more private capital should be invested and more private money expended in that island. Ireland has been in a measure pauperised by the well-intentioned but abortive attempts of Government from time to time to recoup to various industrial classes their losses, or to bolster up specific industries or interests. The House League, the latest idea of the agitator, is already demanding a Government loan to assist householders to purchase (compulsorily) all houses from those who built them and own them. If a fishery pier, a good lease, new nets, the reclamation of a bog, a bridge over a brook, a new road, or, in short, any other matter, is desired involving the outlay of money or wits, the Irishman has come to a painful degree to lean on the Imperial Government to supply what is wanted. Thrift and self-reliance are thus in danger of elimination by the means of English generosity. Mr Morley is right, that at the bottom of Irish troubles lies a negation of self-dependence in the people. This must be removed. It will not be either by concessions to agitation or by perpetual State aid or legislative coddling. It

will be by a firm and consistent upholding of the law as it exists at any given time; and by the great and salutary reform, not of vague and speculative schemes of Home Rule or Statutory Parliaments, but by throwing on localities over all the United Kingdom—in Ireland, say, on each of her four historic provinces—the burdens and responsibility of the local maintenance of the laws, liberties, and institutions of the realm.

100. As Mr Giffen has so ably pointed out, to sever the existing partnership will, from the business point of view, not cause much loss to Great Britain—that is to say, in so far as production and exchange are directly concerned. It is, however, certain that, indirectly—in the sense, that is, of general security and credit—Great Britain would suffer to a very material degree; and still more would Great Britain suffer from the political insecurity engendered in the position of Ireland tossing on the political ocean in helpless independence. But even a brief review of the effects of a severance of partnership from a business point of view amply and clearly demonstrates that, whatever the degree of injury such severance would inflict on Great Britain, to Ireland it can only mean absolute economic disaster and ruin. For this reason, if for no other, every man who really has the interests of the Irish in Ireland at heart, be he Irish, or Welsh, or Scotch, or English, will strenuously, and to the full of his power, oppose any measure that may lead to sev-

erance, and warmly and perseveringly support all action or measures that may tend to draw yet closer the bonds of partnership still obtaining between all parts of the United Kingdom.

I have the honour to remain, your obedient servant,
GEORGE BADEN-POWELL.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

DIVISION II.

F I N A N C E

CHAPTER VII.

THE FISCAL PROBLEM.

101. I NOW turn from the private to the public "Financial Relations," and deal with the questions of public expenditure, public revenue, and the exactions of the tax-collector. Financial relations is the phrase that has caught on with the public, and therefore is the phrase I shall use; but its actual connotation is far better described by the term fiscal relations, for it is all a matter of Treasury receipts, Treasury demands, and Treasury expenditure. All is public money, all is public and not private control. It may be convenient first of all to show what leading men think the grievance amounts to. After that, we can proceed to make statements of the facts and to analyse those facts, and also the whole episode of the recent Royal Commission. Thus we shall be brought to see what remains to be done with reference to this burning question of the financial relations.

102. Leading men of both parties have made vigorous and distinct statements. I wish to put these to the touchstone of facts. Whether Ireland

is overtaxed? whether Ireland contributes too much or too little to the general revenue? and, above all, whether the Act of Union enacts separate financial treatment for Ireland in perpetuity?—these are all questions of fact. So also is it a question of fact whether Mr Gladstone's Home Rule scheme demanded more revenue or less from Ireland than Ireland contributes under the present *régime*. But through all runs the thread of the correct canons of raising public revenue. We hear talk of separate entity and taxable capacity, and of taxing by areas. What we shall have to see is, in regard to public revenue and public expenditure in Ireland, what is right, what is desirable, what is just, and what is expedient.

103. The statements of public men vary. The Nationalists, to a man, advocate the theories of the "separate entity" and "relative taxable capacity." Lord Crewe, speaking with all the authority of his experience as Lord Lieutenant, has said:—

The Act of Union caused two Exchequers to be made, and absolutely recognised that, for fiscal purposes, England and Ireland were two countries. . . . Ireland now paid $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions more than its taxable capacity entitled it to pay.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has said:—

What had been exposed by the Irish inquiry was the fact that the people of Ireland contributed one-eleventh of the Imperial taxation, while what was known as the taxable capacity of the country was only one-twentieth of the Imperial whole. Upon that was founded a strong *prima facie* case of injustice on the supposition that Ireland could be regarded as a separate taxable entity. . . . Ireland and Scotland were entities.

Mr John Morley, again, with personal experience of Irish Administration, is of opinion that Ireland still remains a separate entity for fiscal purposes, and still retains an inferiority in taxable capacity, and a right that that inferiority should be taken into account in all matters of raising revenue.

104. It is therefore all the more necessary to approach the question with caution and in detail. In point of history, it is well to remember that the whole of this so-called financial relations problem has been fully placed before the public in the 'Times' of the 5th of May 1886. I quote the letter, with corrected figures, which I then wrote under the heading:—

105. *The Economic Value to Ireland of the Union.*

To the Editor of the 'Times.'

SIR,—As the final decision of Parliament on Mr Gladstone's Irish scheme is now at hand, it may be well to place before the public some of the figures necessary to a right judgment of the case. Mr Giffen, in the 'Nineteenth Century' for February, has ably shown what would be the loss or gain to England "from the point of view of a statesman looking at such a proposal as a mere matter of business."

106. I propose to set out in plain figures what would be the economic gain or loss to Ireland of such a severance of the existing partnership as that contemplated in Mr Gladstone's scheme. I take "partnership" to mean that the Imperial Parlia-

ment remains directly responsible for both the internal and external affairs of Ireland, and, in Mr Gladstone's words, "binds together the three nations by the indissoluble ties of liberal and equal laws." "Severance" I take to mean breaking this tie and transferring this twofold responsibility wholly, or in greater part, to some new authority to be set up in Ireland. The partnership is at present based on the fact that the Imperial Parliament, in which Ireland has at the least her full share of representatives, is directly responsible for the maintenance of the laws of the realm and of the Queen's authority in all parts of the United Kingdom, and for the reform of these laws. Once Parliament abdicate their powers and delegate them to a Parliament in Dublin—with independent control over the Irish Executive and Irish legislation—this partnership is dissolved. In finance and commerce, not less than in institutions and laws, there is no longer guarantee, or indeed prospect, of unity or uniformity, no longer co-operation in national control or business.

107. We can judge of the economic results as they will affect finance and industry respectively.

108. First as to finance. In regard to the public burdens, we have been frequently called upon to believe that Ireland bears far more than her fair share, and very much more than is warranted by the capacity of the inhabitants to contribute. If this were so, then in the name of justice reform would be indispensable. I say nothing here as to the further political question that parliamentary

representation must bear some proportion to such contributions, but confine myself to the economic questions, Are these things so? and if so, Would Mr Gladstone's scheme be any remedy?

109. My first inquiry is into the whole of public revenue raised and expended in Ireland and Great Britain respectively. As for revenue raised, the present methods of record afford no means for distinguishing accurately between the sums actually raised in the different portions of the United Kingdom except in regard to excise on spirituous liquors. We have positive records of the quantities of these on which duty has been paid in Ireland but which pass over to Great Britain for consumption, the duty being thus in reality paid by the taxpayers of Great Britain. The figures are as follows: Amount of duty paid in Ireland on 7,625,000 gallons of spirits, £3,812,500; less duty on 2,180,000 gallons of spirits removed to Great Britain, £1,090,000; leaving net duty on spirits consumed in Ireland, £2,722,500. Similar deductions for beer reduce the yield of duty from £710,000 to £630,000.

110. In regard to the remaining items of taxation revenue, no specific deductions can be made, although it is well known that the returns are favourable to Ireland. For instance, half of the income-tax in Ireland accrues under Schedule A, and is paid on valuation — and that “Griffith's valuation” — and not on actual gross rental as in England; and the tenant under Schedule B pays on a much lower rating. Again, the proceeds of

customs duties in Ireland are largely swelled by the expenditure of the military—that is, of Imperial moneys—and in Ireland there is one soldier to every 170 of the population, whereas in Great Britain the proportion is only one to every 450. Other deductions ought also to be made, but the records afford no exact *data*, and therefore we can only judge by the gross totals. It will be observed, however, that Ireland is positively free from the burdens of all land, railway, and assessed taxes.

111. To the figures of Imperial revenue raised in Ireland it is necessary to add those of public revenue raised locally for local purposes, which in Ireland, inclusive of poor-rates, grand jury cess, and other local dues, amount to £3,790,000. I may tabulate the proportions of public revenue raised in Great Britain and Ireland respectively as follows:—

TABLE I.—REVENUE RAISED.

	Great Britain. Amount.	Ireland. Amount.	Proportion of whole.	Total United Kingdom.
Customs . . .	£18,190,000	£1,900,000	1-10th	£20,090,000
Excise . . .	23,564,000	3,352,000	1-9th	26,916,000
Stamps . . .	11,364,000	656,000	1-17th	12,020,000
Income-tax . .	11,590,000	603,000	1-20th	12,193,000
Land, Railway, and Assessed . . .	3,313,000	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>	3,313,000
Fee Stamps . .	637,000	90,000	1-7th	727,000
Interest on Loans .	833,000	194,400	1-4th	1,027,400
Postal and Telegraph	8,860,000	805,000	1-12th	9,665,000
Miscellaneous . .	2,923,000	252,000	1-11th	3,175,000
Total Imperial . .	81,274,000	7,852,400	1-11th	89,126,400
Total Local . . .	59,983,000	3,790,000	1-16th	63,773,000
Total . . .	£141,257,000	£11,642,400	1-13th	£152,899,400

112. In regard to public expenditure I have gone carefully into items. I may remark, in passing, that the apparent discrepancy between the totals of revenue and expenditure is due to the necessary omission of balances and other matters of account running from year to year, which naturally have no place in a statement such as this, which is confined to the actual amounts of money raised and expended in a given year "on public account." The items I have grouped as being expended specifically in and for localities or for the general purposes of the nation respectively.

TABLE II.—SPECIFIC PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

Items.	In Great Britain.	In Ireland.	General.	Totals.
Debt (management)	£200,000	£13,000	£28,671,000	£28,884,000
Other Consolidated Fund (including pensions, salaries, &c.)	556,700	181,500	721,400	1,459,600
Army . . . .	...	...	19,200,000	19,200,000
Navy . . . .	...	...	11,500,000	11,500,000
Revenue collection (including post-office, &c.) . . .	8,300,000	1,600,000	...	9,900,000
Miscellaneous (including grant for police, education, &c.)	9,075,200	3,695,500	2,767,700	15,538,400
Local (under local authorities for local purposes) .	59,393,000	4,156,000	...	63,549,000
Grand totals .	£77,524,900	£9,646,000	£62,860,100	£150,031,000

TABLE III.—SPECIFIC PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ANALYSED.

	Great Britain. Amount.	Ireland. Amount.
Specific from Imperial sources	£9,831,900	£3,889,000
Specific from local sources	59,393,000	4,156,000
For collection of revenue	8,300,000	1,600,000
	<u>£77,524,900</u>	<u>£9,645,000</u>

TABLE IV.—BALANCE-SHEET OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

	Great Britain.	Ireland.	Proportion of total.
Public revenue raised in . . .	£141,267,000	£11,642,400	1-13th
Deducting expenditure, "specific" and "local"	77,524,900	9,646,000	$\frac{1}{8}$ th
Net contribution to general national expenditure . . .	£63,742,100	£1,996,400	1-31st

113. We are thus brought to recognise three cardinal points:—

(a) By the Act of Union Ireland was to contribute 2-15ths, or less than 1-7th, of Imperial taxation. As a matter of fact, Ireland only contributes 1-11th.

(b) But of the whole public revenue, both Imperial and local, Ireland contributes 1-13th, while there is expended in Ireland 1-8th of the total public revenue expended in and for localities.

(c) The net result is that Ireland, after providing for all local expenses, contributes £1,996,400, or 1-31st, to the general national expenditure. This small sum of under £2,000,000 is all that Ireland has at present to contribute fully to discharge her liabilities and to secure internal order and safety against external aggression.

114. But before comparing the present expenditure with that proposed by Mr Gladstone, it may be well to be clear as to Ireland's share in the national liabilities. In regard to the National Debt the Parnellite theory, as stated in Parliament, is that the Irish portion of the debt stood at £28,000,000 at the time of the Union, being then 1-17th of the total—of which it is asserted

that £16,000,000 was incurred in order to keep the peace in Ireland while Ireland enjoyed Home Rule—and that the promise was then made that Ireland should never be taxed to pay the English portion of the debt; also that this Irish debt had grown by the year 1816 to £112,000,000. An apportionment of Ireland's present contribution to the general expenditure would only supply the charges for, say, £15,000,000 of the debt, or 1-50th of the total; so that at present Great Britain is taxed to pay a great part of the Irish portion of the debt. But if we adopt any accepted principle of apportionment—such as population, capacity to pay, material resources or benefits accrued—Ireland's share in the National Debt would range, according to Mr Giffen's figures, at from 1-15th to 1-7th of the whole. In other words, the portion of the National Debt at present borne by Ireland is, as a matter of fact, £15,000,000; but as a matter of justice it ought to be somewhere between £50,000,000 and £110,000,000.

115. But, besides this portion in the National Debt, Ireland has been for many years the recipient of loans and advances at cheap prices, because based on the national credit. I have examined carefully into the details of loans advanced during this century to aid localities within the United Kingdom. These loans have been advanced for public works, education, maintenance of order, relief of distress, encouragement of a variety of industries (such as fisheries and agriculture), and

for the purposes of such Acts of Parliament as the Irish Land Acts. The results up to date may be tabulated as follows:—

Character of Loan.	Great Britain.		Ireland.	
	Totals advanced.	Totals remitted.	Totals advanced.	Totals remitted.
Closed loans .	£11,256,000	£1,272,000	£20,451,000	£9,750,000
Unclosed loans .	44,000,000	151,000	19,147,000	1,516,000
Guaranteed loans	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>	12,250,000	<i>Nil.</i>
Totals .	£55,256,000	£1,423,000	£51,848,000	£11,266,000

116. Thus Ireland has obtained within this century nearly as much Government loans as all the rest of the United Kingdom; and, in addition, Ireland has had ten times as much of these advances remitted. In other words, while only £1,000,000, or 1-50th of the moneys advanced to England, Wales, and Scotland, has been remitted, no less than £11,000,000, or 1-5th of the moneys advanced to Ireland, has been remitted. Some there are who endeavour to explain away these remittings on the plea that in exchange Ireland had to bear new taxes or was suffering from the potato famine. But this is to forget that all the time Ireland was fully represented in the Parliament that imposed the taxes, that precisely the same taxes were imposed in Great Britain as well, and that across St George's Channel there occurred equally grave disasters—as, for instance, the cotton distress.

117. Ireland has enjoyed the use of capital to the amount of £52,000,000 obtained on peculiarly easy

terms on the pledge of the Imperial reputation and guarantee. The English taxpayer is now, it is true, becoming somewhat alarmed. He knows that the Treasury last October reported that arrears of repayments, already great, showed a marked tendency to grow greater, and that local rates in Ireland no longer gave evidence of any elasticity whatever. It is not for me here to discuss any pauperising effect that this eleemosynary aid may have had in Ireland; that in the absence of such charitable doles, individuals of districts might have been spurred to rely on their own exertions and knowledge, and to devise means of livelihood that were remunerative in themselves, and not founded on artificial and extraneous support. But this is the occasion to point out that severance of partnership would saddle Ireland with the responsibility for the remaining debt of £30,000,000. Ireland would give up once for all every chance of English generosity remitting any further portions, and Ireland would have alone to bear the burden of any failure of localities or individuals to pay interest or repay capital, and would also have to provide the difference in cost of the loans when Irish was substituted for British credit. According to present indications this is a very material risk. Only last August Mr Sexton wrote to the Treasury that in many parts of Ireland the rates were already "painfully burdensome, and are paid by occupiers who are as poor as the labourers themselves"; and Mr Sexton belongs to a party which has for its chief aim the turning out of the

country the other possible ratepayers—the landlords. Thus there is immediate risk that this £30,000,000 of loans would be saddled on Ireland, and thus severance would mean adding to the burdens of the taxpayers of Ireland the responsibility, at all events, for an additional £2,000,000 per annum, a responsibility at the present borne by the whole of the United Kingdom.

118. Ireland now pays only £2,000,000 per annum to discharge her liabilities and to secure peace and safety and her share in all the advantages the Imperial expenditure offers. The Imperial military forces alone expend in Ireland more than £3,000,000 in the year, and the townspeople of Ireland are fully alive to the pecuniary advantages of such “local” expenditure. But if to-morrow Mr Gladstone could grant in full the demands of the American-Irish party—and to place Ireland in the position of directing her own course among the peoples of the world—what power would there be in Ireland capable of maintaining internal order, to say nothing of warding off external aggression? History records with absolute distinctness that in Ireland, as in other small countries inhabited by races of different stock and a variety of religious creeds, you must have civil strife unless you have a superior power stronger than any of the local factions and willing to intervene. Among the economic advantages conferred by the Union, not the least is the prevention of armed conflicts in Ireland—an advantage that would be immediately sacrificed if once the Catholics and Protestants,

landlords and lacklands, agitators and industrious, were again free to revive their ancient feuds.

119. From these considerations we see, first of all, that under the existing system Ireland, on any recognised principles of proportionate contribution, bears less—far less—and not more than her fair share of the public burdens; and secondly, that the complaint that the present burden is greater than can be borne by the inhabitants is one which will be not removed but materially aggravated by any severance, partial or total, of the existing legislative and financial union. In proof of this I proceed to tabulate Irish expenditure as estimated for under Mr Gladstone's Bill. Among the *data* in the bill we find that the proportionate ratios of contribution from Ireland and Great Britain are regarded as 1 to 14; the Irish share in the National Debt is taken to be £48,000,000; the customs and excise duties are to remain as at present; the Irish Legislature is to raise all additional revenue, but to dispose of none until certain first charges, under Imperial Administration, have been satisfied.

TABLE VI.—MR GLADSTONE'S PROPOSED IRISH EXPENDITURE.

Items.	Present Expenditure.	Proposed Expenditure.
Government Bill—		
Sec. 14. Cost of Collection	£1,600,000	£1,600,000
Secs. 13 and 14. Debt	1,996,400	{ 1,826,000 1,666,000 110,000
Sec. 14. Army and Navy		
Sec. 14. Civil Service (General)		
Secs. 20, 28, and 29. Judges and Civil Service, including cost of abolition of office	2,304,000	2,304,000
Sec. 13. Constabulary and Dublin Police	1,586,000	1,000,000
Local Administration—		
Poor Law, Municipal, County, Education, &c.	4,156,000	4,742,000
Carry forward	£11,642,400	£13,248,000

Items.		Present Expenditure.	Proposed Expenditure.
	Brought forward	£11,642,400	£13,248,000
ACTUAL EXPENDITURE.			
Liabilities—			
Local Loans	. . . . .	Nil.	1,500,000
Land Purchase Bill	. . . . .	Nil.	3,000,000
Full Use of Bill	. . . . .	Nil.	4,000,000
Total expenditure and liabilities		<u>£11,642,400</u>	<u>£21,748,000</u>

120. Thus the Irish expenditure, of a character fixed in detail by the Act, amounts to £6,202,000. The customs and excise revenue, hypothecated to pay these fixed charges, amounts now to £5,252,000, leaving a deficit of £950,000 under this head. The remaining charges of civil and local administration now amount to £7,046,000, which, together with this deficit, calls for a revenue contribution of £7,996,000. But at present, outside of the customs and excise revenue, there is raised in Ireland from all local and Imperial sources only £6,390,400. Thus one net result of Mr Gladstone's proposal would be to necessitate the raising in Ireland of an additional public revenue of £1,605,000, or an increase of 15 per cent on the present burden of taxation. It is averred that the present system of expenditure is extravagant; but judging by experience in Ireland, and also in other lands, it is impossible to acknowledge that in the maintenance of order, the collection of revenue, or the administration of justice and such peculiar laws as the Irish Land Acts, any retrenchment will be possible. Moreover, considerable increase may be necessary in view of possible resignations of Civil servants

involving the payment to them of commutations concurrently with salaries to their successors.

121. But, in addition to this, Mr Gladstone's bills necessarily make Ireland responsible for a great deal more than this. For instance, the Government bill very properly throws on Ireland the liability for the charges on loans advanced; and this is, at the lowest estimate, a liability of £1,500,000 per annum, for, as I have shown, there is an outstanding debt of 30 millions, of which a sum of not less than 18 millions is for moneys actually advanced on loan. Ireland is also deprived of any possible remitting of these loans at the cost of the Imperial Exchequer. In addition to this, the Land Purchase Bill necessarily and properly throws many further burdens on Ireland. It is impossible at the present to estimate the amount with any definiteness; but among them we find the following:—

1. The salaries and expenses (§ 20) and costs (§ 35) of the Land Commission.

2. The collection of rent-charges or capital due under the bill (§ 26).

3. Four per cent (§ 33) on the Land Purchase Debt up to £50,000,000, or £2,000,000 per annum.

4. Principal and interest at 3 per cent (§ 34) on a debenture issue up to £5,000,000, or £200,000 per annum.

5. Interest on and repayment on account of "costs advanced."

122. The present liabilities on loans amount to £1,500,000, and these new liabilities under the

Land Purchase Act would add probably £3,000,000 ; so that Ireland would become burdened with a new public liability of a capitalised value of £112,500,000, or new annual liabilities of £4,500,000 per annum ; and to this might be added in all justice the full liabilities of the Land Bill unaccountably limited by Mr Gladstone's 50 millions, but standing in reality at certainly over 150 millions. It may be here remarked that Mr Gladstone has in one point failed to maintain a proper regard for fiscal justice. Section 31 of his Land Purchase Bill provides for an enormous increase of the National Debt, but not for any proportionate increase in that portion of it now assigned to Ireland, although the object of the increase is solely the amelioration of Ireland.

123. To meet these increased liabilities the Irish Parliament would have to collect for itself (*a*) interest and payments for local loans, and (*b*) rents and moneys receivable for purchased lands, and would have to stand prepared to tax the people of Ireland for any deficit in either or for arrears.

124. The Parnellite plea has always been that the tenants cannot pay their rents. Under the new system the landlords would be relieved of paying that moiety of all rates they now pay ; and that means that the tenants or the State as landlord would have to provide towards the ordinary revenue nearly two millions now contributed by landlords in income-tax and death duties, or rents, or in local rates for lands rented out. The landlords will not for the present invest in Ireland the

moneys they receive from their farms. In addition to this new drain on their resources, the tenants of the Irish Legislature between them will have to make good, out of sources hitherto untaxed, any liabilities for interest and sinking fund of this new land purchase scheme.

125. Wherefore, on the whole, in addition to an extra burden for ordinary administration of something like £2,000,000 per annum, Ireland would become liable for and in some measure be forced to raise considerable sums of public moneys in order to be able to enjoy Mr Gladstone's professed luxuries.

126. I trust the figures I have collected will be thoughtfully and carefully studied by every man in Ireland who knows what it is to pay rates and taxes. Mr Gladstone's scheme will increase public burdens in Ireland, and at the same time transfer them from the wealthier and independent classes on to the shoulders of the poorer middle class. The tenant-farmers and the country shopkeepers will be the chief sufferers. No doubt the shrewd eyes of Mr Parnell and of some of his lieutenants have already recognised this, and they will not be slow to see that once the bill be adopted in principle on second reading, it would be futile to attempt in Committee so fundamentally to alter its clauses as to avoid these fiscal and financial consequences.

127. The evil effects of such proposals on private credit, enterprise, and industry I will ask leave to deal with in a second letter—and remain, sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE BADEN-POWELL.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE L. S. D. OF HOME RULE.

128. It is necessary to enter yet further into the details of the problem whether Mr Gladstone's Home Rule scheme demands more or less public revenue from Ireland than is demanded under the existing Union. I reproduce, by kind permission of the editor, an article from the 'National Review,' because it contains the requisite data for arriving at a correct judgment.

129. Mr Asquith, at Dewsbury on January 9th, 1897, made a very clear and explicit statement as to the cost of Irish administration :—

Well, then, assuming that Ireland ought to be treated, is entitled to be treated, as a separate entity, let me just put before you what are the actual facts. The important thing for you to understand is this, that from the existing system neither Ireland nor Great Britain gains anything at all. Ireland pays in taxation seven and a half millions. She ought to pay, according to her taxable capacity, no more than five millions. Therefore she is overtaxed to the extent of two and a half millions a-year. On the other hand, the administration of Ireland costs five and a half millions. If it were an

administration such as it ought to be, it would cost two or three millions less. The result is that, while Ireland is over-taxed, the contribution which she makes to our Imperial expenditure, instead of being, as it ought to be, some three millions, is only two millions sterling a-year. We get less from Ireland than we are entitled to receive from her upon the basis of her taxable capacity, and yet Ireland pays more to the Exchequer than her taxable capacity warrants you in demanding from her. What is the explanation of that? The explanation, of course, is the gross and excessive costliness of the Irish Government. The cost of administration in Ireland—I am speaking now of her local administration—is very nearly £1 a-head. What is it in Great Britain? Eleven shillings and fivepence. What is it in a country which, as regards size, population, and so forth, is very similar to Ireland—I mean Belgium? Ten shillings a-head. It costs twice as much, roughly speaking, to administer Ireland as it does to administer Belgium. This leads to two conclusions. In the first place, under the Imperial Parliament Irish taxation has steadily grown until it is now largely in excess of her taxable capacity. In the second place, under the same system the expenditure on Irish administration has grown until it is not only largely in excess of that of almost all other civilised countries, but until it leaves the margin contributed by Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer far less than it ought to be if Ireland contributed in accordance with her real capacity. This is a system, you see, which blesses neither him that gives nor him that takes.

130. The facts and figures I append now will prove, even to Mr Asquith, that however bad the case of Ireland under the present system, under Mr Gladstone's scheme the case would have become so much worse as to be absolutely intolerable.

131. ¹ At by-elections, and at all other times, we

¹ From the 'National Review,' December 1889.

are told by our Gladstonian friends, "Home Rule must come." If so, it is of the first importance to thoroughly think out the details as well as the principles of the schemes of Home Rule which alone are put before the public as practicable and possible. We have Mr Gladstone's definitions in black and white; and in the light of these definitions it is useful to descend from the general to the particular, to pass from vague and encouraging assertions about the union of hearts and justice to Ireland, to the more matter-of-fact but not less important practical details of the scheme put forward.

132. To one of these details too little attention has as yet been given, and yet it is the detail which lies at the very root of almost every political movement, and is specially vital to the Home Rule problem. I refer to the effect of Home Rule on the pockets of the people of Ireland.

133. Mr Gladstone has defined Home Rule, in general terms, to be "the management in Ireland by an Irish Parliament, subordinate to the Parliament at Westminster, of affairs exclusively Irish." And in his great Home Rule Bill he went, in all detail, into the fiscal arrangements necessary to the carrying out of such a Home Rule scheme. . . .

134. I wish to set out the plain figures of the results of such a policy on its financial or fiscal side; the results in regard to the amount of public revenue which residents in Ireland would have to contribute; the results, in brief, that would affect the pockets of the Irish people.

135. It is, of course, desirable that Irishmen should carefully survey the problem from this point of view; and it is no less the duty of all in Great Britain, who by vote or work control public policy, to see that Irishmen do not unfairly suffer in pocket from any Imperial legislation, no matter by whom proposed.

I will deal first of all with Public Expenditure, then with Public Revenue, and lastly with Public Loans.

Public Expenditure.

136. In regard to Public Expenditure I have carefully analysed the public records, and find that the general expenditure may fairly be allocated as follows:—

TABLE I.—PUBLIC EXPENDITURE (in round numbers, 1887-88).

	Actually expended in Great Britain.	Ireland.	General Expenditure.	Totals.
<i>A.—Consolidated Fund.</i>				
National Debt, management .	£200,000	£14,000	£26,000,000	£26,214,000
Civil List, Annuities, Justices, &c.	732,000	189,000	837,000	1,758,000
<i>B.—Supply Services.</i>				
Army . . . . .	...	...	18,168,000	18,168,000
Navy . . . . .	...	...	12,326,000	12,326,000
Civil	12,380,000	3,844,000	2,228,000	18,452,000
Revenue (including P.O.)	8,912,000	1,875,000	...	10,787,000
Total Imperial	£22,224,000	£5,922,000	£59,559,000	£87,705,000
Total local (under local authorities for local purposes)	61,684,000	4,290,000	...	65,974,000
Total public expenditure	£83,908,000	£10,212,000	£59,559,000	£153,679,000

In reference to Table I., the object has been, by careful comparison of items, to allocate the expenditure as the present burdens would fall, assuming a Parliament to be set up on St Stephen's Green after Mr Gladstone's own model. According to present needs, there would be expended in Ireland of Imperial revenues £5,922,000, and of local revenues, £4,290,000, or a total public expenditure of £10,212,000.

137. Mr Gladstone, in his great bill, gives the following as the expenditure necessary in Ireland under his scheme :—

TABLE II.—MR GLADSTONE'S PROPOSED IRISH EXPENDITURE.

<i>Items.</i>	
National Debt charges	£1,466,000
Sinking Fund	360,000
Puisne Judges and Permanent Civil Service (as at present, and including cost of abolition of office)	3,065,000
Army and Navy	1,666,000
Imperial Civil expenses	110,000
Constabulary and Dublin Police	1,000,000
Revenue collection, including Post Office and Telegraph	1,290,000
One-thirtieth principal of public loans	279,000
Interest on outstanding loans	243,000
	<hr/>
Total general expenditure	£9,479,000
Total local expenditure	4,790,000
	<hr/>
Total public expenditure	£14,269,000

In reference to Table II., it is to be noted that Mr Gladstone's bill (§ 15 (2)) enacted that "it shall be the duty of the Legislature of Ireland to impose all such taxes, duties, or imposts as will raise a sufficient revenue to meet all sums charged for the time being on the Irish Consolidated Fund."

But all such imposts must be other than duties of customs or excise, "which duties shall continue to be imposed and levied by and under the direction of the Imperial Parliament only," in order to form a "Customs and Excise Fund." The Irish Consolidated Fund is specially charged with making good all deficits in the receipt from this "Customs and Excise Fund." So that, according to Mr Gladstone, the minimum expenditure on the part of the Irish taxpayer is £14,370,000, which includes provision in the Local Budget for Police, which at present cost £568,000 more than the million sterling provided in Mr Gladstone's list. And he is charged with providing for any deficit in the Land Commission expenses over and above receipts from available Church Funds. In addition to this he incurs a liability (§ 18) to a special war contribution. Altogether, the Irishmen resident in Ireland would have, under Gladstonian Home Rule, to provide for an annual expenditure of more than £14,000,000 sterling, as compared with a present annual expenditure of under £11,000,000.

138. Such was the scheme propounded by one who is very generally regarded as a most capable fiscal authority, and than whom, without doubt, we have no better organiser of public finances. The more the fiscal aspect of Home Rule is considered, the more it becomes evident that Mr Gladstone's scheme is typical of, if not identical with, the scheme that is indispensable. And although it may be altered in detail, nevertheless in general

results some such total will and must be come to if Home Rule “subordinate to the Imperial Parliament” is to be devised.

Public Revenue.

139. We thus arrive at the necessity for asking what amount of Public Revenue is provided in Ireland under the present system:—

TABLE III.—PUBLIC REVENUE AT PRESENT CONTRIBUTED BY RESIDENTS.

	In Great Britain.	In Ireland.	Total.
Customs . . .	£18,041,000	£1,750,000	£19,791,000
Excise . . .	21,943,000	3,080,000	25,023,000
Stamps . . .	12,581,000	625,000	13,206,000
Income-Tax . .	14,126,000	685,000	14,811,000
Land, Railway, and Assessed . . .	4,422,000	...	4,422,000
Fee Stamps . . .	539,000	92,000	631,000
Postal and Telegraph, Woods and Forests, &c.	10,964,000	1,043,000	12,007,000
Miscellaneous . .	1,987,000	182,000	2,169,000
Total general revenue	£84,603,000	£7,457,000	£92,060,000
Total local revenue	67,226,000	4,215,000	71,441,000
Total public revenue	£151,829,000	£11,672,000	£163,501,000
Per head of popula- tion	£3 18 0	£2 8 0	...

In reference to Table III., several points have to be borne in mind in allocating the revenue contributed by the different portions of the United Kingdom. In regard to customs, a certain amount of the duty-paying imports, such as tea, coffee, &c., are landed in Great Britain, the amount ultimately paid by the consumer in Ireland for duties appearing in great measure as if paid in England. On

the other hand, the very heavy item of excise duties on spirits and porter nominally paid in Ireland is in reality paid in great measure by residents in England and Scotland. For instance, the figures in regard to Irish spirit duties show that while duty is paid in Ireland on 7,600,000 gallons of spirits, more than 2,000,000 gallons crosses the St George's Channel to England. This would mean that more than £1,000,000 of the £4,000,000 paid in duty in Ireland is paid by the consumer in Great Britain. So, too, with porter: of the £710,000 duty levied in Ireland, probably about £80,000 is paid on what is brewed for English consumption. In regard also to this local consumption of beer and spirits, there is no doubt but that soldiers consume much, paying for it out of "Imperial" moneys; and in Ireland there is one soldier to every 170 of the population, whereas in Great Britain the proportion is only one to every 450.

140. The Income-tax returns are clear, especially on the point of property assessed to income-tax; and Scotsmen, who have only seventy-two members in the House of Commons, should bear in mind that Ireland is represented by 102 members, although Irish property assessed to income-tax is of an annual value of only £36,559,000, as compared with £57,145,000 in Scotland. Moreover, half of the income-tax in Ireland accrues under Schedule A, and is paid on "Griffith's valuation," and not on actual gross rental as in England. The tenant under Schedule B also pays on a much

lower rating than the tenant in England. Nor may it be forgotten that Ireland is quite free from the burden of land, railway, and assessed taxes.

141. We are thus brought to the following figures in regard to public revenue and public expenditure, in order to maintain the administration in Ireland, and also discharge Ireland's share of strictly Imperial burdens.

At present a revenue is raised of £11,672,000, which, after defraying the Irish expenses of £10,212,000, leaves £1,460,000 for National Debt, Army and Navy, and other Imperial expenses, or precisely one-sixtieth of the whole of these general expenses.

Under Mr Gladstone's proposals, a revenue would have to be raised in Ireland of £14,270,000 (20 per cent, or 4s. in the £, greater than at present) in order to meet Irish expenses of £10,667,000 and fixed contributions to the Imperial expenditure of £3,602,000, or about one-twentieth of the total general expenditure.

Public Loans.

142. It is necessary also to bear in mind the facts of the loans made, by or through Government and the Imperial credit, to localities and individuals. These loans at present stand as follows:—

TABLE IV.—PUBLIC LOANS.

Country.	Total advanced.	Total repaid.	Total remitted or written off.	Total in arrear.	Total not yet due.	Total out-standing.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
England, Wales, and Scotland .	62,067,000	33,882,000	1,161,000	183,000	26,842,000	27,346,000
Ireland . . .	45,598,000	23,628,000	10,599,000	29,000	11,072,000	11,684,000

143. These figures are very noteworthy. Loans have been advanced for all manner of local purposes to all districts of the United Kingdom, and it will be observed there has been everywhere pretty punctual repayments; but where Ireland stands out as distinct from Great Britain is in the great amounts advanced as compared with population, and above all, in the great amounts remitted and written off. These may be stated in tabular form:—

Total Loans.	Per head of Population.	
	Advanced.	Remitted.
Great Britain.	£2 7 4	£0 1 0
Ireland	8 8 10	2 0 0

We thus see that residents in Ireland have received, in proportion to population, four times as much Government aid as residents in England; they have been relieved of their burdens no less than forty times as liberally per head as residents in other parts of the kingdom. But there remains no doubt but that this form of aid will no longer accrue to them if once Home Rule is set up. This is apart altogether from the consideration as to how far such aid merely results in pauperisation.

144. In regard to the remissions, it may be pointed out, as has been done by Mr H. Fowler, that of the £10,500,000 remitted in Ireland, something like £8,000,000 are for distress loans, advanced in 1847 and again in 1881. But, then, it must also be borne in mind that of £4,000,000 advanced as distress loans in Great Britain, all has been repaid, and none remitted.

145. It is sometimes said that with Home Rule there would come in a great reduction in expenditure, and specific savings are mentioned—as, for instance, in the constabulary. Such a result would be contrary to all experience, in any other place or age. My own experience in examining into the administrative expenses of so many colonies points plainly to the fact that whatever the political, social, or other advantages of elective forms of government, they certainly do not lead to economy. Mr Gladstone himself in his bill makes special provision for possible deficits in the yield of customs and excise—as, for instance (§ 20 (2)), in providing for the payment of the superior judges. In Ireland itself we know that sixteen millions of debt were incurred in maintaining the peace in Ireland during the last Home Rule Parliament. Nor is there evidence that the jealousies and recriminations arising out of racial, religious, political, or avaricious distinctions have yet died out in Ireland. All troubles of this kind mean great expenditure, especially in the absence of any overwhelmingly powerful central authority.

146. For myself, I have seen by experience the numerous good results that follow on making localities responsible for local affairs, administrative and executive. In this direction much can and will be done in and for Ireland. But to grant a separate Legislature and a separate Executive for so great, so essential a portion of the United Kingdom would, in one word, increase taxation in Ireland 20 per cent.

147. We have had from time immemorial complaints that Ireland is overtaxed. Not so long ago Mr Crilly, one of the Parnellite members, aired this strange theory with much vigour of statement in the House of Commons. Yet out of the public revenues raised in Ireland, after public expenditure in Ireland has been provided for, there is not £2,000,000 surplus to become Ireland's contribution to a purely Imperial expenditure of £60,000,000.

148. One professed aim of the Parnellite party is the extermination of the landlord element. In proportion as this object is attained, in so far will tenants, farmers, shopkeepers, and labourers have to bear the full brunt and burden of taxation. Out of their own pockets they will have to make good the losses to the national exchequer that will follow on the non-receipt of the income-taxes, death duties, and other important contributions to the revenue heretofore made by the well-to-do landlords. There is no doubt as to the serious disasters that would follow.

149. In 1886 Mr Sexton wrote to the Treasury that in many parts of Ireland the rates "were painfully burdensome, and paid by occupiers as poor as the labourers themselves." No doubt the future taxpayers of Ireland will ponder on these results of the possible breaking up of a national social system.

150. If, then, we restrict our view to the fiscal side, if we look to facts as they stand, and if we accept Mr Gladstone's financial judgment, we are

forced to adopt the following conclusions as to the financial effects of the introduction of Home Rule for Ireland :—

1. Increased public expenditure.
2. Increase in the burdens of taxation.
3. Shifting the burden from the wealthy to the poor.
4. Loss of all elasticity in revenue.
5. Loss of borrowing powers at low rates of interest (and of all prospect of remittals of loans).

151. Such results are the very reverse of those hoped for by all who have at heart the wellbeing and progress of Ireland and the Irish people.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE FINANCIAL
RELATIONS, 1893-96.

152. THE episode of the Royal Commission contains many features worthy of record and remembrance. Among others let us inquire into the idea of the Commission; its true character; the character of the evidence; and the reports.

153. The fundamental idea of a Commission of Inquiry into the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland was no doubt the consciousness that the fiscal policy of the United Kingdom or of any part thereof can only be controlled or altered by the deliberate action of Parliament. As the Home Rule Bill could hardly pass without some deliberate alteration of the fiscal policy, it became necessary to bring some influence to bear on Parliament in a given direction. Mere debate would not suffice, in view of the fact that not only the whole of the artillery of the Conservative batteries, but the best quick-firing and heavy ordnance from the Liberal batteries, was all ranged

at the moment in opposition to the Home Rule Bill. Nor, indeed, did experienced parliamentary hands see any salvation in a Select Committee, which, according to the best traditions of party representation, could be made to include but a very small numerical majority in favour of Home Rule, and would be, as happily Select Committees are, greatly, very greatly, influenced by the cross-examination of each and every witness, not only by the supporters, but by the ablest and most expert opponents of Home Rule. Failing a Select Committee, a Royal Commission was decided upon. And here again all would have gone well had the Home Rule Bill become law. But the bill was rejected by Parliament and by the country; and as the Commission had been selected, appointed, and instructed merely *ad hoc*, the Commission and all its reports necessarily became involved in the downfall of the bill.

154. Mr Morley has insisted that this Commission was in some sense merely a consequence upon a Commission suggested by Mr Goschen, and acquiesced in by the Conservative leader of the House of Commons, Mr W. H. Smith, and of which Mr Goschen described the intention to be "to secure a practical investigation into the present incidence of taxation of Ireland and its relation to the taxation of the rest of the United Kingdom." This inquiry, however, was, on the one hand, to include Scotland, and, on the other, *not* to be retrospective in effect.

155. But Mr Morley a year ago in the 'Times,' reminding us of this proposed Commission, also reminded us that "among the twenty-one persons who agreed to serve on this Committee were Mr Goschen, Mr Balfour, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Matthew Ridley, Mr Jackson, Mr T. W. Russell, Mr Childers, Mr Campbell - Bannerman, myself, and others." Here were at least six prominent anti-Home Rule statesmen to watch the evidence and give the weight of their opinions in the report or reports.

156. It becomes all the more necessary to remember once again who were the members of this new Royal Commission. Of the total of thirteen Commissioners, nine were pronounced Home Rulers. Of the remaining four, one was a Scotch Unionist member, two were Irish Unionist members, and one was a fair-minded independent statesman, but not a member of Parliament. There was not on the Commission even one single member of Parliament opposed to Home Rule to watch the case on behalf of the taxpayers of England and Wales. No wonder, then, that the Commission from the very first forfeited the general public confidence in its impartiality, or in the independence or thoroughness of its work of inquiry. Unfortunately, in addition to all this, the list of witnesses shows that they for the most part were merely *ad hoc* witnesses; and the true explanation was put in a nutshell by Lord Farrer and Lord Welby, who made the very appropriate

statement that "the real bottom principle of taxation was all the individuals of the nation, and not the basis of what province they lived in; but this principle was given up when Mr Gladstone in 1886 introduced his Home Rule Bill." In other words, all the just and accepted canons of taxation, the real bottom principles, were to be — well! banished to Saturn, when Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill came on. Lord Farrer and Lord Welby will probably be the first to acknowledge and welcome a return to real bottom principles, which have happily become possible now that and so long as Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill is in abeyance.

157. Such being the true character of the Commission itself, it is little wonder that we find the great majority of the witnesses and the great bulk of the evidence called, not to elucidate bottom principles, but to justify and support the definite views and requirements of the Home Rule policy. At this period also many returns were prepared to the order of the Government, and at great cost to the general taxpayer, again for this strictly official purpose of grouping facts and arguments which told in favour of the bill. But perhaps the gravest omission of all in regard to the evidence is the fact that in what is the most valuable and practically useful part of any inquiry by Committee or Commission, there was no opportunity whatever for any examination or cross-examination of the witnesses by Commissioners representing English

or Welsh taxpayers, because there were no such Commissioners on the Commission. Thus of the evidence collected by this Commission, valuable so far as it goes, it is absolutely true that it was *ex parte* evidence from *ex parte* witnesses in the main; that there was no cross-examination in fact or possible by the opponents of the scheme; and that a great mass of apposite and necessary evidence was never adduced and never even demanded.

158. I would give one instance. In question 6666 and the following questions Lord Farrer states to a witness: "What you are now saying shows that the taxation on the poor of England is unfair, just as much as it shows that the taxation on the poor of Ireland is unfair. . . . How does the case of the poor man in Ireland differ from the case of the poor man in England?"

The witness, Mr M. O'Brien, replies, "The question before the Commission, I understood, was simply between England and Ireland"; and then evades a direct answer by saying, "There is a great waste of money in your administration of Ireland."

Mr Sexton at once comes to the rescue by asking (6676), "You apprehend that this is an inquiry not into the relative conditions of classes in England and Ireland, but into the relative capacity of England and Ireland, each considered as a unit?" Answer, "Certainly."

By this essentially "leading" question Mr Sexton shows that the poor in England are specially excluded from the purview of this Commission, which

is strictly confined to the consideration of England and Ireland as separate units, as separate fiscal entities. And Mr Sexton would not permit any suggestion even of any other idea or basis of inquiry to enter into the investigation. So that, on Mr Sexton's own showing, this whole inquiry is incomplete and beside the mark, unless we agree that England and Ireland are to be, and must be, regarded and treated as separate fiscal entities. With this we shall deal later on.

159. The Commission in the brief report, which they describe as "practically unanimous," declare in section 4 :—

The terms of reference that were drawn up for our guidance were probably dictated by the fact that the investigation was contemplated in connection with the Home Rule Bill of 1893, the financial arrangements of which were proposed to be at first of a temporary character, their final adjustment being left undecided until after the results of our inquiry were made known.

Once again it may be said, that as the bill is dead, so are the final adjustments of its financial arrangements. But in paragraph 5 of the report the Commissioners state: "These terms of reference indicate the nature and extent of the inquiry confided to us, an inquiry admitted, as we have stated, by all parties of the State to be expedient and necessary." No proof is offered as to this statement except the proof that all parties were to agree that no settlement could be formulated until after full and complete inquiry.

160. But that this particular inquiry was neither full nor complete, but simply *ad hoc* and *ex parte*, is amply shown when we recapitulate the terms of reference :—

To inquire into the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and their relative taxable capacity and to report—

1. Upon what principles of comparison, and by the application of what specific standards, the relative capacity of Great Britain and Ireland to bear taxation may be most equitably determined.

2. What, so far as can be ascertained, is the true proportion under the principles and specific standards so determined, between the taxable capacity of Great Britain and Ireland.

3. The history of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland at and after the Legislative Union, the charge for Irish purposes on the Imperial Exchequer during that period, and the amount of Irish taxation remaining available for contribution to Imperial expenditure ; also the Imperial expenditure to which it is considered equitable that Ireland should contribute.

In the first place, it must be pointed out that the whole of these references are a direct and distinct infringement of the enactments in the Act of Union and the Act of 1816. The latter Act fully and legally enacted the condition laid down in article 7, subsection 6, of the Act of Union, that when once Parliament decided to establish a system, which the Act of 1816 did establish, of indiscriminate and equal taxes imposed on the same articles in all the United Kingdom,—that then, in the words of the Act of Union, from the period of such declaration,

the contribution of the two countries, Great Britain and Ireland, towards the future expenditure of the United Kingdom, shall cease to be regulated according to any specific proportion or according to any of the rules previously prevailing. Thus the very consideration of these terms of reference can only proceed if we ignore the Act of Union and the consequent Acts, and any conclusions confirmatory of these terms of reference distinctly and necessarily involve the repeal of these Acts. In the second place, the terms of reference have really no meaning except on two conditions,—the one, that the Home Rule Bill should become law ; and the other, that Ireland and Great Britain must remain separate entities for fiscal purposes. If it is shown that neither of these conditions is likely ever again to come into existence, it might with truth be said to be futile to pursue the subject of the Commission any further.

161. But some of us are resolved full justice shall be done to Ireland, as to every component portion of the empire, and therefore we now proceed to analyse all the results of this Commission. In the first place, we will deal with the conclusions on which the Commissioners state that they were practically unanimous. These are five in number, and I would briefly deal with each separately.

1. That Great Britain and Ireland must, for the purpose of this inquiry, be considered as separate entities.

It is a mere truism to assert that the terms of

reference cut from under the feet of the Commission any possible licence or liberty to inquire into or even to doubt the existence of Ireland as a separate fiscal entity. But this recommendation exceeds these terms by strictly confining the assumption of this theory to the special purpose of this inquiry.

162. 2. That the Act of Union imposed upon Ireland a burden which, as events showed, she was unable to bear.

This highly suggestive conclusion is merely restating in brief the arguments advanced in the early years of this century, and which led up to the realisation of other clauses in the Act of Union which contemplated and rendered possible and necessary that consolidation of the two Exchequers and that system of impartial and indiscriminate taxation which were deliberately set up by the Act of 1816. This particular Irish burden was consciously removed just seventy years ago.

163. 3. That the increase of taxation laid upon Ireland between 1853 and 1860 was not justified by the then existing circumstances.

Presumably this refers to Mr Gladstone's extension of the income-tax to Ireland, and to his increase in the Irish spirit duties. But does it imply that this increase has been justified by circumstances not existing at the time of the increase? At any rate this conclusion is only on the hypothesis of the taxable capacity of Ireland on the separate fiscal entity theory. Nor is it easy to see how this clause in the report can refer to anything

except ancient history, because it refers to a period specifically closed in the year 1860.

164. 4. That identity of rates of taxation does not necessarily involve equality of burden.

This is indeed a sound academic platitude, applicable to taxation in any country or age, and equivalent to the statement that inequality of burden is possible even with identity of rates of taxation, and also that the contrary is equally possible. These are little more than metaphysical subtleties which no one denies to be possible under given conditions.

165. 5. That whilst the actual tax revenue of Ireland is about one-eleventh of that 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 a statement of opinions on relative taxable capacity. It is the one conclusion of all the five which is really interesting to us in our decision on the solution of this great subject, and with it we shall deal later on. But for the moment we must bear in mind that it is the conclusion of Commissioners, not one of whom in any sense whatever represented the vast majority of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom.

166. In regard to all other conclusions, we are told with somewhat suspicious brevity in section 11 of the report: "There are points on which we differ. For these, for a more complete account of our several views on the subjects dealt with by the above conclusions, and for our views on the whole

question, we beg to refer to our separate reports." These separate reports are six in number. One is agreed to by five Commissioners of such varied experience as The O'Connor Don, Mr John Redmond, Mr W. A. Hunter, Mr C. E. Martin, and Mr Wolff. Another by three eminent financial experts—Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, and Mr Bertram Currie. Another wins only the concurrence of Mr Sexton, Mr Slattery, and Mr Blake; and Mr Blake adds yet further details of his differences from his two colleagues. Then there are three separate and lengthy reports respectively by Sir David Barber, Sir Thomas Sutherland, and Mr Childers.

167. In these various reports may be found facts and arguments for almost any conclusion or opinion; but they conclusively prove that this Royal Commission has absolutely and entirely failed to make a report to her Majesty on the subjects referred to them which is in any sense final or conclusive on those subjects, and which could by any possibility be taken as a basis of action by any Administration.

168. So far, then, as the conclusions come to by this Commission go, all remains conflicting and contradictory; although we are decidedly the richer by a great mass of information and argument collected on this complex subject. But this failure of this Royal Commission, beyond increasing the store of valuable information, is no cause for despair to those among us who are determined, so far as in us lies, to secure justice—ample justice—

to Ireland, and to see her present prosperity secured and increased. And it is certain that the fiscal future, the financial relations of the immediate future, can only be rightly arranged after forming just and correct conceptions on two such vital points as separate fiscal entity and relative taxable capacity.

CHAPTER X.

“SEPARATE FISCAL ENTITY.”

169. THE problem whether Ireland is or should be a separate fiscal entity is one which has both its theoretic and its historical side.

170. The historical view has been definitely phrased by Mr John Morley to be “the true construction of the Act of Union”; and in Mr Morley we have the best possible champion of this idea of separate fiscal entity. From him we have a lucid and just statement of the case by one who is not only personally experienced in Irish affairs, but a perfect master of the historical method.

171. It may be premised that, before the Act of Union, Ireland, with, as Mr Goldwin Smith said, its only element of nationality a defined frontier of water, might have been regarded as a separate fiscal entity. The question remains, What happened on the passing of the Act of Union and since? On the 17th December and the 24th December 1896 Mr John Morley wrote two very clear and comprehensive letters to the ‘Times.’ In these he states

his views, taking the Act of Union, the Act of 1816, and subsequent action in Parliament, as the basis of this theory. I would quote his own words :—

I should be sorry to think that a Unionist is a man who does not study the Act of Union, but I must say it is beginning to look rather like it. . . . The framers of the Act by their own wording of its articles . . . expressly limited the duration of the quota of two-seventeenths to a period of twenty years, and they provided that it should be revised on a certain definite basis at intervals of not more than twenty or less than seven years, unless Parliament should previously have declared that the expenditure of the United Kingdom should be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the like articles in both countries.

172. It is well here to remind ourselves of the exact words of the Act. Subsections 2 and 3 of article 7 relate to the quotas to be contributed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively to the expenditure of the United Kingdom, and enact that after the lapse of twenty years, and thereafter at prescribed intervals of not more than twenty or less than seven years, Parliament should, subject to certain rules laid down in article 7—

Revise and fix the proportions in which it shall deem it just and reasonable that Great Britain and Ireland should contribute, *unless previous to any such revision Parliament shall have declared that the expenditure of the United Kingdom shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed upon the like articles in Great Britain and Ireland.*

Subsections 7 and 8 of article 7 proceed to provide—

That if at any future day the separate debt of each country respectively shall have been liquidated, or if the values

of their respective debts (estimated according to the amount of the interest and annuities attending the same, and of the sinking fund applicable to the reduction thereof, and to the period within which the whole capital of such debt shall appear to be redeemable by such sinking fund) shall be to each other in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each country respectively, or if the amount by which the value of the larger of such debts shall vary from such proportion shall not exceed one-hundredth part of the said value, and if it shall appear to the Parliament of the United Kingdom that the respective circumstances of the two countries will thenceforth admit of their contributing indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each, to the future expenditure of the United Kingdom, it shall be competent to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to declare that all future expense thenceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to such declaration, shall be so defrayed indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, and thenceforth, from time to time, as circumstances may require, to impose and apply such taxes accordingly, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand.

That from the period of such declaration it shall no longer be necessary to regulate the contribution of the two countries towards the future expenditure of the United Kingdom according to any specific proportion, or according to any of the rules hereinbefore prescribed; provided, nevertheless, that the interest or charges which may remain on account of any part of the separate debt with which either country shall be chargeable, and which shall not be liquidated or consolidated proportionably as above, shall, until extinguished, continue to be defrayed by separate taxes in each country.

173. According to the *ipsissima verba* of the Act,

it cannot be correct to say that “they expressly limited the duration of the quota of two-sevenths to twenty years . . . *unless* Parliament *should* determine the expenditure should be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes on both countries.” It would be correct to say that “the terms under the Act were expressly limited *in view of* Parliament in due course declaring that,” &c. I commend this true view to Mr John Morley.

174. Indeed, I would also commend to him what he writes himself in the same letter as to the action taken by Parliament in 1816 :—

Then came the amalgamation of the Exchequers sixteen years later. . . . What was the policy of 1816? It was a repeal of the principle of quota and the substitution for it of the principle of indiscriminate and equal taxation in the two countries. This second principle was undoubtedly in the minds of the framers of the Union as the ultimate object of their policy, and as such it appears in the seventh article. . . . The policy of 1816, like the policy of 1800, marches tentatively and provisionally. The Act of Union, article 7, clause 7, in laying down beforehand the conditions under which taxation should become equal and indiscriminate, specifies that this process of assimilation shall be subject to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand. The policy of 1816, therefore, carries over and extends to the method of indiscriminate taxation the very same principle of revision from time to time which accompanied the original method of fixed quota.

175. Wherefore Mr John Morley himself acknowledges two definite steps. The Act of Union fixed the quota of contribution from Ireland, in view of

a subsequent substitution of the principle of indiscriminate and equal taxation of both countries, subject to (a) revision, and (b) particular exemptions in special circumstances. This substitution—a definite substitution—of equal taxation for a quota was carried out by the Act of 1816, which was, in the words of Mr John Morley, “a repeal of the principle of the quota.”

176. But the principle of revision every twenty years, especially attaching to the quota arrangement, is described by Mr Morley himself—and we can want no higher authority—to subsist only “unless Parliament declared that the expenditure of the United Kingdom should be defrayed indiscriminately from equal taxes.” Mr Morley, in saying “the policy of 1816 carries over and extends the very same principle of revision,” is mixing up the 2nd and 3rd with the 7th and 8th subsections of article 7. Subsections 7 and 8 do not and cannot include anything as to parliamentary revision, as they only lay down that the absolute assimilation of taxes shall be subject to particular exemptions or abatements as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand.

177. So far, then, as the Act of Union itself is concerned, it was an Act ostensibly and actually passed for the purpose of promoting closer relationship between the two British islands, and especially fiscal relationship. Some have argued that you cannot insist rigorously upon the terms of the Act of Union nowadays, because Parliament, with the

consent of all the Irish representatives, has already abrogated one of its articles—namely, that concerned with the Irish Church. But so far as separate fiscal entity is concerned, the most rigorous interpretation of the Act of Union shows us that this Act specifically contemplated and arranged for the complete and final assimilation of the separate entities into one fiscal entity by the amalgamation of the two Exchequers, and the introduction of a system of indiscriminate and equal taxation on the same articles all over the two countries.

178. In proceeding to consider what happened in 1816, it is well to bear in mind what the responsible statesmen of the day stated as to the terms and conditions of the new financial arrangement. Lord Castlereagh in 1800 asserted that under the Union it was intended to substitute for proportionate contribution a system of indiscriminate taxation, equally applicable to all parts of the United Kingdom; but he added:—

The United Parliament will be enabled to make abatements in Ireland as the Parliament of Great Britain has always done in Scotland since the Union, when from local circumstances the high duty cannot be levied without either rendering the revenue unproductive or pressing too hard upon the poorer classes.

179. The last of the Irish Chancellors of the Exchequer, Mr Vesey Fitz Gerald, in view of the amalgamation of the Exchequers under the Act of 1816, stated:—

I do not fear that Parliament will ever declare the com-

petency of Ireland to bear the entire weight of that taxation which the wealth and resources of England enable her to support, without reference to those considerations upon which alone Ireland should be exempted from those burdens which are laid on all other subjects of the United Kingdom.

180. And, lastly, the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, thus clearly lays down the Imperial point of view in 1815:—

He trusted that when the two Treasuries of Great Britain and Ireland should be consolidated, such a measure, arranged with due caution, would be found exceedingly advantageous to all parties, and that the Irish public would benefit by this operation. Care would no doubt be taken in regulating the taxation to pay due regard to local circumstances, and that the principle of the measure in contemplation should be equally fair to Great Britain and Ireland.

181. Thus under the arrangements come to by all parties, and stereotyped in the Act of 1816, all ideas of separate fiscal treatment were put out of court once and for ever. But all parties were bound to consider exceptional local circumstances in reference to any taxation proposals, not only “as has always been done in Scotland since the Union,” but, in Lord Liverpool’s words, “in order that the principle of the measure should be equally fair to Great Britain and to Ireland.”

182. But the details of what occurred in 1816 are important. The anticipations formed by the promoters of the Act of Union, that a more complete unification of the Treasuries would become in due course inevitable and useful, were more than verified by what occurred in the transitional period.

Ireland found herself unable to provide the quota of two-seventeenths, and the burden of her separate debt became intolerable. These were, of course, times of heavy war expense, in which in Great Britain the income-tax alone had been raised to 2s. in the £, a tax from which Ireland was then free. Another exceptional burden was at this time taken by Great Britain from off the shoulders of Ireland, when the two public debts were amalgamated into one and Ireland left without any increase in taxes, relieved not only of her particular public debt, but of the rigid quota of contribution allotted to her by the Act of Union.

183. The historical aspect of the question cannot be more tersely or lucidly put than in the words of Sir Thomas Sutherland's brilliantly able report :—

The conclusions which result from a study of the historical side of the case, as here stated, are briefly as follows :—

1st. That while Ireland was shut out from rightful share in the trade and commerce of the empire, her contribution to the defence of that empire and the struggles in which Great Britain was engaged, was little more than nominal.

2nd. That this state of matters was intended to be altered by the Union, and that while Ireland was to be admitted to an equality in regard to trade, she was also to take her share in Imperial obligations; but the unequal debt of the two countries prevented the amalgamation of Exchequers which would naturally have coincided with the Union.

3rd. That it being necessary in these circumstances to create a joint purse, based on a system of contribution in certain ratios, the conditions were arranged with every desire to do justice to Ireland, but that the prolonged struggle in which the country became engaged with France, immediately

after the Union, rendered all estimates of anticipated burdens and revenue absolutely nugatory.

4th. That while both countries incurred a heavy load of debt, the debt of Ireland was eventually thrown to a very large extent on the shoulders of Great Britain when the Exchequers were joined together, and that this amalgamation was the only course open to Parliament in order to avert a most perilous financial situation, so far as Ireland was concerned.

5th. That the subsequent gradual assimilation of the taxes in Ireland to those in Great Britain (save in certain important exceptions, in which Ireland is favoured) has proved to be satisfactory from a fiscal point of view, inasmuch as no check or hindrance of any importance has occurred in the general growth of British or Irish revenue for many years.

184. It is little use adding to the argument, as Mr Morley does, that “so necessary did Parliament then deem it, as Mr Pitt had deemed it necessary sixteen years before, to guard Ireland against a stereotyped and unquestionable standard of contribution which her varying circumstances might in time make impracticable or unjust,” for the legislation of 1816 abolished once and for all any stereotyped and unquestionable standard of contribution.

185. On May 20, 1816, the two Exchequers were to be amalgamated, and three resolutions were agreed to for this purpose. The text of the first two resolutions runs :—

1. That it is the opinion of this Committee that the values of the respective debts of Great Britain and Ireland, estimated according to the provisions of the Acts of Union, have been, at a period subsequent to those Acts, in the same proportion to each other (within one-hundredth part of the said

value) with the respective contributions of each country respectively towards the annual expenditure of the United Kingdom ; and that the respective circumstances of the two countries will henceforth admit of their contributing indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed upon the same articles upon each, to the future expenditure of the United Kingdom ; subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland and in Scotland as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand ; and that it is no longer necessary to regulate the contribution of the two countries according to any specific proportion, or according to the rules prescribed by the Acts of Union with respect to such proportions.

2. That it is the opinion of this Committee that it is expedient that all expenses henceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all debts hitherto contracted, shall be so defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes, to be imposed on the same articles in each country ; and that from time to time, as circumstances may require, such taxes should be imposed and applied accordingly, subject only to such exemptions and abatements in Ireland and Scotland as circumstances may appear to demand.

The third resolution declares the opinion of the Committee that legislation should be adopted “to carry into further effect the purposes of the said Acts of Union by consolidating the public revenues of Great Britain and Ireland into one fund, and applying the same to the general services of the United Kingdom.”

186. It is difficult to see how, in the face of these resolutions, and especially of the third, Mr John Morley can write : “ Separate financial treatment of Ireland is a principle of the Act of Union ; it is a principle of the Act of 1816 ; it existed as a fact for

half a century after the first of these events, and for nearly forty years after the second.” It is true Mr Morley adds as a proof of this contention that the order of reference to the famous Committee of 1864 was “to consider the taxation of Ireland, how far it is in accordance with the Treaty of Union or just in reference to the resources of the country.” Mr Morley does not seem to understand that in that order of reference in 1864 there is not one single word about separate entity, although there is a distinct reference to what has since been termed taxable capacity, a question we shall soon be dealing with.

187. It is well to add what Mr Morley states as to the officially expressed opinions of the Treasury:—

Apart from the views of the Government of the day it is important to observe that Sir Edward Hamilton in his evidence assented to the proposition submitted to him that Ireland had been since the Act of Union, is now, and will be as long as the Act of Union remains in force, a separate entity to *the extent that her circumstances have to be considered when a scheme or case arises under this proviso*—the proviso, viz., in article 7 of the Treaty of Union, that the principle of indiscriminate taxation between the two countries is to be subject to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand.

188. It is only fair to record Sir Edward Hamilton’s actual words, leading up to this specifically qualified assent:—

Ques. 10,433. But when you proceed to act under this proviso, and consider the circumstances of Ireland with a

view to determine whether she is entitled to exemption or abatement, how can you consider her circumstances except separately? *Ans.* I admit for the purposes of this inquiry you have to do so.

Ques. 10,434. At any time? *Ans.* No! I venture to think that a proviso is one thing and an enactment another. The enactment is that there shall be indiscriminate taxation, &c.

189. Thus, then, in 1816, once and for all, the principle of one Exchequer and one indiscriminate basis of taxation was definitively set up, subject to due consideration being paid to any exceptional circumstances in reference to the incidence of any particular tax upon the poorer classes in any one of the three kingdoms.

190. As to subsequent political action, in the first place, as a matter of fact, no revision of the quota, contemplated indeed in subsections 2 and 3 of article 7 of the Act of Union, ever took place; for in less than twenty years—viz., in 1816—Parliament had, as Mr Morley says, “repealed the quota.” Therefore that condition of the Act of Union disappeared sixty years ago below the political horizon, together with the whole principle and theory of the quota.

191. The system of joint taxation and indiscriminate taxation between all the component parts of the United Kingdom was carried on from 1817 to the present day, and the representatives of Ireland never seriously complained of or sought to change this principle until Mr Gladstone, compelled to vindicate his sudden conversion to Home Rule,

after fifty years of active political opposition to any such scheme, suddenly discovered that he could not have Home Rule, any more than the Parnellites could have Separation, unless he devised some engine for the revival of the separate financial treatment which had existed before the Union.

192. The fiscal amalgamation of 1816 was completed in due course. But here again due consideration was shown to exceptional circumstances in Ireland. The case is well stated in the following extracts from the Report of the chairman of the Royal Commission :—

P. 25. Although the statesmen who framed the Act of Union contemplated complete freedom of trade between the two countries after the amalgamation of the Exchequers, yet it was found necessary in concession to mercantile interests to continue for a certain time protective duties, and up to the year 1823 Ireland preserved a distinct system of customs. . . . The unification of the customs system in itself would seem to be an obvious and satisfactory corollary of the consolidation of the Exchequers in 1817.

193. It may be remarked that the object of the Parnellites to re-establish a protective tariff for Ireland could only be possible provided all that was done by the Acts of 1800 and 1816 be repealed, two separate Exchequers re-established, and the two islands declared again to be separate fiscal entities. Thus we find that one main principle stipulated for by the Nationalists in all three of Mr Gladstone's abortive Home Rule Bills was control over their own customs tariff; but Mr Gladstone's own English and Scotch supporters could not be brought to grant

this concession in any one of the bills. In the last bill Mr Gladstone was forced to retain Imperial control over, and Imperial collection of, the customs duties—a proposal which finally denied to Ireland the prospect of being regarded as a separate fiscal entity.

194. After the settlements of 1816, as a matter of fact, on more than one occasion the incidence of taxes was dealt with. Thus, in the Forties Sir Robert Peel refused to extend the income-tax to Ireland, on the plea that Ireland had not benefited equally with Great Britain in recent removals of fiscal burdens on industry. But in 1852 Mr Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and under the express conviction that he was not departing one iota from the letter or the spirit of the Acts of 1800 and 1816, did extend the income-tax to Ireland. Certain Irish members, led by John O'Connor, protested with vigour; but Mr Gladstone deemed it honourable and right to extend the tax to Ireland, and by Ireland the tax was accepted.

195. It may also be pointed out that under the same Chancellor of the Exchequer the duties on spirits in Ireland were raised from 3s. 4d. to 8s., with the view to their equalisation with the English duties; and Mr Childers points out that “if the House of Commons in the period from 1853 to 1860, when the great enhancement of taxation took place, had fully considered the circumstances of Ireland, they would not have felt themselves justified in increasing the taxation of that country.” But the

House of Commons during those years evidently thought not of Ireland as a separate fiscal entity, but only a part and parcel of the United Kingdom.

196. Again, with the House of Commons Committee of 1864, while consideration was paid to the circumstances of Ireland, nothing was said or done as to Ireland's being a separate fiscal entity.

197. It has to be borne in mind that the three financial experts on the Commission—Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, and Mr Currie—entered it as their opinion: “We have not thought it part of our duty to attempt to elaborate any plan for determining the proportion in which Ireland should contribute to the common purse.” This indicates that those who are experienced in public and private finance discard altogether the idea that this Commission was intended to or could carry out in practice the idea contained in the theory of separate fiscal entity.

198. The practical objections to this theory are indeed many and insuperable.

199. For instance, there is a minor constitutional argument that will be pressed home by a powerful majority. Very strong opinions are entertained that if you grant separate fiscal entity you must grant a corresponding fiscal basis of representation; that taxable capacity is the corollary of representative capacity, and that in plain terms, at whatever percentage of capacity for paying taxes you place Ireland, on the same percentage you must allot her representative capacity.

200. For example, if you take the report of the Commission, you will agree that the taxation of Ireland ought to stand in the proportion of one-eleventh to that of the rest of the United Kingdom, and if the taxation is in proportion to the representation this would mean one-eleventh, or 61 out of 670 members. But if we accept the further finding that the taxable capacity is not estimated by any of the Commissioners to exceed one-twentieth, then your number of members falls to 34 instead of 103. Mr Sexton goes even further, and says that the taxable capacity is only one-thirty-sixth, and thus he would reduce the representation to 15 or 16 members for Ireland.

201. But there are other and more serious practical objections.

History already tells us, in unmistakable facts, of all the evils that followed when there were separate customs policies and tariffs in the two islands, and of all the squabbles and conflicts arising from diverse and often opposing systems of raising revenue. All this occurred, too, over periods when the facilities of communication and the habit of close intercourse were as nothing to what at present subsist.

202. It is impossible to see how Imperial policy and the needed Imperial expenditure could be provided for with this dual system. Whether for peace or war, such expenditure is liable, and must remain liable, to the calls of sudden emergencies. Frequent recourse is and must be had to votes of

credit. On occasion these have amounted to 10 and 12 millions. And on no plan hitherto proposed—indeed on no conceivable plan—could a system of two independent Exchequers provide common funds with justice to each of the two countries.

203. According to the statistics provided by the Treasury the proportions of tax revenue contributed by Ireland are just now—

Customs	.	.	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{8}$
Excise	.	.	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{10}$
Other direct taxes	.	.	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{24}$

It is obvious that if for Imperial necessities a sum of 10 millions was required, Ireland would be called upon for a very different amount, in accordance with which tax it was decided to charge with the vote of credit:—

If customs,	Ireland would pay	£1,250,000
If excise,	" " "	1,000,000
If other direct taxes,	" " "	416,000

This example indicates the grave difficulties of such a fiscal distinction.

204. Again, such a state of affairs would fatally hamper the freedom of each Chancellor of the Exchequer in arranging his scheme of taxation, and many taxes imposed, augmented, or reduced might, whether intentionally or unintentionally, react to the serious fiscal loss of the sister island.

205. To Mr Gladstone we can assuredly look for any possible or practicable financial device, and

in his three Home Rule Bills he has presumably run through the short gamut of possibilities. The contribution to Imperial expenditure in his three bills was to have been provided as follows:—

1886. A defined sum each year.

1893 (Feb.). The produce of the customs duties.

1893 (July). One-third of the total Irish tax revenue.

The fatal objection to all three plans is, that the Irish contribution does not increase or decrease in accordance with the increased or decreased demands for Imperial expenditure. Moreover, in all three Mr Gladstone saw fit to make very stringent provisos as to collection and as to due payment of the contribution. This feature of his three bills is probably the best illustration possible of the insuperable practical objections which do and must exist if once you set up the two neighbour islands as separate fiscal entities.

206. There are many who go further than this, and agree with Mr Mitchell Henry:—

There is no place for the “separate entity” question unless you wish to divorce the kingdoms and set up an enemy on your flank, and once more find yourself liable to have the Irish ports opened to your enemies, as was done before the Union, when the French landed both in the South and in the West.

CHAPTER XI.

RELATIVE TAXABLE CAPACITY.

207. *In practice*, if Ireland is not to be treated as a separate fiscal entity, where is the use of following up the further problem of relative taxable capacity? The reply is, that *in justice* such an inquiry is before all things desirable, inasmuch as the new grievance of Ireland is that defined in the last of the five conclusions on which the Commission was practically unanimous:—

That whilst the actual tax revenue of Ireland is about one-eleventh of that 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.

The Commission do not, in this conclusion, say whether this relative taxable capacity in Ireland is of the individual or of the area, but for the sake of clearness of conception it is well and correct to handle the question from both standpoints.

208. If it is of the individual, by what standard can we judge? John Stuart Mill has told us that the bottom principle of taxation is, “When an

amount sufficient to meet the bare necessities has been exempted, each could then pay a fixed proportion not of his whole means, but of his superfluities."

209. But there is yet another all-pervading if unseen principle underlying every system of taxation, which renders it extraordinarily difficult to agree as to the burden borne by any individual or class. It is undeniable that nobody knows precisely who contributes any particular tax. For instance, an import duty may be contributed by the importer out of his profits, by the distributor out of his, or by the consumer in the price which he pays; or again, it may be paid by the foreign manufacturer, or by the foreign exporting merchant; or it may be paid partially by any or all of these various individuals. The particular conditions of each case or trade ultimately regulate who bears the burden of the particular tax, and so with most other taxes. If a farrier has a heavy licence imposed upon him, he will, if he can, get its price back by charging more for shoeing horses. If the income-tax is raised 2d. in the £, those who have to pay will endeavour to recoup themselves for charging more for the money they lend small tradesmen who pay no income-tax, or by employing labour for shorter terms on the estate, or by offering and paying less rent for what they hire. If the tax on beer or spirits is raised, the increase may be paid out of profits by the brewer, the merchant, or the publican, or it may be possible to recoup it from the consumer directly; but there are many cases in

which the latter course is quite impossible, and in these cases the retail price of drink does not increase. These bottom facts of taxation must be taken into consideration.

210. In the present case the main question is, Are there any circumstances concerning the individual in Ireland which call for particular exemptions or abatements over and above those due to the individual in Great Britain? Mr Childers wisely pointed out, "If a rule of this kind is to be adopted as between two communities, it must also be valid as between different classes of society." Still more is it true in dealing with taxable capacity to come down to the ultimate individuals as being something beyond country and beyond class. But in Ireland we are at once met with the patent fact that the individual residents differ from one another, classes differ from one another, quite as much as they do in England or Scotland.

211. It is a safe, the only safe, canon of statistical inquiry, only to add or subtract, never to multiply or divide. Averages are almost fatal to correct reasoning. For instance, we are told that the "minimum of subsistence" of different nations varies, but that in Ireland it may be taken as £12 per head of population. Sir Robert Giffen has estimated that the total annual income of Great Britain is 1400 millions, and that of Ireland 75 millions, which would show that Ireland enjoys one-nineteenth of the annual wealth. And he also calculates that the total expenditure on bare sub-

sistence is 420 millions in Great Britain and 54 millions in Ireland, showing that Ireland spends for subsistence one-forty-sixth only of what is expended in Great Britain. At once we see on the highest statistical evidence how widely the conditions of claims on the individual may be made to differ, especially if he be grouped in communities or by localities.

212. Then, again, there is the special character of any particular tax; and taxes, so far as public revenue is concerned, are in three categories. There are direct taxes levied directly on the individual, such as licences, stamp duties, income-tax, land-tax, and assessed taxes; there are indirect taxes, such as excise duties and customs duties, which are to be eventually collected by the importer or brewer from his customers, although paid by him in the first instance; and there are those best described as payment for services rendered, such as post-office and telegraph charges and judicial fees.

Direct taxes are, as a rule, levied on the well-to-do, exemptions being made for poor people; but, like the dog-tax, they not unfrequently press heavily on the poorer classes. Indirect taxes, in so far as they are really paid by the consumer, are in the nature of voluntary taxes, inasmuch as the individual is not forced to consume the taxed commodity. But an indirect tax is levied indiscriminately on rich and poor, and is in fact the only method by which all citizens can contribute to the common public expenditure. In regard to the third cate-

gory, it is difficult to see how or why any one class or individual could or should be freed from paying for services actually rendered by the State. At all events, in all these categories of taxes it is practically impossible to apportion them to the wealth of the individual if you once mark off individuals either by communities or by residence, without doing material injustice and great injury to all other individuals not so exempted.

213. The gravest inherent difficulty in the problem is the fact that in this Irish case the distinction drawn is really not one of community or class or individual, but of area. It is the relative taxable capacity not of the Irish, or of the Irish brewer or distiller, as compared with the English, but of Ireland as compared with England or Scotland or Wales. The Nationalists would increase the taxes on the Irish millions in Great Britain, and reduce taxes on the Irish in Ireland.

214. Mr Sexton, for instance, draws important conclusions from Sir R. Giffen's figures. In his report he states (p. 74) :—

The relative capacity of Great Britain and Ireland may be most equitably determined upon the following two principles of comparison—(1) . . . Estimated amount of income remaining in each country after deducting from its gross income an allowance for the cost of supplying its population with the necessaries of life. (2) . . . The approximate sum to be raised from each country, with its estimated surplus income, in order to secure to the poorer country the retention of some adequate portion of its surplus by providing that its taxation should never exceed a certain part of its surplus.

And again (p. 83):—

The most appropriate specific standard for reduction of the gross income of either country to its taxable income is a deduction, uniform in both countries, per head of the population, of an adequate allowance for the cost of necessities of life.

215. But the argument thus initiated cannot logically stop at the comparison of Ireland with Great Britain. If for the purpose of adjusting taxation to the back of the ratepayer the principle of the relative capacity of areas be once admitted, why should poorer Connaught be taxed indiscriminately with wealthy Ulster, or poor agricultural Kerry with rich manufacturing Dublin?

216. If it could be proved that Ireland is on the whole less wealthy and has less margin of John Stuart Mill's "superfluities" out of which to meet the claims of the tax-gatherer than England, does not the same argument hold good as thus indicated by comparing County Kerry with County Down, or Donegal with Dublin? If for the purpose of adjusting the burden of taxation you once admit the relative taxable capacity of areas, can you ever have anything but a veritable bear-garden of taxpayer claimants for reductions or exemptions? If you grant to Ireland contribution to the general revenue on relative taxable capacity, if you adopt this principle so eagerly demanded by the Irish Nationalists, the least you can do in justice is to grant the same treatment to all other parts of the United Kingdom. The idea is entirely reactionary,

and a flying in the face of all recorded experience ; but the *reductio ad absurdum* of the argument is seen in the fact that many Irish members, and even landowners, do not complain of their taxation so long as they are resident in London, but immediately they return to Ireland, where they are less heavily taxed and where the cost of living is less, then they cry out that they are scandalously over-taxed.

217. Further evidence of all this is seen when we are told that Ireland is practically an agricultural country, and therefore far poorer than Scotland, which is so largely mineral and manufacturing. But you can find in the Midlands and East Anglia a group of counties or an area of England with a population of four and a half millions which is practically agricultural, and therefore far poorer than, say, the city of London or than Lancashire and Yorkshire.

218. Moreover, as history, and especially recent history, so conclusively demonstrates, you may have an area which is agricultural to-day and manufacturing to-morrow, as was evidenced not a hundred years ago when the linen industry revolutionised the neighbourhood of Belfast, or when engineering came and took possession of the Clyde district. Taxing by areas is thus subject to the essentially human frailty that knowledge of the future is not an attribute of man.

219. The truth is, that whether you proceed by the community, or by the class, or by the individual,

or by the area, or by nationality in allotting the burden of taxation, you are faced by two insuperable difficulties : one, that the relative wealth varies and must vary from time to time, and that such allotment must be liable in ordinary process to perpetual variation and readjustment ; and the other, that the competition of the several interests or districts for more favourable terms would be so great that the ultimate contributions would run the risk of a very near approach to the vanishing-point.

220. The theory of relative taxable capacity is not one to be entertained by responsible or practical statesmen on *a priori* grounds. But we may turn with profit to the searchings and findings of the Royal Commission on this most important point.

221. Perhaps the one result of the Royal Commission which is of the highest practical value is their treatment of the question of relative taxable capacity, called for by the first of the three terms of reference : “ Upon what principles of comparison, and by the application of what specific standards, the relative capacity of Great Britain and Ireland to bear taxation may be most equitably determined.”

222. We have, of course, from the first, to waive all question as to the general utility of investigating such a problem and of making such comparisons between two countries. We have to act *ex hypothesi* and proceed for the moment on the assumption that for one reason or another we wish to make

comparison of relative taxable capacity between Great Britain and Ireland.

223. The argument, the evidence, and the findings of this particular Commission on this particular subject are well worthy of the closest study; for they bring every mind, that can afford to give the requisite attention, to this one important and practical conclusion—viz., that there are and can be no “principles” and no “specific or any other standards” by which the relative taxable capacity of the two countries can be equitably determined.

224. It is true that Mr Sexton and others of the Commissioners show only too patent an eagerness to treat Ireland as a national unit, and exclude all reference to the taxable capacity of the individuals who happen to reside in Ireland. But even Mr Sexton is compelled ultimately to descend from his lofty national pedestal to the lowly particulars of the individual taxpayer.

225. The Commission discusses or discovers six main tests:—

1. Population.
2. Comparative imports and exports.
3. The consumption of certain duty-paid articles.
4. Relative assessments to death duties.
5. Relative assessments to income-tax.
6. Estimate of value of commodities of primary use annually consumed.

226. In regard to the *first* test, population, the Chairman's report says, “We may set aside population as not affording us any test upon which we

can rely ;” but in Lord Farrer’s report a very important contention is introduced :—

The population of Ireland has in the last fifty years diminished from about eight millions to about four millions and a half, whilst the population of Great Britain has nearly doubled. There can be little doubt that one reason of this difference is, that the means of subsistence in Ireland have remained comparatively stationary, whilst those of Great Britain have enormously increased. These alterations in numbers do not, however, by themselves afford satisfactory evidence concerning capacity to bear taxation. If Ireland produces as much as she did when her numbers were greater, and that product is divided among fewer persons, those fewer persons will be better off and *pro tanto* better able to bear taxes.

227. Then, again, Mr Sexton in his report points out that Irish capital has fallen from 563 to 400 millions during this century. He also, in other connections, enlarges upon the fact that the population has fallen in the same period from eight to four and a quarter millions. What he has not the “statistical penetration” to see is, that these twin groups of facts prove that Irish capital has increased over the same period from £70 to £88, or 25 per cent, per head of the population.

228. There are many of these highly significant indications that population as a test of relative taxable capacity may, in the words of the Chairman’s report, “be set aside as not affording us any test upon which we can rely.” He might have added, “to prove the contention which we were appointed to prove.”

229. The *second* test, that of imports and ex-

ports, is similarly dismissed by the Chairman with the remarks :—

As since 1825 there is no record of the coasting trade, their relative amounts cannot now be ascertained with any degree of accuracy ; and even if the relative amounts could be ascertained, they would prove no real standard for defining the relative taxable capacity of the two countries. This has deprived us, in endeavouring to estimate the relative wealth of Great Britain and Ireland, of the assistance that we might have derived from an accurate knowledge of the relative exports and imports, . . . made it difficult to ascertain the real incidence of taxation upon the inhabitants of the two countries, or, in other words, to estimate the share of revenue contributed by each unit of population.

230. The *third* test, a comparison of duty-paid articles, the Chairman's report states to be "merely begging the question, as it is based on the assumption that the mere paying of the duty justified its imposition." Mr Childers declares all the foregoing tests to be inapplicable to the purpose in hand.

231. More favour is shown to the *fourth* and *fifth* tests, the assessments to death duties and income-tax ; but for the present the assessments and valuation of both these classes of duty, in various particulars of great importance, differ materially in each of the two countries. And in both cases these duties are in great measure allotted by domicile. It is pointed out that a great number of the wealthy owners of property and mortgages in Ireland live to pay income-tax

or die to pay death duties domiciled in Great Britain, where at all events they hold invested great proportions of the profits derived from Ireland. It is also evident that neither of these tests has anything whatever to do with the well-being or taxable capacity of the great bulk of the population, the working classes, who are exempted under both duties.

232. With much ingenuousness the Chairman's report comes to the conclusion that "to find the relative taxable capacity of two individuals we should naturally endeavour to find out their respective incomes." Acting on this superficial plea, the income-tax returns are virtually the only test the Commissioners worked upon. But even if you know exactly what a man's income is, how does that lead you to know what is the amount of his "superfluity," what his taxable capacity? In addition to knowing what his income is, you must discover what are the necessary expenses of his position, his profession, or his trade; and what are his duties towards children, relations, or friends. Thus a bachelor with £1000 a-year and no living relations and no profession, has superfluities altogether denied to a bachelor with £2000 a-year who has an invalid mother and several brothers and sisters all otherwise unprovided for, and also the expenses necessary to an active profession.

233. In regard to the *sixth* test, the Chairman's report says, "this test is not, in our opinion, of much value," and the report proceeds to say:—

Various other tests, such as banking, post-office, railway, and other comparative statistics, have been suggested. . . . None of them by themselves can be considered of much value, but, pointing on the whole in the same direction as those we have already enumerated, they tend to corroborate the conclusions at which we have arrived.

234. All the Reports teem with difficulties, many of them obviously or asserted to be insuperable in gauging with any accuracy this relative taxable capacity. For instance, in the Chairman's report, in respect of the important class of spirit duties, the only taxable commodity whose movements can be accurately traced, it is stated:—

Errors of some magnitude were discovered in the statistics furnished in 1891. . . . The fact that these were possible where permits are required must throw doubts on the whole of the returns. . . . An estimate of the movement of other dutiable articles, such as tea, tobacco, wine, and beer, can only be arrived at by indirect means, and can be regarded as nothing more than an approximation to the absolute facts.

235. We have already quoted the conclusion on these tests in the Chairman's report:—

None of these by themselves can be considered of much value, but, pointing on the whole in the same direction as those we have already enumerated, they tend to corroborate the conclusion at which we have arrived.

In this latter sentence is contained perhaps the most remarkable *non sequitur* ever seen in an official and expert report. It is refreshingly Irish. Precisely similar are the terms of the conclusion arrived at in paragraph 113:—

After a careful consideration of the various standards or tests of relative annual wealth which have been brought before us, we have come to the conclusion that none of them have much value, taken separately, except two,—viz., (1) assessment to death duties; (2) assessment to income-tax,—but that, taken collectively, all more or less support each other.

And then in paragraph 63 the conclusion is finally summed up in the statement:—

To answer these questions with mathematical accuracy would be impossible. Nothing but a general approximation to the truth can be looked for.

236. The findings of the Commission may be fairly paraphrased as follows: “Each one of the proposed tests or standards is declared to be either irrelevant or intrinsically untrustworthy, but as ‘they all point in one direction and tend to corroborate the conclusions at which we have already arrived,’ though in themselves and by themselves severally unreliable, yet jointly and together they are most reliable proof to our minds that the relative taxable capacity of Ireland does not exceed one-twentieth that of Great Britain.”

Such arguments and such arrays of statistics come dangerously near to Monsieur Thiers’ definition of statistical science as “the art of stating in precise terms things which one does not know.”

237. The nation at large will hardly rest satisfied with these foregone conclusions, avowedly based on evidence and tests not one of which is either “reliable or of any use” for the purpose in hand.

238. It may be well, however, before we finally dismiss this strange argument, to follow in detail the most notable of the tests produced—viz., that of the drink bill. Records are quoted to show that in the year 1892-93 in Great Britain a total of £48,571,000 was spent on spirits, and £88,627,000 on beer, the figures for Ireland being respectively £6,144,000 and £6,291,000. The contention made by the Commission is noteworthy. The whisky tax is unfair and unjust when levied on the poor in Ireland, but apparently quite fair and just when levied on the poor in Scotland, England, or Wales, because whisky is a necessary of existence to the Irish wage-earner, but only while he remains in Ireland.

239. Mr Childers in his report states :—

We are unable to accept the view that because a population spends a considerable proportion of its income upon spirits, beer, tea, and tobacco, this is a proof that it has a great deal of money to spend. For practical purposes, and looking at the matter not from the point of view of the moral reformer, but from that of the statesman who has to consider the incidence of taxation, the things upon which the poorer classes do, as a matter of fact, spend their income, must, we think, be taken to be, under existing circumstances, their necessities of existence.

240. Again we find by Lord Farrer's report :—

It has, however, been argued that the articles in the above table are, if not luxuries, at any rate superfluities, and are therefore fair tests of the balance remaining after the bare necessities of life have been supplied. We are unable to assent to this argument. We think that the consumption of

the masses must be taken as a whole ; that we must accept what they actually consume as what they find it necessary to consume, and what without a total and almost inconceivable change in their habits they are unable to forego. It has indeed been suggested that the use of stimulants is in many cases a sign of poverty rather than of wellbeing ; and that if meat, bread, clothes, and fuel were abundant, the consumption of tea, spirits, and tobacco would not be less than it is. This is a suggestion requiring careful criticism ; but without adopting it we cannot, for the reasons previously stated, regard the consumption of these articles as a conclusive criterion of capacity to bear taxation.

241. Once again, it must be remembered that if whisky, beer, tea, and tobacco are necessaries of life in Ireland, and cost 19 millions, or £4 per head of the population per annum, why are they superfluities, fit subjects for taxation, in Great Britain, where they cost 175 millions, or £5 per head of the population ?

242. It may be useful here to recall the great Henry Grattan's views on the subject. It will be remembered that in February 1791, in the Irish House of Commons, he moved three Resolutions, which were worded as follows :—

That the principal cause of the excessive use of spirituous liquors is the low price thereof. That to remedy the said evil it is necessary to impose such duty or duties on spirituous liquors as render the same too dear for the consumption of the lower orders of the people. That in order to give the lower orders of the people a wholesome and nutritious liquor it is necessary to give the breweries of the kingdom decisive advantages, and that for this purpose it is necessary that the duties affecting the brewer should be reduced and the restrictions and regulations whereby he is now restrained taken off.

243. In supporting these Resolutions Mr Grattan spoke of the increase of intoxication as being due to the increased consumption of whisky, and said :—

From this growth of poison and this decline of nutriment how necessary the interference of Parliament to sustain the latter as well as check the former. In settling the excise on spirits it should be raised so high as to put them out of the reach of the mechanic and labourer, taking care at the same time to provide him with a cheap and wholesome beverage, in order to do which the excise and every restriction should be taken off the brewery.

Grattan was in favour of placing on Irish whisky the same tax which had been placed in England on gin—viz., 20s. per gallon—and he was in favour of placing spirits “out of the reach of the mechanic and the labourer.”

244. The great majority of the present Royal Commission, however, deem whisky to be a chief necessary of existence to the poorer classes in Ireland; and if their contentions have any logical conclusion, it must follow that the tax on whisky should be very greatly reduced below its present level of 10s. In short, they contend that the whisky-drinkers in Ireland should be adequately protected against the exactions of the tax-collector.

245. Thus in the Chairman's report :—

The consumption of spirits in Ireland per head is very little less than in Great Britain, although that of beer is only about half as much per head. . . . If it should appear that the average taxable wealth per head in Ireland is rather less than half per head in Great Britain, it is clear that, in this case, the incidence of this indirect taxation is much

more heavy in proportion to the resources of the population in Ireland than it is in Great Britain. . . . Whilst the tax on spirits, the article more generally consumed in Ireland, is equal to from two-thirds to three-fourths of the price, the tax upon beer, which is the popular article of consumption in England, is only about one-sixth of the price. . . . The main cause of the inequality in the incidence of taxation may be stated to be that tea, tobacco, and spirits, articles which the average Irishman consumes equally with the inhabitants of the United Kingdom, are more or less heavily taxed, while the income out of which he can purchase them is very much smaller.

246. In other words, the Commissioners would agree to the hypothesis that as the Irishman in Ireland has less spare income to spend on spirits, which are a necessary of his existence, than the Englishman or Scotsman or Irishman in Great Britain, you must agree to tax his spirits less.

247. Professor Mahaffy in the 'Times' of the 6th January 1897 wrote most pointedly on this subject :—

An identical tax on whisky levied all over the kingdom cannot possibly work injustice to Ireland. Irishmen consume a little more whisky apiece than Britishers, and this means that they spend upon it a large part of their income relatively to that spent by their neighbours. But they are not compelled to do so. They are even ceasing, as figures show, to do so. They have perfect freedom to untax themselves if they like, and, so far as whisky is concerned, they are doing it. If they spend 5 per cent of their income on whisky whilst people in Great Britain only spend 1 per cent, whom have they to blame but themselves, and what is the inference except that either the calls on their income are smaller or their self-indulgence greater than those of their

neighbours? Of course, poverty and cold may make men drink whisky, but is that a reason for reducing the tax upon it or for refunding the money paid as that tax, which is the same thing? The argument that whisky is necessary for the poor in Ireland, though not in England, is hinted at in more than one place in the reports, and though it appears to me to go beyond the domain of economics and enter upon that of morals, I may allude to it shortly. . . . The deficit is of course to be made up by Great Britain. In other words, the taxpayers across the Channel are to become, by compulsion, paying members of a great society for the promotion of whisky-drinking in Ireland.

248. Mr Leonard Courtney has most ably and clearly pointed out on more than one occasion that whilst the first principle of the system of taxation in the United Kingdom is equal sacrifice from all taxpayers, yet there is superimposed an additional principle, moral rather than financial, "of taxing spirits as high as the prevention of illicit distillation and the maintenance of the revenue will allow." A heavy drinker of spirits, especially if he be a poor man, may thereby supply far more than his fair quota to the revenue, or may even ruin himself by so severe a drain upon his relative taxable capacity. But the tax is moral as well as financial, and to reduce the tax or to repeal the tax on spirits in order that the drunkard may not be overtaxed, or may have more to spend on this necessary of his life, is not a proposal which I for one ever hope to see realised in practice in our own country. Indeed, if this were done, as this Irish Commission wishes it to be done in Ireland, Sir William Harcourt

would presently discover a new and additional obstacle set up to his great policy of Local Veto.

249. The 'Times' once pointed out that if Father Matthew's conversion of a large part of the Irish people to teetotalism had been lasting in effect, this supposed grievance of the Irish would never have come into existence. And there are still followers of Father Matthew in Ireland; there may be some among the Irish Nationalist members. Certainly, wherever and whatever the temperance force may be in Ireland, it will be warmly opposed to this plan of reducing the spirit duties on the mere plea that drunkards by their own indulgence in spirit-drinking are taxed beyond their relative taxable capacity.

250. Quite as remarkable as this interesting appeal for free whisky is the relegation to a back place in the arguments of the great question of relative expenditure. And yet the terms of reference are specific in the request for information as to "the Imperial expenditure to which it is considered equitable that Ireland should contribute." The Chairman's report is plain enough on this point:—

To the question at the end of the Reference—viz., What is the Imperial expenditure to which it is equitable that Ireland should contribute?—we reply in the words of Mr Childers, "That so long as Great Britain and Ireland continue to be united, under one Parliament, it is, in our opinion, impossible to discriminate between objects of Imperial expenditure to which Ireland should, and those to which she should not contribute."

251. Wherefore, so long as the Act of Union prevails and the Imperial Parliament remains supreme — so long, that is, as Ireland remains part and parcel of the United Kingdom—so long, in the opinion of these essentially Irish Commissioners, will it remain impossible to discriminate between the Imperial charges which fall rightly upon Ireland or Great Britain respectively.

252. The objects of Imperial expenditure are defined in the same report :—

Whilst the kingdoms are united under one Parliament, and Imperial expenditure is determined on Imperial grounds, we cannot but regard the maintenance of order, the enforcement of the laws, the collection and protection of the revenue, as subjects of Imperial concern, no matter in what part of the United Kingdom they take place, and the expenditure upon them must be regarded as a whole, and Imperial in its character.

Sir Edward Hamilton had been pointing out in the evidence that this excessive taxation has been compensated for by the expenditure on what he calls local services in Ireland. He says :—

The best, and indeed the only true standard whereby to determine whether Ireland is overtaxed as compared with Great Britain, is to take the respective amounts which the State extracts from the taxpayers of the two countries for Imperial as contrasted with local purposes, and to compare the amount so abstracted with their respective resources so far as they are ascertainable.

And he defines as “local purposes” for Ireland “all items of expenditure which would not have to be incurred if Ireland had no existence.”

253. Thus there is a great deal in the problem as to what are the necessary Imperial expenses in each part of the United Kingdom which could not be incurred if the said portion was not in existence. There is no doubt that the expenditure of Imperial revenue on such objects in Ireland has very materially grown in recent years. In fact, ever since the generous outpouring of millions of British money to remedy the ravages of the great famine, there has been continuous augmentation of expenditure of Imperial money in Ireland—"expenditure which would never have been incurred had Ireland not existed."

254. But the more this particularly important aspect of the whole question is examined, the more are we driven to the conclusion that, whilst it is always possible to allocate duties to various local administrative bodies or areas for working specified localities, it is impossible to draw any distinct line of demarcation as between Imperial and local expenses or Imperial and local expenditure as far as areas are concerned. For instance, "in the maintenance of order, the enforcement of the laws, and even the collection and protection of the revenue," the army and navy constitute the ultimate resources of the State, and were they non-existent—were no Imperial expenditure incurred to maintain them—a very considerable increase of local expenditure, or Imperial expenditure on the local police force, would be undoubtedly necessary.

255. There are other matters closely affecting

this question of relative taxable capacity, including the wide-reaching subject of all State loans and advances and the employment of the State credit; but here it must suffice merely to point out that this Commission has decided that it is impossible to arrive with any practical or mathematical accuracy at any estimate of the relative taxable capacity of two large areas like the two largest British islands.

256. Ireland, like Great Britain, contains a population of very mixed occupations, and even this Commission has been unable to agree upon any one specific principle or standard which would serve as a reliable test of relative capacity to bear taxation. It is well that the Commission has met and amassed information, and has proved to the world once and for all that on this grave and fundamental problem, whatever individuals may think or surmise or define, there is no sign whatever among all the Commissioners of any agreement as to premisses, as to facts, or as to the basis on which to proceed to a conclusion which could aid or justify any action on the part of the State in this matter of relative taxable capacities.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FISCAL FUTURE.

257. THE Financial Relations Commission has focussed public attention on the one remaining crux of the Home Rule controversy. A full study of the proceedings and reports of this Commission, as we have seen, brings us to very definite conclusions, even though they be of a negative character. They may be summed up as follows:—

1. The theory that the two larger islands of the British Islands, Great Britain and Ireland, can or should exist as separate fiscal entities is untenable in history, in theory, and in practice.

2. There are no data and no other means of fixing relative taxable capacity with sufficient accuracy for the practical purposes of legislation or administration.

258. The two islands are part and parcel of one another, and all that is requisite is to continue in the path of, so far as may be possible, placing them and all their concerns on a footing of perfect and impartial equality.

259. The public, and especially the Irish politicians, have not as yet perhaps grasped the true meaning of the English and Scotch side of the great question of financial relations; and it may be well briefly and once for all to set out this essential aspect of the case. Lord Farrer on the Commission bravely endeavoured to keep this argument before the Commission. Thus (question 6668) he asked one very competent witness whether "taking the taxes off the poor man in Ireland would be putting something on the poor man in England, as would be the case if it is to come out of the common purse?" The whole question would have been put in a nutshell by a correspondent of the 'Times' who wrote, "The question is whether Irishmen are or are not taxed more than Englishmen and Scotsmen in return for the services and protection afforded by the Government of the day," if he had used the words "whether residents in Ireland are or are not taxed more than residents in England or Scotland in return for the services and protection afforded by the Government of the day."

260. Sometimes complaints have been publicly made by unthinking Irishmen that Ireland is over-taxed for the special advantage of Scotsmen and Englishmen. The evidence of the Commission, however, distinctly proves that this is not so. Lord Farrer indeed saw fit to place this point strongly before the public in a letter to the 'Times': "It is clear that whatever may be the

effect of the present arrangement upon Ireland, it is not an arrangement which puts money into the pockets of the British taxpayer."

261. The real fact is, that what is at the basis of the Irish argument is a theory, very powerful in elections, that reform of taxation is necessary because the poor must be taxed less and the rich taxed more. But it must be remembered that this theory is equally applicable all over the United Kingdom if applicable anywhere, and that to carry it through in Ireland alone would be grave and palpable injustice to the poor in Great Britain, a great proportion of whom are Irish.

262. Before planning for the future it is also necessary to carry in mind the actual fiscal exemptions and abatements which have been made or are now in existence in favour of Ireland and because of her special circumstances.

263. In reference to *debts*, early in the century, by the amalgamation of the two Exchequers, Ireland was relieved of a growing debt the burden of which was become intolerable. Loans for the remedying of distress were actually remitted and written off from the Imperial account to the amount of eleven millions sterling; and to this day Ireland obtains loans for public works and necessities at a very low price because of her intimate and presumably inseparable union with Great Britain.

264. In reference to *taxation*, Ireland is not called upon to pay house-tax, land-tax, railway passenger tax, and assessed taxes; and in income-

tax under Schedule D the assessments are on a far lower basis than on similar incomes in Great Britain, while in many minor matters there is less to pay. For instance, the dog-tax rate is 5s. in Ireland instead of 7s. 6d., as it is in Great Britain. The general result is seen in the fact that while the population of Great Britain contributes £2, 4s. 10d. per head of taxation revenue, the population of Ireland only contributes £1, 8s. 10d. per head—a very material “abatement.” Mr Dillon, were he an Englishman, would probably call this a monstrous injustice to Old England.

265. In regard to *expenditure*, for many years past a larger and larger share of the Imperial expenditure has been allotted to Ireland, and a far greater share in proportion than anything of the kind allotted to Great Britain. Some of this has been due—as in the case of the Land Commission and all its enormous expenses—to legislation welcomed by the Nationalist representatives in the House of Commons. It must also be remembered that even during the past thirty-five years Ireland’s contribution to Imperial expenses outside Ireland has fallen from an annual average exceeding five millions sterling to an annual average under two millions. This one fact alone is interesting, for it implies that Ireland now contributes only one-thirty-fifth of the common Imperial expenditure, whereas under the Act of Union she bound herself to pay four times as much—viz., two-seventeenths.

266. One remaining item in favour of Ireland is the large amount of financial assistance recently conferred on Ireland by what is known as remedial legislation. The English and Scotch were most willing to make all the grants and give all the privileges to congested districts and to other districts which might assist them to regain their prosperity; but without doubt Ireland has been dealt with on a far more liberal scale, not only proportionally to her population but absolutely, than any other portion of the United Kingdom.

267. As we have seen, the union of Ireland and Great Britain took place for the explicit and special purpose of cementing the unity of the three kingdoms. It is necessary to restate this mere truism, because Mr John Morley among others appears to be possessed by the strange idea of showing that the Act of Union had stereotyped over all ages separate financial treatment for Ireland, and that this was also the principle of the Act of 1816. That, as I have shown, is to misread actual history. The Act of Union made a provisional arrangement that the old separate financial treatment should continue for a period, but with the express and definite object of the final amalgamation of the two Exchequers, which, as an undisputed matter of history, did take place in 1817 under the Act of 1816. Political action since then has followed on the same lines, and what we have to do, for the sake of Ireland no less than for the sake of the rest of the United Kingdom, is to complete

this union by uniformity in taxation. We are bound in turn to carry forward the original compact initiated by the Act of Union. We are bound to consider in the Irish as in the Scotch case any special circumstances, but we are bound to apply to all component parts of the United Kingdom the same principle of "indiscriminate taxation."

268. There is much to be done yet in general principle and in particular detail to establish practical uniformity; but in accordance with our most valuable tradition, we permit such arrangements to grow and develop of themselves, and are not given to forcing matters forward in cast-iron moulds. Nor is it to be denied that anomalies in taxation may in some cases be profitably retained. The one principle to be pursued in the future is to develop a system and rates of taxation which shall not press unduly on any individual or any industry, and then make this justly applicable to all citizens of the State. No citizen ought to pay one penny more or one penny less because he resides in any particular area of the State so far as the common public revenue of the State is concerned. Any system which infringes this canon of taxation must be a step in the direction of breaking up the State, and away from the consummating its union.

269. The long and the short of it is, if you have Home Rule you must have separate fiscal entities; but if you have these, you have the very foundations of separate political entities, the germs if not

the fruit of independent political existence. But if you do not have Home Rule, separate fiscal entities are altogether out of place and unnecessary, and union, uniformity, and co-operation can then take the place of separation, antagonism, and hostility.

270. But before all things, in arranging your taxation be careful not to interfere with the free course of industry and commerce, and let your fiscal arrangements be made subservient to, and not subversive of, all that can in any way promote and secure the material prosperity of every possible industry, of every locality, and of every individual in every class.

271. A further Royal Commission on these fiscal relations has been promised. The magnitude of the task must be honestly regarded from the highest standpoint. The late Royal Commission affords irrefutable and abundant testimony that by the terms of the Act of Union and subsequent Act of Parliament, the whole nation is legally bound, in levying tax revenue, not once and again but always, to consider whether not general but particular exemptions or abatements in taxation are fairly to be continued or granted to any of the several component portions of the United Kingdom. This is the only condition under the Act of Union attaching to the enactment by Parliament in 1816, that "the expenditure of the United Kingdom shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed upon the like articles in Great Britain and Ireland."

272. At the present moment Ireland enjoys many exemptions and abatements denied to Scotland, England, or Wales. The question remains, Are these still desirable or necessary for Ireland, or are others required, and are they in effect just and equitable in comparison with the fair needs or rights of Scotland, England, or Wales? The system of indiscriminate taxation, once for all set up in 1816, must be firmly maintained. But this can only be done provided it be on the basis of fairness and justice to all—and subject to the all-pervading rule of removing all that may damage or even endanger, and promoting all that may secure and enhance, the prosperity of every portion of the United Kingdom.

273. Wherefore, if such a new Royal Commission be issued, it would be well if the terms of reference and appointment were drawn upon the following lines:—

Whereas by the Act of Union it was enacted that

It shall be competent to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to declare that all future expense thenceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debt contracted previous to such declaration, shall be so defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, and thenceforth, from time to time as circumstances may require, to impose and apply such taxes accordingly, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand.

That from the period of such declaration it shall no longer be necessary to regulate the contribution of the two countries towards the future expenditure of the United Kingdom according to any specific proportion, or according to any of the rules hereinbefore prescribed.

And whereas these provisions were ratified and enacted in subsequent Acts of Parliament, and especially in the Act of 1816, this Royal Commission is issued—

To inquire whether there are any circumstances, at present existing, which demand—

(i.) The continuance of the abatements and exemptions in the existing fiscal system as applied to Ireland.

(ii.) The alteration or extension of such abatements or exemptions with a view to securing just and equal fiscal treatment for each of the component portions of the United Kingdom, and the better industrial and commercial prosperity of the same.

274. Furthermore, among the members of such a Commission there should be not only acknowledged experts in fiscal affairs, but also proportionate representation of the main policies advocated on the Irish question.

275. The whole problem will, however, be materially simplified if the Local Government Bill for Ireland is made, as it should be, to include, boldly and comprehensively, the whole of the question of local revenues and local expenditure.

DIVISION III.

P O L I T I C S

CHAPTER XIII.

IRELAND AND POLITICAL PARTIES.

276. IRELAND, above most countries, has been a very shuttlecock of politics. Of old, Irish affairs, as compared with English and Scotch, were closely affected and interfered in by such foreign States as France and Spain. The sole purpose of the great blockade of Brest (1796 to 1801) was to prevent France from invading Ireland and associating herself with Irish malcontents. But in later years, and even up to the end of this century, Ireland and the Irish question are utilised, not only in the United Kingdom but more especially in the United States, as weapons for the warfare of political parties.

277. Mr Gladstone, at the time the universally acknowledged leader of the Liberal party, wrote to his electors at the general election in November 1885: "Whatever the obligations of the Conservative party to those known in the existing Parliament as Irish Nationalists, the Liberals of England and Scotland will have to draw their inspirations,

as to the treatment of Irish affairs, from a higher source.”

278. He also at this time gave a most lucid and emphatic warning to all and sundry, and especially to those of his own party, that no party in this Imperial Parliament should ever attempt to deal with Irish affairs unless it was entirely above and free from any dependence whatever on the Irish vote. His words, spoken in Edinburgh on November 9th, eloquently and explicitly defining the situation, need re-quotation as often as possible :—

It will be a vital danger to the empire if there is not in Parliament a party totally independent of the Irish vote. . . . I tell you solemnly that though I believe the Liberal party to be honourable, patriotic, and trustworthy, . . . it would not be safe for it to enter upon the consideration of a measure with respect to which at every step in its progress it would be in the power of a party coming from Ireland to say, “Unless you do this or unless you do that we will turn you out to-morrow.”

279. Such were the very definite pledges entered into by Mr Gladstone in regard to Irish affairs before the election in November 1885. But that general election gave a House of Commons composed of 334 Liberals, 86 Nationalists, and 250 Conservatives. Mr Gladstone was in a minority “except for the Irish vote.”

280. In direct violation of all those noble sentiments and promises, so soon as it became obvious that without the Irish vote Mr Gladstone could not attain to or hold office, Mr Gladstone converted himself to precisely opposite views. By itself the

Liberal party was in a minority; with the aid of the Nationalists a majority could be secured. This aid could only be obtained by agreement as to Irish legislation. Again Irish political needs directly controlled the political situation in the Imperial Parliament, and this control had most unexpected and far-reaching effects. Not only did Mr Gladstone at once make a compact and alliance with the Nationalists of a far closer and more stringent character than that which he had rigorously denounced and held up to public reprobation as an unholy alliance of the Tories a few months before, but he introduced a bill devised, framed, and drafted strictly in accordance with the views and the dictatorial demands of those "known in the late Parliament as Irish Nationalists."

281. His new policy at once created a cleavage in the ranks of the Liberal party which even up to the present appears to widen rather than to re-close. The once all-powerful Liberal party, by reason of this invasion of Irish political needs, has, for the present at all events, split itself into two, and rendered itself powerless and insignificant.

282. We remember the reluctance with which so many of his chief colleagues broke with Mr Gladstone on this one point of Irish policy. We find, for instance, in the 'Times' of February 1886, a list given of forty-three Liberal and Radical members who had by that date declared against the Home Rule Bill, and a list is given immediately below of a great many more members who were

still loath to sever themselves from their old chief, although at the same time loath to break with the essential Liberal principles he had so lately and so nobly affirmed. Among these latter we find Mr Joseph Chamberlain. But the Home Rule Bill was inevitably to be introduced, and fresh facts from Ireland would be a valuable contribution to the solution of the problem.

283. In February 1896 Parliament met with the Conservatives in office—but in a minority, as against Mr Gladstone's new "unholy alliance." And the Conservatives, in accordance with their honourable and firm adhesion to the principles and traditions of their party, stood to their colours and were turned out of office. No thought ever entered the head of any one of the leaders, or of the rank and file, that by such an act of political bribery as reversing previous promises and declarations they should yield for one moment to the Nationalist policy for the simple reason that thus they could remain in power.

284. Mr Gladstone at once entered upon office, and with the knowledge that a Home Rule Bill would be introduced, I determined to employ the opportunity of the three weeks' recess necessary to enable new Ministers to be chosen and re-elected, by a further study of the Irish problem in Ireland. I crossed at once to Ireland, and travelling third class and putting up at third-class inns, and keeping outside the gates of the friends whom I had previously been to stay with, I went among the people,

was deeply interested, and gleaned many important facts and opinions.

285. Mr Gladstone on February 12 had written his celebrated letter to Lord de Vesci, in which he stated: "I should highly value all indications, especially if they go to the *heart* of the question before us, which would aid my colleagues and myself in the difficult task of determining how we may best at this important juncture discharge our duties to Ireland and to the empire."

286. I soon found I had many "indications that went to the heart of" the Irish question. These results of my personal observations and inquiries, fresh from the anvil of personal contact with the people themselves, appeared in a series of letters to the 'Times,' and these by kind leave of the editor form the basis of several chapters in this book. They were penned, it is true, in 1886, but they anticipate much that has come to pass ten years after; and they give facts and figures and arguments which, with even greater force than at the time they were written, ought to appeal to all, and aid all who have at heart the salvation of Ireland. Some of these I have already reproduced, and others will follow for the better elucidation of the present political position.

287. There are, however, sundry leading episodes in the political developments between 1886 and 1898 which must needs be borne in mind before we actually enter upon a consideration of the political position as it exists to-day.

288. There was, for instance, the episode of Mr Parnell's fall, and of its close connection with the intentions and the future of the Gladstonian wing of the Liberal party. In a letter to the 'Times' (27th November 1890) I sought to summarise the circumstances by a critique on Mr Gladstone's explicit and detailed letter to Mr Parnell. I wrote:—

“In the heat of the painful controversy that now fatally agitates the Gladstonian party, I wish very definitely to call public attention to one fact.

“Mr Gladstone, in his historical letter to Mr Parnell, puts his decision ‘in terms simple and direct.’ He writes (the italics are mine):—

Having arrived at a certain conclusion with regard to the *continuance at the present moment* of Mr Parnell's leadership, . . . notwithstanding the splendid services rendered by Mr Parnell to his country, his *continuance at the present moment* in the leadership . . . the *continuance I speak of* would render my retention of the leadership of the Liberal party almost a nullity.

“If these simple and direct words have any meaning at all, they proclaim the continuance at the present moment of Mr Parnell as leader of his party absolutely destroys Mr Gladstone's power as a leader.

“But in all this long letter expressing the ‘conclusion at which, after using all the means of observation and reflection in his power,’ Mr Gladstone had arrived, there is no one word, simple or otherwise, to indicate that Mr Gladstone in any degree

whatever condemns the nameless acts. On the contrary, in this letter Mr Gladstone expresses the simple and direct wish ‘to alleviate the personal nature of the situation’; speaks of previous action of Mr Parnell as ‘much to his honour’; and concludes with a *quasi*-apology, ‘what my public duty has made it an obligation to say.’ There is no single word or phrase of public, still less of private, condemnation of what has occurred; nothing except a simple and direct statement that a political party must suffer by the ‘*continuance at the present moment*’ of Mr Parnell in his leadership.

“Judging by this letter the public can and will assume that Mr Gladstone—

“1. Sympathises strongly with Mr Parnell.

“2. Objects to Mr Parnell’s continuance in the leadership *at the present moment*.

“3. Objects solely for the reason that such continuance would bring embarrassment and disaster to his party.

“4. Contemplates, without a word of disapproval, the return of Mr Parnell to the leadership.

“Public, as well as individual, opinion in England, in Scotland, in Wales, and, above all, in Ireland, to whatever religious denomination it may own allegiance, will know how to deal with a treatment of this painful question which absolutely and entirely ignores the primary dictates of religion, and even the ordinary requirements of genuine morality.”

289. I must be pardoned for quoting the forcible words of a leader in the 'Times,' but they bring out with terse distinctness the precise effect on the political situation of the fall of Mr Parnell :—

It is quite certain that without him Mr Gladstone cannot attain to power; it is by no means certain that if Mr Gladstone did attain to power he would be able to carry out any policy desired by Mr Parnell. . . . Mr Parnell is in a different position, and he has given them very little reason to suppose that he either values their approval or studies their interests. He views the whole business from a purely selfish standpoint, and may be supposed to cherish a very comfortable conviction that the sky will not fall though Mr Gladstone should become "almost a nullity." . . .

There is even more than this. Mr Parnell is not likely to believe very seriously in the carrying out of the threat. He will note that his retention of the leadership was ardently advocated by a great many Gladstonians up to the very moment when Mr Gladstone, after careful observation, came to the conclusion that the contrary policy is the more expedient. He will observe that, although "Mr Gladstone is for Wales the embodiment of the principle of righteousness in public affairs," he does not demand Mr Parnell's retirement in the name of righteousness. His "simple and direct" language demands it only in the name of expediency, as judged from his own point of view. He demands it only, as Sir George Baden-Powell points out to-day, for a limited period, vaguely defined as the "present moment." Temporary expediency is not a strong ground for one who seeks to bend the iron will of Mr Parnell. . . . Mr Parnell and his friends probably cherish a cynical belief that all this disproportionate clamour about a breach of the Seventh Commandment will give place under pressure to acquiescence; exactly as a louder clamour, persisted in for a longer time, against other and graver crimes, gave place to devoted advocacy and close alliance.

290. Another incident in the history of the Irish question as affecting political parties in the Imperial Parliament is the wolf cry that "Ireland blocks the way." So lately as November 1897 Mr J. Redmond asserted that "the only hope for the Liberal party is to put Home Rule back once more into the place in which Parnell left it when it was blocking the way to English reforms." I make an appeal to facts and ask, When did Ireland thus block the way, save and excepting when in Mr Gladstone's hands Home Rule Bills occupied for so long the time and energies of the House of Commons?

291. I must quote a letter I wrote in the 'Times' of 30th December 1890, because it summarises *facts* too often forgotten:—

Ireland does not Block the Way.

To the Editor of the 'Times.'

SIR,—“The final and complete downfall of Mr Gladstone's Irish policy” is perhaps in no guise more conspicuously evident than in the fact that even in his latest public utterances he still harps on his old string—“Ireland blocks the way.” At Bassetlaw Mr Gladstone gleefully asked the question, “Why should English politics and Scotch and Welsh politics be dependent on the choice of an Irish leader?” The electors of Bassetlaw, however, replied in no uncertain voice, “What a foolish question! Our politics are perfectly independent

of anything of the kind." These electors were absolutely right.

292. Mr Hugh Price Hughes now backs up Mr Gladstone. He advocates compromise in the Irish question on the specific plea, "We must be prepared to give and take if this miserable paralysis of our public life is to cease."

I would ask, Where is this paralysis? Where is this dependence? Where is this block? Many of us personally engaged in the actual work of our public life are amazed, if amused, at this continuous re-echo of Mr Gladstone's specious cry. In our practical experience of affairs we have not come across this "miserable paralysis of public life"; we fail altogether to see that our politics are "dependent on the choice of an Irish leader"; we do not find that Ireland blocks the way.

293. I appeal to facts. Let us remind ourselves, for instance, of the five chief Acts passed by the present Parliament in each of the four sessions since the country refused Mr Gladstone's offer of Home Rule.

In 1887 : House of Commons Procedure, Criminal Procedure (Ireland), Allotments, Coal Mines Regulations, Merchandise Marks.

In 1888 : Imperial Defence, Conversion of Debt, Local Government (England and Wales), Irish Commission, Railway Rates.

In 1889 : Army and Navy Defence, Board of Agriculture, Local Government (Scotland), Merchant Shipping Amendment, Technical Education.

In 1890: Barracks Improvement, Limited Liability Companies, Housing Working Classes, De-limitations in Africa, Education Acts Amendment.

Thus, of the twenty chief Acts already passed by this Parliament, only two refer specifically to Ireland.

294. It is true that the House of Commons has taken very much more time over its work in later years. Twenty-five years ago a session occupied about 850 hours. During the last ten years the average duration has exceeded 1250 hours. But this has been due to the extraordinary garrulity of perhaps 15 or 20 out of the 670 members; and the obstruction has been accomplished by English, and Scotch, and Welsh, quite as much as by Irish members. Hitherto there has been an unaccountable acquiescence by the overwhelming majority in this tyranny of an insignificant minority. There are signs that this will last no longer. These dilatory tactics may delay, but they do not block or paralyse business: they consume valuable time and energy, but they by no means result solely from Irish policy, and are certainly not in any way dependent on the choice of an Irish leader.

At this point the public are not unnaturally somewhat led astray, because they see the newspapers, faithfully responding to the public demand, devoting so much space to the exceedingly dramatic episodes of the present break-up of Parnellism.

295. Many of us have been convinced all along of the intrinsic rottenness of Parnellism. I enclose a quotation of our views as expressed in the 'Times'

in the spring of 1886, and which have now been so accurately justified in the event. We are in no degree surprised at the break-up of the unnatural and temporary combination of the mutually hostile elements which make up Parnellism. The death-blow was delivered by the Special Commission, even though Mr Gladstone asserts, at Bassetlaw, that ever since 1886 he has worked "in great harmony with the Home Rule party," and that "there never was a word of difficulty or difference" down to the day when "certain proceedings took place in a divorce court." The Parnellites were condemned by the Commission — some for treasonable conspiracy; many for being connected with, and paid by, criminal conspiracies; others for other equally bad acts; but Mr Gladstone, it seems, never faltered in his friendship with them, and has never differed from them, until their leader was condemned in the divorce court. Then Mr Gladstone came forward to declare that the exigencies of party expediency demanded that Mr Parnell should retire from the leadership for a time. Mr Gladstone peremptorily dictated to the representatives of Ireland that they must change their leader; and now he asks the British elector to believe that British politics are dependent on this choice of an Irish leader.

296. Happily the country at large at last acknowledges that the bubble of Home Rule has been pricked, and, in weighing the rival candidates for government in the balance, the country will take hold of the fact that the present Administration has

contrived to carry on the business of the country through all the years it has been in office, and has succeeded most admirably in bringing peace and quiet to Ireland and encouraging the Irish themselves to cheer Mr Balfour in his wise endeavours to promote material prosperity on the sure foundations of law and order. The Government also intends to introduce into Parliament a Local Government Bill for Ireland on lines similar to the bills already passed for England and Scotland. The battle-cries before the electors will no longer be Home Rule *versus* Coercion, but Self-Government *versus* Home Rule.

297. In the face of all these obvious facts Mr Gladstone obstinately reasserts, at Bassetlaw, "The business of the country has long been in arrear, and in arrear it must always continue until by means of Home Rule you get rid of the Irish question." This is merely a coupling together of fancies which vanish in the light of a comparison with what is actually being done in real life. Parliament has passed in each session a great array of Public Acts affecting English, Welsh, and Scotch rather than Irish affairs. The Government is busy not only administering but also reforming all the great public departments; the Imperial finances were never in better hands, the general interests of the mother-country and the empire never better looked after. There is certainly no paralysis of public life; it is mere fanciful imagination to dream that Home Rule, even if it could be thrown into practicable shape, would rid us of the Irish question; and, above all, it is absolutely

contrary to the facts of what has been done in Parliament to assert that Ireland blocks the way.—
I am your obedient servant,

GEORGE BADEN-POWELL.

CARLTON CLUB.

298. One other incident that seriously affects the amount of support given to Mr Gladstone's Irish proposals by conscientious Radicals and Liberals is the reiteration—even by Mr Gladstone—of the strange and fallacious statement that “Ireland is utterly destitute of the institutions even of local self-government.” Here I again quote a summary of this incident which appeared in the ‘Times’ of 11th July 1892:—

299. *Truth will prevail.*

To the Editor of the ‘Times.’

SIR,—Mr Tyndall writes, in to-day's issue of the ‘Times,’ “No man has ever done more to corrode the love of truthfulness among Britons than Mr Gladstone.”

In the same issue Mr Gladstone writes, under date “Dalmeny, July 8, 1892,” with a view to influencing the Stirlingshire election: “The Irish are oppressed by unequal laws devised to place them under their landlords, and they are utterly destitute of the institutions even of local self-government.”

Mr Gladstone, electioneering in 1892, forgets that Mr Gladstone ever since 1870 has been assuring all

the world that his own beneficent land legislation for Ireland has completely emancipated tenant and labourer.

300. Both statements cannot be true. Even more serious, however, is Mr Gladstone's new statement that the Irish "are utterly destitute of the institutions even of local self-government."

Mr Gladstone is calling upon us all to postpone (? to the Greek Calends) all ideas of maintaining the Imperial ascendancy or dealing with pressing temperance or labour problems, in order that he may elaborate and establish a mysterious scheme for the better government of Ireland. But now Mr Gladstone startles us all by placing himself in the pillory, self-convicted of phenomenal ignorance of even the elements of the case with which he thus proposes to deal.

I challenge Mr Gladstone to name any single borough, or barony, or county in Ireland which has not enjoyed and does not enjoy "institutions of local self-government." Every child knows that poor-law guardians, county cess, town commissioners, harbour commissioners, municipalities, even lord mayors, and all the usual "institutions of local government," exist everywhere in Ireland; and that, as a matter of fact, all that is now needed to make Ireland equal to England and Scotland in matters of local self-government is the extension to Ireland of the reforms already granted to Scotland, Wales, and England by the Local Government Acts.

301. We must hope that this strange promulgation of distinct untruths is a mere outcome of ignorance, grave and culpable though that ignorance be.

But the deliberate and authoritative publication of untruths, with a view directly to influence voters, is a distinct breach of the spirit of the Corrupt Practices Act. Moreover, it is a plan of campaign which will signally fail to commend its authors to the confidence and support of the shrewd and upright Scotch elector, who will take it to be a sign of the despair of the leader of the Separatist party. —I am your obedient servant,

GEORGE BADEN-POWELL.

CARLTON CLUB, *July 9.*

302. I have now set out some of the reasons which explain the half-heartedness with which genuine Liberals and Radicals followed even Mr Gladstone in his vagaries connected with Home Rule. Throughout there has been an underlying current of distrust, based on Mr Gladstone's noble assertion of high-minded principles in November 1885. All true Liberals felt with him that "nothing could be more dangerous to the public weal than that the question of Irish government should be handled in a Parliament where there was no party strong enough to direct its action without being liable to be seduced from the right path by the Irish vote."

303. The Crimes Commission once and for all exposed what was traitorous and criminal in the

agitation for Home Rule. Mr Parnell's fall was a fresh but not unexpected blow. But what has had even a wider effect, and what will have a deeper and more enduring influence, is the growing exposure of the falsity of the Gladstonian historical method. The necessary alliance with Parnellism and all its traitorous and criminal supporters was at the first and for a time cloaked in the righteousness of the endeavour to extend to Ireland all the attributes of civil liberty and complete political emancipation, and excused on the plea that so many honest supporters of the system were to be found in Ireland.

304. To the details of all this we will turn in future chapters, and we shall also proceed in greater detail to exhibit the hollowness and falsity of the Gladstonian historical method. The immorality of the Parnellite alliance becomes undoubtedly associated with the glaring untruth of the many eloquent appeals to supposititious history or fallacious analogies. The minor incidents of the assertions as to Ireland blocking the way, or the absence of local government in Ireland, will find their counterparts in the greater but no less wildly incorrect and misleading appeals to colonial analogies, and to Home Rule precedents in foreign lands.

305. For the moment it is sufficient to set out all these matters in detail, to aid all we can in "the gradual spread of historical information," which Mr Gladstone told his followers "will, in no long time, we may rest assured, bring about the triumph of

right," and to leave, with confidence, the actual facts to sink into the public mind, in the assured conviction that truth must ultimately prevail, and the salvation of Ireland be placed on a basis secure above all the enticing suggestions of quack advisers, and safe in trusting to the successful experiences of essentially appropriate remedies.

CHAPTER XIV.

PARNELLISM.¹CORK, *Feb.* 20, 1886.

306. "I SHOULD highly value all indications that go to the heart of Irish affairs," is Mr Gladstone's pressing invitation to all and sundry to assist him in that "examination and inquiry" which he, no less than his predecessor, promptly put in the forefront of his treatment of Irish affairs. It is true that his predecessor devoted only a short Saturday to Monday, so to speak, to this preliminary process, and on the Monday was ready to place a policy before the House. But over here in Ireland, people, by reason of a better perspective, perhaps, seem to judge of the new Premier in the focus of his past career, and to see behind this misty and unexpected plea a real inability in Mr Gladstone's Cabinet to adopt the cut-and-dried policy which Mr Gladstone himself thinks would keep him in office.

307. However, the fiat has gone forth to examine and inquire, and Mr Gladstone will no doubt value certain aspects of the Irish problem as seen from

¹ From the 'Times' of February 26, 1886.

Ireland, and not from England. Having recently gathered the views of all classes on the leading problems, I will propose briefly to analyse, in order, Parnellism, social disorder, landlordism, Irish poverty, two Irelands, and proposed settlement.

308. To begin with, What is the view, not as yet expressed, but none the less held by shrewd observers in and around the city that has sent to Parliament the hon. member for Cork? To put it briefly, it is very generally understood here that the movement which has placed the party of 86 in Parliament has for its binding motto not "Home Rule," not "No rents," not "Nationalism," not "Separation," but simply and purely "Parnellism"—for there is no other word which can cover that bundle of heterogeneous influences which has resulted in that temporarily united party of 86, which the good year 1886 sees supporting Mr Parnell in the House of Commons. Mr Frederic Harrison would find but little foundation for his hypothetical premisses that "the Irish people have expressed, by constitutional methods, their desire for a national Government." If he and Mr Gladstone had lived in Cork the last few years they would have enjoyed a back-stairs view of the creation of this party of 86; they would have noticed, without indeed being able to identify, the absolute supremacy of some one overpowering will, some one all-pervading, all-absorbing plan. At one time so able a lieutenant as Mr Davitt might openly deride and rebel; at another, a newspaper of no less influence than the 'Freeman's Journal'

might presume to pursue an independent course ; at yet another, men of the eloquence and supposed party influence of Mr Healy and Mr Biggar might ask support for a loyal Parnellite like Mr Lynch in opposition to one whom Parnellites had branded as a traitor to his party. But scarce had the words passed their lips than Mr Parnell appears, and five minutes of "secret conclave" brings them to their knees, just as before the same dominant influence had forced Mr Dwyer Gray's newspaper to veer right round on to the Parnellite tack and Mr Davitt to eat his own words. The fact is—and it is a fact very clearly ascertained and recognised in this city of St Finn Barrs—that there is a mysterious, secret, but irresistible power of which Mr Parnell is the personification, which all over Munster and Leinster and Connaught, as in the election of 1885, bound together in irresistible unity certain heterogeneous influences, and victory was thus, and thus alone, secured.

309. A great many speakers and newspaper writers and authors of magazine articles and pamphlets have been at great pains to show in detail why it is that Mr Parnell has this power, and what is this power which he wields. Mr Gladstone ought to be concerned rather with the practical question, Is this power one that will last, and what is its real definite object ?

310. People who were in the South of Ireland know very well what influenced voters at the last election. Mr Gladstone was not in the South of

Ireland, and therefore he and others in England may care to know what I can gather together and summarise of the experiences of those who were.

At nearly every polling-booth there were, at least, five big motives at work reconciling the consciences of electors to vote for the Parnellite candidate, and these five motives explain in some degree the character of the bundle of heterogeneous influences that make up this power of Parnellism. In brief, they are religious ambition, land-hunger, industrial depression, protection, and intimidation.

311. Many in England will say, "It needed no prophet to come from Cork to tell us this." But what is forgotten is, that in ordinary times these motives are in antagonism and not in unison; they are sticks in different and mutually hostile hands, very shillelaghs indeed; and not that bundle which, united by one common bond, affords all the strength it boasts to the party of 86.

312. The priests do their duty admirably—that is, their duty to their instructions. The order has gone forth that the Catholics are to support Parnellism in Ireland, just as the order has gone forth that the same Church is to oppose, *vi et armis*, free education across the St George's Channel. The Catholics are to support Parnellism, and that is all they know or care to know. How far their instructions are founded on hopes or ideas of renewed temporal power, how far there are pledges held in Mr Parnell's closed hand (as the letter to Lord de Vesci was held in that of Mr Gladstone), no one

knows. All that is known is that Parnellism was to have the undivided, unhesitating support of each priest and of all Catholics at the election of 1885. And this support was of the very highest importance. The priests are good men—good, that is, according to their lights. They obey their superiors; they bow implicitly to authority. But they do this on a principle that is just as binding on their flocks. The priests are truthful men, and do not deny that there are many—nay, in remote parishes a majority—of their faithful flocks that cannot read or write; and what more just and proper than that each priest should be careful and industrious to see that each one of his flock voted in accordance with the instructions from above? Such was one influence telling with the illiterate and the great mass of agricultural as well as of urban voters. Mr Gladstone may tell his Mid-Lothian supporters that the poison of religious ascendancy, in its various forms, has been expelled from the country. But with the renewed “No Surrender!” cry from the Orangemen of the North, and this very significant, active, and skilfully directed intervention of the Roman Catholics in the elections, Mr Gladstone himself may see that the struggle for religious ascendancy still poisons the Irish political atmosphere.

313. But, over most inland areas of Ireland, agriculture—including pastoral occupations—is the one great industry; and all over these districts was at work another great engine, hostile at other

times to any Church, for Churches teach justice and respect for rights between man and man. But on this occasion the Land League worked side by side with the Church; and its teaching was addressed to all who "hired the use" of the land; and the text was, "Support Parnellism and you shall be made the owners of the soil for the use of which you are now asked to pay rent." Land-hunger, the desire to become a landowner, the sovereign proprietor of one's homestead, is an abiding appetite of the Anglo-Saxon race, but it is a positive disease with that Norman-Anglo-Celtic race which inhabits the southern half of Ireland.

314. It is well to remember that it is by no means a pure Celtic race. No doubt every one knows how the Parliament of Kilkenny passed severe enactments—notably those of 1309 and 1367—to stay or check the tendency of the English colony to intermarry or mix with the Irish natives. But, like more recent legislative interference passed by another Parliament, a reasoning people refused to be held down by laws which forswore those eternal principles of human action which are not, as Mr Gladstone thinks, and no doubt Henry II. thought, merely attributes of the inhabitants of Saturn. As a matter of fact, all over the South of Ireland first Norman and then English settlers came so long ago as the twelfth century; and ever since Richard, Earl Strongbow, in 1173 married Eva, daughter of Dermott Mac Morrrough, King of Leinster, and so became, in

right of marriage with this fair Irish heiress, landlord of all Leinster—ever since have fresh settlers from over the Channel come in, and, despite Acts of Parliament, intermarried with the friendly Irish, and by the right of Irish tradition and Irish law, become landlords for generations.

315. Thus in the South there has been, so far back as history goes, a Norman-Anglo-Celtic race of landowners. Individual ownerships have been, it is true, upset from time to time; at the first, by the ruder means of simple slaughter, and subsequently by the semi-civilised procedures of attainder and forfeiture. It was hoped, however, that the nineteenth century had developed order and law out of chaos and force; but it seems that again might is right, and that those who have power as parliamentary dictators are very Cromwells in their ruthless confiscation of rights they do not wish to respect. Mr Gladstone easily persuaded his party to decide that encouragement might safely be given to those who were not landowners in Ireland to behave as if they were, in the hope that they soon would be. The consequence of his legislation in regard to property in Irish land from 1870 onwards led in 1885 to a great contingent of electors voting for Parnellism, because they were taught, by a League that some have not scrupled to brand a conspiracy, and which a Liberal Government had put down as illegal, that if they did so they would speedily become possessed of lands that belonged to others.

316. And then in 1885, brooding over all classes,

was a great and grave depression. "The pressure of low prices upon agriculture," to use Mr Gladstone's words, and the great fall in prices of all other produce, are no doubt causes or accompaniments of the depression; but there are, besides these, others special to Ireland. For six years past law and order have been on a most precarious foothold. For six years open attacks on property, on personal liberty of action, on all those foundations of prosperity which the high priests of Liberalism never wearied of proclaiming to be at once the very foundations and the ultimate aims of civilisation, have been more than tolerated. The consequences have been a more intense depression in Ireland than any known in England—a feeling of hopelessness and helplessness that has forced many to yield to the new despotism, under the conviction that even if this mysterious Parnellism can work no good it can at all events work great evil, and that if Mr Gladstone yields to the agitator there is really little use in isolated individuals holding out or attempting to claim the protection of the Constitution and the laws.

317. And then there is no doubt whatever that many whose all is invested in the depressed industries have caught eagerly at the hope, so speciously put forward by Parnellism, of protection to Irish industries. They know that confidence and credit and purchasing power of the people are all departing from Ireland, and they catch in their despair at this last straw.

318. At the elections worse than all these influences was the particular action of the general spirit of intimidation which has so long cast its blighting shadow over the land. In every part of these southern counties there are endless tales of experience at the polling-booths, and they all tell how the same powers that bid boycotting to come and go had their agents at every booth, under whose eyes voters voted. There were priests, it is said, and laymen in and around the booths; the illiterate it was easy to watch, and circumstantial stories are even told of men well able to read and write coming to the presiding intimidator and making false confession of illiteracy merely in order to prove that they voted the right way. Two consequences followed: the one, that many more voted the Parnellite ticket than otherwise would have; and the other, that many more refrained from voting than would have been the case had the voting been either free or secret.

319. I commend all this to the particular attention of Mr Morley in his excellent desire to place all things "upon the basis of free popular consent and approval," for he may find that intimidation prevailed not only with the voters, but with the constituencies as well, for they were scrupulously forbidden to select their own candidates; and quite recently a new edict has gone forth to the effect that the names of candidates for seats in Parliament are not to be made known beforehand to any but the delegates at the conventions, where, but

only with closed doors, the merits or demerits of the candidates may be discussed. Would such action be for one moment tolerated in England? There are many here who loudly proclaim that a Royal Commission would find it a profitable task to inquire into the late election in Ireland, and to see how far it was in any sense or degree a free expression of the electors' choice; to see whether it is constitutional for an irresponsible clique to say to constituencies, "You shall not select your own candidate; we will send you one, but we refuse to tell you who he may be till it is too late for you to object or choose another."

320. We have had the latest instance in Galway; and this crowning case proves that the representatives of Ireland who advocate Parnellism were, for the most part and practically, not elected but nominated. This seems a breach in spirit, if it is not in letter, of the whole practice and traditions of parliamentary election. I say nothing as to what is very commonly reported as to the complete neutralisation of the secrecy of the ballot. What is to become of Ireland as a free country, supposing for one moment that Parnellism secured that separation of Ireland from England which Mr Parnell shadowed forth in the terms, "We will never accept anything but the full and complete right to arrange our own affairs and make our land a nation; to secure for her, free of outside control, the right to direct her own course among the peoples of the world"? Not

only is it a practice of Parnellism, but a practice slavishly acquiesced in by a "free people," that, as I say, their representatives in Parliament should be nominated and not elected—a practice quite contrary to Anglo-Saxon principles of self-government, but no doubt quite in accordance with the principles of that Parnellism which secret and irresponsible agencies are attempting to force on Ireland.

321. I would wish to add that a great many people in Munster and other parts of Ireland outside Ulster are or wish to be engaged in manufacturing industry, and that they have been and are so engaged. Ever since the English appeared in Cork County—and that means for 250 years—manufactures have been started of all kinds, and in other parts of the South ironfounding, and woollen, lace, glass, leather, and linen manufactures have been established for hundreds of years. Whisky, butter, bacon, and live stock have for long formed the staples of an active export trade. There have been various changes and chances in these industries. Most of them have come into existence during the present century—that is, be it remembered, under the much-abused Union. In Waterford and Cork Counties are large deposits of minerals and ores, including iron, coal, copper, silver, barytes, paving-stones, slates, and marble. But, as with the profitable barytes mine of Mount Corin, what is needed is capital to give these industries life. In endless cases private enterprise

has started industries. Away at Carrick, in the wilds of Donegal, a glove-knitting factory has been most successfully started; and in Munster, as well as in Connaught, are to be found scattered woollen factories giving this result—whether we judge by spindles or by people employed—that Munster, “backward, Celtic Munster,” claims quite half the woollen industry of all Ireland. What is chiefly needed for the development of all these industries is capital, and that will flow freely from England only provided there is confidence.

322. Parnellism in its coquettings with protection, which can hereafter barely be laid aside without distinct breach of promise; in its bitter attacks on landed property; in its insidious movements against house property; in its supreme influence over that great engine boycotting, has shown itself to be a system of administration which is incompatible with commercial confidence.

323. The Dublin Chamber of Commerce last month suggested a resolution for the annual meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce in London:—

The Council feel themselves imperatively called on at the present crisis to declare their opinion that any measure calculated to weaken the union at present existing between Great Britain and Ireland would be productive of consequences most disastrous to the trading and commercial interest of both countries.

324. The comment of the Cork Chamber was to the effect that “it would be altogether incon-

sistent with the views held by this Chamber to approve a resolution which simply means that the Irish people are not fit to govern themselves." The fact is, Irishmen may see that English capital is all in all to the development and prosperity of their country; and they may see clearly that with the investment of capital come yet closer ties of general intercourse and greater facilities of communication; and that England, day by day increasing its imports of bacon, butter, poultry, eggs, and other dairy produce, will do so in increasing quantities from those countries with which trade is most facilitated. There is no reason why Ireland should not, by clinging closer to England, become, as it were, the prosperous dairy-farm of the great English mining and manufacturing districts.

325. But instead of fostering and promoting this natural relationship Parnellism steps in, and first of all scares capital, and then usurps a political domination in commercial matters, and ordains that to promote closer commercial union with the natural English markets is equivalent to saying that the Irish are not fit to govern themselves. Cornwall and Devon and Somerset are wisely content to improve by all means in their power those facilities of intercourse and connection which enable them to supply food to the English factory hands, and think they enjoy all they desire of self-government so long as they have their *quota* of representatives in the Imperial Parliament. Can it be true of Munster that its reasonable inhabitants think that

a desire for continued close commercial union with its chief markets is equivalent to a confession that the Irish people are not fit to govern themselves, even though Munster has a more than liberal *quota* of representatives in the Imperial Parliament?

326. If Mr Gladstone can see things as they appear from the Irish side of the water, it will be plainly evident to him that Parnellism does not content itself with grants of local government which shall be "subject to all that authority of the Imperial Parliament which is necessary for maintaining the unity of the empire." The prominently declared object is "to secure for Ireland, free from outside control, the right to direct her own course among the peoples of the world." The Irish in Ireland certainly have no desire thus to play at national independence and become the sport of ambitious or envious nations of ten times their strength. At the same time, Parnellism is enjoying a brief heyday of parliamentary power, and may even accept as a temporary instalment some scheme which the Prime Minister may regard as a very final concession, but which the secret controllers of Parnellism will simply and rightly take as a stepping-stone from which there can be no going back, although going forward will be all the more possible and may easily become absolutely necessary. These are the definite objects Parnellism has in hand; but let it not be forgotten that the strength of this party of 86 is, to use a phrase of Mr Chamberlain, "a temporary combination of hostile

elements," a mere bundle of heterogeneous influences, among which are Roman Catholic ambition, land-hunger, communism, trade depression, and widespread and organised intimidation.

327. The supple withy which keeps this heterogeneous bundle united for the present is the influence and the money of those who style themselves the Irish in America. This head-centre of Parnellism has collected, even if it has not altogether accounted for, during the past five years, sums amounting to nearly a quarter of a million sterling. This has been done under the main contention that Ireland shall be freed—freed, that is, from being represented in and controlled by the Imperial Parliament—in order to be delivered over, stripped of any powerful interests, of any organised civilisation, of any strength for independence, to become the helpless prey of two conflicting interests—the Roman Catholics, and those who live and have their being in the promotion of Parnellism.

328. I have endeavoured to sketch what are the constituent elements of this despotism that would fain fix its domination in Ireland. The English and the Scotch and the Welsh people will on inquiry discover that this party of 86 does not express the views held by the bulk of the residents in Ireland; that the present supremacy of Parnellism is but temporary, and that its aims are not in the present, and cannot be in the future, conducive to the prosperity of any trade, industry, profession, or interest that is really Irish.

DIVISION IV.

R E M E D I E S

CHAPTER XV.

PROPOSED REMEDIES.

*The Doctors differ.*¹

ATHLONE, *March.*

329. IN this, the concluding letter of the series of five in which I have endeavoured to afford Mr Gladstone certain "indications that go to the heart of Irish affairs," I pass to a summary review of the settlements or remedies proposed, and more especially to that solution which Mr Gladstone is well known to wish to put forward.

330. I say "wish," because Mr Gladstone is only in office on sufferance, and has by no means the power to push through his own desires. At the time of the general election he was careful to call upon the electors of Great Britain to give him a majority sufficient to place him above the demands or threats of the Parnellites. His call fell very flat, and Mr Gladstone, with the insight of a true politician, at once saw that he must ally to himself these Parnellites, with whom it was both folly and

¹ From the 'Times' of April 3, 1886.

disgrace for the Tories to ally themselves. This cost him the parliamentary support not only of many votes, but also of his ablest lieutenants. Mr Gladstone also saw at once that he must do a great deal of educating and persuading before he could muster even a respectable minority in the House of Commons to do his bidding in Irish policy. He has shrewdly deferred till April any taking of the public into his confidence. He was not long in persuading himself that a scheme of Home Rule acceptable to Mr Parnell was a good thing. An idea started in November is in December a cardinal point in his new policy. January, February, and March are devoted to persuading others, and in April—*Væ Victis!*

331. In any settlement of the Irish problem there must be three parties to the transaction. These are (1) the agitators who demand, (2) the countries that gain or suffer, and (3) the Government that gives. What have, then, these parties respectively to say in the matter?

332. There are the agitators who demand; and they roughly divide themselves into the Americans, the Nationalists, and the Home Rulers.

333. The Americans, by which term I mean those in America who support Parnellism, are a great power in the matter. Mr Parnell said openly of the last election: "Had it not been for prompt and daily assistance from America, I fear that many of our nominations must have fallen through for want of funds. . . . We feel assured that nothing will

be left undone by America to enable us to speedily and surely win the legislative independence of Ireland." Mr Michael Davitt has been telling us that "the chief inspiration of the Land League movement, its spirit, and most of its financial strength," came from America. What is the motive of these Americans? The Philadelphia newspaper, the 'American,' tells us "it is not to convert the Irish people into loyal and contented subjects of Queen Victoria that the Irish in America have supported the Home Rule movement with their money." Those who know are very well aware that the mass of Americans have no sympathy whatever with this Irish agitation. They hold to the principle that rebellions are alone to be justified by oppression and wrong which those in power refuse to rectify. But there are others in America who see, or hope for, in this perpetual Irish trouble a running sore, injuring, maiming, and perhaps eventually destroying English competition in trade and manufactures. These men ally themselves with professional agitators, who make a very comfortable living out of the subscriptions they can raise from the misguided enthusiasm of ignorant Irish emigrants. Their motive is to weaken British power, and they make a cat's-paw of a got-up enthusiasm for a fictitious Irish Nationalism. Without their financial aid Parnellism would droop and die, for it has no real roots in its adopted country. This American aid will be withheld if any scheme be adopted which shall promise a peaceful and final settlement of the question.

334. The Nationalists are those whose aim it is to secure for Ireland complete and independent control of both the internal and the external affairs of Ireland, or in Mr Parnell's words, "to secure for Ireland, free of outside control, the right to direct her own course among the peoples of the world." It is true that in the House of Commons Mr Parnell finds it convenient to say that "his own candid opinion was that, so far from increasing the chances of separation, the concession of autonomy to Ireland would undoubtedly very largely diminish them." But outside Parliament he talks deliberately of the "fullest realisation of the hopes of Ireland as a nation," "the right to banish English misrule for ever," "that the Irish nation will prosper and be perpetual." Mr Parnell demands a Parliament to manage all Irish affairs, in which he includes all revenue raising, and also free leave to protect Irish industries. He adds:—

It is impossible to give guarantees. . . . I am convinced that the English statesman who is great enough to induce his countrymen to give Ireland full legislative liberty will be regarded as one who has removed the greatest peril to the British empire,—a peril that sooner or later—it may be sooner than later—will certainly find an opportunity of revenging itself by the destruction of the British empire for the misfortunes, the oppressions, and the misgovernment of our country.

335. These words are full of significance. Mr Parnell declares he can give no guarantees, and he places in the forefront of his programme the re-

covery "inch by inch, surely if slowly, of every rood of land which has been robbed from the Irish people." Compensation for the disturbance of the landlords is not, and cannot be, in the Nationalist programme. The aim of the Parnellites is separate national existence; and if Mr Parnell diverges one iota from this programme he will be at once deposed. The final claim of the Nationalists is for separation without guarantee, without compensation, without even a vestige of Imperial control.

336. Under the title of "Home Rulers" are ranged many advocates of various degrees of autonomy, all presumably acknowledging the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, but all outside Mr Trevelyan's well-known limit as expressed in his axiom that there is "no half-way house between entire separation and absolute Imperial control." Home Rulers aim at independent control over Irish affairs, under some hazy idea that this can be granted and Imperial control still remain supreme. But Home Rulers reject as inadequate mere systems of local government subject to the Imperial Parliament. Archbishop Croke defines the Home Rulers as "simply claiming the right of making their own laws and managing their own affairs, and not dreaming of separation from England as even a possible result." But no Home Rule scheme has as yet satisfied either the Separationist or the Unionist, both of whom maintain that the Home Rule of the Home Ruler cannot be seriously regarded as a permanent settlement. The attraction

of Ireland, the lesser, to Great Britain, the greater, has always proved too powerful for the Separationist, and will prove still more powerful in these days, when the relative proportions are so very much more unequal than they have ever been before. Even until this century the proportions of population in the two islands had been as 3 or 2 to 1, and yet this attraction remained paramount. But now the proportion is as 6 to 1.

337. Poyning's Act, in Henry VII.'s reign, asserted the legislative supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. Then there followed movements in the direction of Home Rule, and days of trial and misery and trouble, until Cromwell brought peace and rest by the means of legislative union. Under the Stuarts Home Rule was again introduced, with the result of hostile measures by the greater island, in her own commercial and military defence, against her weaker neighbour, which culminated in such injury to the lesser that the reunion with the greater was the sole remedy. The troubles of the greater at the time of the American Rebellion were made the opportunity of the discontented; and, by rioting, rebellion, and armed threat, Home Rule was again exacted in order to endeavour to knit the lesser more heartily to the greater. Twenty years of Home Rule and legislative independence culminated in the rebellion of 1798.

338. No student of history but has waded through the tale of the gross corruption, intrigue, and all that is vicious that, under this Home Rule,

had grown to prevail in Ireland; but there is no one who can point to any proved Irish grievance which the Imperial Parliament has not done its best to remove since the Union was happily established in 1801. There may have been, as Mr Parnell says, misfortunes, oppressions, and misgovernment, but they occurred chiefly in periods during which Ireland enjoyed (?) Home Rule; and for many years past Ireland has enjoyed more than equal treatment with the other districts of the United Kingdom. Archbishop Croke is not the only complainant who quite forgets that the Irish at present do make their own laws and manage their own affairs just as freely and fully as the inhabitants of any other equal portion of the United Kingdom. And Home Rulers must remember that, while they and all good citizens will rigidly oppose any attempt at separation, history tells us clearly that Home Rule has been often tried and as often has ended either in forcible suppression of a Separationist movement or in willing reunion as the only remedy for the ruin and other evils induced by so unnatural a state of suspended independence.

339. Parliament must remember that the Americans aim at no settlement, the Nationalists at one which breaks up the empire at its core, and the Home Rulers at one which has been proved over and over again to be no settlement at all. But the first two classes are willing to accept schemes which are instalments towards the attainment of

their aims, and herein lies the great and grave danger. The political and financial supporters of these aims have allowed, no doubt unintentionally, to leak out that their supreme control of Irish affairs will in the end include dealing in an altogether revolutionary fashion with the great local interests and institutions — social, religious, industrial, and commercial — land, churches, and commerce. Yet it is an open secret that from time to time these supporters may be willing to accept schemes which they will take as instalments, but which the political obtuseness of some misled Government or party may mistake for a final settlement. Such a Government will find when it is too late that it has virtually surrendered the position, although the enemy for the moment does not choose to take possession. It is a concession to the attacking force of a minor position from which he can never again be driven back, but which renders possible fresh forward movements on his part.

340. And we know we have to face a temporary combination of actually hostile forces, to each of which, under the idea of finality, Mr Gladstone has made a series of temporising concessions. On the one hand, we have the Roman Catholic power, winning, first of all, Catholic emancipation, and then the disestablishment of the Church, and now looking to Mr Parnell for the final concession of the control of education, and even of religion, over three parts of Ireland. On the other hand, we have the true “land-grabbers,”

the authors of the no-rent manifesto, who, by means of Mr Gladstone's past, present, and prospective land legislation, are gradually winning one position after another. These hostile elements of this temporary combination understand only too well the ease and certainty of advancing by instalments, and the success of their electioneering tactics has for the moment given their combined battalions an altogether abnormal power. Mr Gladstone professes himself ready once more to yield to them more positions on his old plea of finality. But this time it seems certain that Parliament and the country will recognise clearly that such concessions are mere instalments towards revolution and separation, and Mr Gladstone will find himself chewing the bitter cud of a hopeless minority.

341. As I have said, there are three parties to the transaction. I have dealt with the agitators who demand; I will now take the countries that are to gain or suffer. In previous "Indications" I have pointed out how largely Irish troubles are due to economic causes, and how closely and increasingly the welfare of the inhabitants of Ireland depends on the intimacy of their intercourse with the populous and busy sister island of Great Britain. It is in English manufacturing centres that Ireland finds the great market for her chief products, her cattle and pigs, her butter and bacon, and even her whisky and porter. It is because she is part and parcel of the British empire that Ireland has cheap facilities of sending her produce over all the world.

And it is English harvest or dock wages and English expenditure in Ireland itself that afford means of living to hundreds of thousands in Ireland. There are 600,000 tenants in Ireland, and of these two-thirds, representing a population of 2,000,000 souls, have holdings under 25 acres, and cling to land that will not support their families without this extraneous aid of employment by means of English money. Shopkeepers and bankers all through Ireland can tell a clear tale of what would happen were the supply of investment and employment moneys from England to cease; and it is no wonder that not alone in Ulster, but all over Ireland, wherever they dare give voice, traders, merchants, bankers, manufacturers, and all, in short, who know what Irish business is, are one and all opposed to separation and in favour of yet closer communion with Great Britain. These feelings are still publicly maintained by such bodies as the Cork Defence Union or the Grand Juries, and I commend to Mr Morley's very careful attention this one fact—that separation, virtual or actual, will mean the ruin of business, the ruin of commerce and industry in Ireland. Well may Lord Salisbury speak of “that delusion, Home Rule.”

342. But if separation means economic ruin to Ireland, it none the less means material injury to Great Britain. It is true the English taxpayer would no longer be called upon to supply directly or on English credit millions sterling to Ireland as loans, or contributions, or gifts. English Parlia-

ments and English parties would no longer be fettered by the wasteful littleness of the matters or the tactics advanced by the Parnellite party. But Great Britain would suffer in honour, in credit, and in business relations from the disorder, wrangling, anarchy, and economic suicide of so near a neighbour as Ireland. Great risks would also be run politically. Lord Hartington has summed up these dangers when he said—

The people of the United Kingdom will never assent to the practical separation of the two Governments of England and Ireland. They will not tolerate the formation of an independent Government which may be hostile, which may be unfriendly, which may adopt opposite colonial, fiscal, and even foreign policies with regard to Imperial matters.

343. In brief, so far as the two countries concerned will be affected, Ireland will suffer vitally and Great Britain materially from all moves tending in the direction of separation; both countries will gain substantial advantage from movements or measures tending to knit yet closer the Union, and encourage that tendency towards thorough assimilation which at present subsists.

344. The third of the three parties to the transaction I have named is the Government that gives. That Government is, for the moment, Mr Gladstone tempered by the possible opposition of the Conservatives, the Whigs, the Liberals, the Radicals, or the Parnellites in the present Parliament. What will this Government recommend? It seems to be an open secret that Mr Gladstone has, at all events,

one specific in a very forward state of preparation, and that that involves definite concessions to the demands of the Separationists and of those who wish to abolish landlordism.

345. I have already pointed out that in Ireland, where all the past utterances of the various leaders burn themselves into people's memories, it is quite clearly understood that no concessions will be accepted by the Parnellites except those which, in themselves or as stepping-stones, lead from legislative to national independence. As a matter of fact, any concessions which the Parnellite party can accept will deprive Ireland of all security that she shall continue to enjoy equal laws and constitutional privileges with England and Wales and Scotland.

346. Such concessions must include command over finance. Ireland now pays far less than her share of the public burdens. Of the total revenue raised by taxation, both local and Imperial, Ireland contributes about £10,000,000, or 20s. per head of the population, while Great Britain contributes £129,000,000, or 40s. per head. Of the public expenditure Ireland receives a far greater share than that proportionate to her contributions. Financial independence would saddle Ireland with her share of the National Debt, as well as deprive her not only of the Imperial credit, but of the loans, and, above all, the remitting of loans now enjoyed by the aid—the charitable aid in many instances—of the taxpayers across St George's Channel.

347. In brief, this part of Mr Gladstone's specific would seek to restore social order by giving a legal *status*, and indeed supremacy, to all the forces that have for so long waged war against law and order.

348. The second part of the specific seeks, in brief, to wipe out all the evil results that have accrued on Mr Gladstone's abortive and ruinous tinkering with land legislation. Whatever the details of a buying out of the landlords, it has only become necessary because Mr Gladstone tampered with the liberty of the individual to get for his own what he could in the open market. It may have become necessary to compensate Irish landlords for the evils done by the legalising of the "No rent" movement, but this can only be accomplished either at great pecuniary sacrifice on the part of the British taxpayer or by burdening Ireland with a great and heavy debt. It remains for Mr Gladstone to explain on which horn of the dilemma he intends to impale himself.

349. In fine, it is extremely difficult to see that any of the specifics put forward by the powers that be will at the same time satisfy the agitators, re-establish order and confidence in Ireland, actually lighten the financial burdens of Ireland, or in any way guarantee any improvement in the present evil circumstances. All that we can say of Mr Gladstone and those whom he has called into his consultations is, that there is exceeding divergence of opinion, and that, except in the consciousness that the proposed specifics will prove a failure, there is

no other point of agreement among these political doctors.

350. In closing this series of "Indications from Ireland," I would summarise that recent personal inquiry among all classes of the people in Ireland shows distinctly that—

1. Parnellism is an ephemeral power, a mere "temporary combination of otherwise hostile elements," these elements being Roman Catholicism, land-grabbing, blind patriotism, industrial depression, protectionist selfishness, proletariat greed, and Irish-American political schemes—all aided by skilful electioneering tactics, the widespread ignorance of a new stratum of electors, the pressure of organisations not known to the Constitution, and the popular dread of a secret and irresponsible despotism.

2. That the powers represented by the defunct Land League, the living National League, and the new House League, and assisted and supported by boycotting in all its forms, from social avoidance to the maiming of cattle and assassination of men and women, have placed the Queen's authority in abeyance in many relations of life and many districts in Ireland.

3. That a movement to make rents in Ireland illegal and impossible has found countenance and support in Mr Gladstone's Land Acts, and if it succeeds, will for a time altogether prevent any landowner in Ireland, great or small, from allowing any others to use his land on payment.

4. That the chief foundations of Irish troubles are economic and not political. That the one crying need of the population is profitable employment; that the natural resources of the country are great, but for the most part not utilised; and that the true remedy is to make Ireland a place where men will come and live and work and invest and spend. That this is to be secured not by severing but by drawing yet closer the ties that bind her to over-populated, busy, wealthy, and generous Great Britain.

5. That Ireland does not contain the necessary elements of a separate nationality—for among the inhabitants there is no unity or individuality of blood, religion, laws, occupations, sentiments, history, or even tradition.

6. That Ireland has large manufacturing classes as well as agricultural; that to injure these and to abolish landlordism is to banish the classes that chiefly pay local rates, employ labour, find capital, and support churches, chapels, and charities. That in material welfare Ireland has advanced enormously in recent years. That Ireland enjoys to the full as large a measure of local self-government as England or Scotland. That Ireland bears less than her proportionate share of the burdens of contributing to the State revenues.

7. That of the “settlements” now in the air the Irish-Americans wish for none of them; the Parnellites only for those which directly or indirectly lead to separation; the Home Rulers for those

which history tells us are of no avail. Mr Gladstone has schemes of his own, the pivot of which is providing a remedy for his fiascos in land legislation which must burden either Ireland or Great Britain with a great new Public Debt.

351. These seven groups of "Indications that go to the heart of Irish troubles" I earnestly commend to the serious consideration of Mr Gladstone, and of all those who have a conscientious regard for the welfare of the inhabitants of Ireland.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE COLONIAL ANALOGY.

352. WIDESPREAD and apparently deep-rooted, especially in the minds of Gladstonian orators, is the popular fallacy that sees an argument in favour of Home Rule for Ireland in the supposed analogous case of the grant of self-government to the Colonies.

353. As I have indicated, leaders of the Liberal party to this day remain so culpably ignorant of the condition and history of the grant of self-government to our Colonies as still to place the argument in the forefront of their advocacy of Home Rule for Ireland.

354. Thus the usually cautious and accurate Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, speaking at Stirling in the autumn of 1897, remarks:—

How came it that they had heard this exuberant expression of loyalty proceeding from every colonial empire? How was it that there were no longer jealousies and friction between those communities and the central Imperial authority? The reason was, that for many years the Imperial Government had left to each community the control of all things which

affected itself alone. If they looked very closely into it they would find that this could be demonstrated by two very simple and inoffensive monosyllables, with which they had become tolerably acquainted in this country of recent years—namely, Home Rule. There was one country, however, whose *constitutional representatives* found it necessary to abstain from the universal rejoicing—namely, Ireland.

355. On September 29, in his own Scotch constituency, Mr John Morley, with the prickings of conscience of a true historian, nevertheless was blind to the fallacious character of the Colonial analogy. In a characteristic passage of his speech he said:—

What lesson does the history of Canada teach you? I do not mean to say for a moment that the conditions in Canada in 1837 and 1838 were identical with the condition of Ireland in 1886 or the year 1897. I do not say it, but I would say this, that the principle upon which you worked in connection with Canada sixty years ago of conceding freedom solved the difficulty in Canada which was, on the whole, analogous to the difficulty in Ireland, and I cannot conceive why that same principle which has been adopted in the case of communities across the seas should not be extended to the little Ireland that is nearest to us, whose grievances have been deepest and most bitter, and whose children are in every one of these colonies whose representatives you have welcomed (at the Jubilee celebration).

356. But these and other leaders of the same side were but following in the footsteps of their great chief.

One¹ of Mr Gladstone's trump-cards that he has played in his endeavour to win the Home Rule

¹ What follows is one of the chapters in the book 'The Truth about Home Rule' (1888), based upon an article of mine in the 'National Review,' July 1886, reproduced by permission of the editor.

game is "the successful experience of granting self-government to our Colonies"; and this lead of his has been persistently taken up by his lieutenants. But this argument he has introduced is altogether fallacious, inapplicable, and misleading.

357. On a previous occasion, when he sought to recommend *clôture*, on the plea that it had been "adopted in our Colonies, which value freedom not less than we value it," Mr Gladstone was speedily convicted, not only of ignorance, but of what some did not hesitate to call culpable ignorance. And it is pertinent to the present occasion to remind the public of this previous instance in which the late Prime Minister advocated a thoroughly un-English measure, on the special plea of appealing to the successful experience of our Colonies, when such an appeal was fallacious and misleading, because absolutely unfounded in fact.

358. This precedent may be briefly stated. On February 14, 1882, Mr Gladstone rose in the House of Commons to propose a rule of *clôture*, specially advocating it on the plea that our Colonies had adopted it. But in the previous November he had addressed a circular despatch to all our Colonies, asking for specific information as to *clôture*. The replies were all to hand in the following January, and were printed and circulated by February 2. From these it was conclusively evident that only in one out of all the Colonial Legislative Assemblies was there in existence any form of *clôture* whatever.

359. Precisely similar ignorance has Mr Gladstone exhibited in urging his Home Rule Bill for acceptance, by appealing to the successful experience of our Colonies.

360. It is true he commenced his appeal by reminding the House that his experience of Colonial affairs was great, and dated from fifty-one years ago; and he described that at that date the relations between mother-country and Colonies were much strained, but that all had been set right by grants of self-government.

Unfortunately for this glib argument, it so happens that fifty-one years ago, on the one hand, out of the nine Colonies that now have responsible government, only one—Canada—had emerged into the position of a colony, or was, as 28 & 29 Vict. c. 63, phrases it, one of “her Majesty’s possessions in which there exists a Legislature.” Queensland, New Zealand, Victoria, and South Australia were not in existence as separate communities. New South Wales, Tasmania, Newfoundland, and Cape Colony were small struggling settlements, of which little was hoped or expected.

On the other hand, there were many colonies among our more important in those days, but small by comparison now, chiefly in the West Indies, which have since that time, and for their own good, surrendered their self-contained Legislatures.

361. It is perfectly true that since that day large powers of self-government have been delegated to our Colonies outside the tropics, as they succes-

sively sprang into existence; and it is perfectly true that enormous success has attended this policy. But, in the first place, the reasons for such grants, and, in the second, the condition and circumstances of these settlements, differ so radically from the motive and the environments of the Irish case, as to render it logically true that what suited them will not suit Ireland.

362. One word as to the precedent afforded by Canada. Mr Gladstone tells us that Canada affords a case, "not parallel but analogous," and one "embracing the whole controversy." It is a great pity Mr Gladstone, before applying this precedent, did not make himself acquainted with its leading details. He expected the House of Commons to believe that Canada was governed from Downing Street until the year 1838, and that all things by then had come to a hopeless deadlock, which was happily solved by the grant of Home Rule. That is Mr Gladstone's story; but it is one not less inconsistent with actual fact than the story he told three years ago as to the *clôture*. In reality, Canada had its elected representative Legislature from 1791 up to 1838—the executive being mostly in the hands of representatives of the Crown, as was the case at the time in England itself. "Government from Downing Street," as we now understand it, was not possible, seeing that in those days there was no telegraph, and sailing-vessels occupied weeks in crossing to the other side of the Atlantic. There were local troubles

in the Canadas, and these assumed an acute phase over the local question of State endowments for the Church. These troubles culminated in the rebellion of '38.

The Legislature *was* in local hands, and the executive in the charge of officials appointed from the mother-country. Lord Durham succinctly suggested, "Let them not only make their own laws but execute them;" and to carry out this idea, he saw at once that the provinces could not be left to their own independent devices. The two Canadas were united in 1840 under one Government and Legislature, and responsible government was instituted. But in a few years this ill-assorted combination of two antagonistic provinces—the one Protestant by faith and English and Scotch in race, and the other Catholic and French—proved unworkable, and the two provinces were again separated. Have we not in Ireland a somewhat close parallel? In the north-east is there not a province Protestant by faith and Scotch in race? And are there not, in the south and west, two provinces Catholic by faith and Celtic in race? Does not Canadian experience only prove that the amalgamation in a separate constitution and administration of the two incongruous provinces of Ireland merely promises to result in similar failure? No lasting settlement was arrived at until, in 1867, all our various provinces on the North American continent were locally federated into one united Dominion—one great Union.

363. In this policy was found a satisfactory remedy for years of trouble. But the cardinal principle was not the grant of Home Rule, but the *uniting* together of the different provinces under one supreme Legislature and Executive. It was comprehensive and intimate union, and not division and subdivision, which inaugurated in Canada that grand era of prosperity which set in as a result of Lord Durham's wise statesmanship.

364. Very similar troubles occurred in New Zealand, although it enjoyed a representative constitution, before the six provincial governments were amalgamated (1875) into one general Legislature and Executive.

365. But as with Canada and New Zealand, so with the Australasian and Cape Colonies, the circumstances and conditions are the very reverse of those of Ireland. In their case we have distant, young, and rapidly growing colonies, proud of their common nationality, eager to absorb the surplus capital and population of the mother-country, and wisely bent on maintaining as close a union as possible with an empire that is the pledge of their security and their liberties. Also, as I have already pointed out, in those days there were no telegraphs, and communication was as a rule by sailing-ships, which occupied weeks, and to Australia months, in the voyage to and fro.

366. But there is another vital and essential difference which is strangely ignored by Mr Gladstone and all his lieutenants—ignored, indeed, by

all the speakers who have introduced the colonial analogy. It is a difference which overshadows all the others. It is the fundamental fact that these Colonies were at the time not represented in the Imperial Parliament; whereas Ireland is. The instances taken from European, not less than from Colonial history, all lack this one vital feature. Ireland is already as fully represented in the Parliament and Government of the country as any other part of the United Kingdom.

367. To the British colonial communities, thus differing, and diametrically differing, in every essential attribute from Ireland, there was conceded that form of constitution known as responsible government. But with self-government was conceded full responsibility and full control. The constitution granted in each case, as may be seen in any of the Acts, was assimilated as closely as circumstances allowed to that of the United Kingdom. The supremacy of the Crown, two Houses of Legislature, full power over the purse, full responsibility for internal law and order, and for defence against external aggression—these were the five fundamental principles of the new Colonial constitutions, and only the first of these five enters into Mr Gladstone's scheme for Ireland. And the reasons for granting these Home Rule constitutions were the physical obstacles of distance, and the fact that the Colonies were not represented in the Imperial Parliament, two reasons which do not exist in the case of Ireland. And yet this is the

case which Mr Gladstone brings forward as his great precedent for granting Home Rule to Ireland, to a country close to Great Britain, and populated and civilised for ages, and decaying and not growing—at least so the Parnellites tell us.

368. Mr Gladstone will also, perhaps, remember the motive avowed by the leading men of one great party, at all events, in granting this colonial Home Rule. These concessions were avowedly made because they “paved the way to eventual separation,” because they opened the door to a breaking up of the empire. In this respect, also, the present offer of Home Rule to Ireland is, we must hope, distinct and different from the grant of Home Rule to the Colonies. Or does Mr Gladstone in this respect also see a close analogy and precedent? In ‘Oceana,’ Mr Froude well sums up this “policy of separation” in the words, “They were informed that they were as birds in nests, whose parents would be charged with them only till they could provide for themselves.”

369. But the Colonies, with that practical statesmanship (and I speak from a not inconsiderable personal experience) which has been their special product, and a product that will be of incalculable advantage to the whole nation, have replied with no uncertain sound: “It is best for us, it is best for you, it is best for all, that we continually draw closer and closer the bonds of union, the ties of communion—social, intellectual, commercial, and political—that now so happily subsist.”

The reply of the Colonies to the disintegrating grant of self-government is a request that will, and must be, acceded to, for a reuniting of the powers and forces of the empire in some closer union.

370. To sum up, Colonial Home Rule differs from any possible Irish Home Rule in the following among other points :—

1. It was granted to pave the way to separation.
2. It has resulted in creating a warm demand for closer union.
3. The Colonies were not represented in the Imperial Parliament.
4. The Colonies were separated by weeks or months of sea-voyage from London, and there was no telegraph.
5. The Colonies were partially unpopulated, young, and rapidly progressive countries.
6. The Colonies never tired of asserting their pride in their common nationality, and their determination to remain integral portions of the British Empire.
7. The Colonies have the common-sense to see, and the practical statesmanship to act up to the wise conviction, that the closest union means for the whole empire enhanced credit and absolute security against all internal or external danger to liberties or rights.
8. The Colonies have a vivid conception of their duties and obligations as citizens of a great empire.

371. In addition to all this, Mr Gladstone, as I have shown, appealing to the successful experience of our Colonies, proceeds to offer Ireland precisely what was not offered to the Colonies. He asks Ireland to accept Home Rule, and then he defines Home Rule in his bill, from the main lines and purport of which he will not depart even one hair's-breadth.

372. In brief, this bill says to Ireland, "You may have Home Rule; you may have a Parliament in Dublin: but you must have no permanent representatives in the Imperial Parliament; no control over customs and excise—the two great items of purse; no control over your own defence; no full responsibility for law and order; no command over the liberties of your people or industries." In short, Ireland, according to the principle of Mr Gladstone's bill, is to be deprived of all present share in the Imperial Government, and of most of the powers of self-government. The English taxpayer is to take all the ultimate responsibility and control. Ireland is merely to contribute a fixed sum, to be forcibly collected by England. Even the proposed Irish Legislature is to be on an entirely new model—viz., a single chamber—in which the representatives of education and property are merely to have the right to be always in the minority, and with less powers in many respects than the councils even in Crown Colonies, "ruled by the paternal despotism of Downing Street." Indeed, this new and strange Legislature would not enjoy even the rights or

powers possessed by the subordinate Legislatures of the provinces of Canada, and there would be no permanent representation in the Imperial Parliament. Ireland would thus have inferior powers and rights to any other province of any nation of European stock.

373. This is what Mr Gladstone offers to Ireland, and what the Parnellite lieutenants assert will be accepted as final by Ireland. To others in Ireland this proposal comes in the light of an insult and a degradation—as a proposal which would settle nothing, but which would open the door to endless complications, and make possible every manner of dispute or difficulty. In conclusion, I will add that this Union, which has proved good and useful and vital to Great Britain and to Greater Britain, to the thirty millions in England and Wales and Scotland, to the two million Ulster men and commercial men in Ireland, and to the ten million British citizens of European stock in the North American, South African, Australian, and other provinces of the nation, is not lightly to be cast to the winds because an ephemeral majority of three millions of the less educated and less substantial of the inhabitants of Ireland have been misled into supposing that “to direct their course by themselves among the nations of the world” will freely give to some Irishmen the land now belonging to others.

374. This demand for Home Rule, as a stepping-stone towards separation, is a passing craze, on which agitators may batten, and by which true

patriots may be blinded and misled; but it is opposed, even in this the hour of its zenith, by the good sense and successful experience of at least forty-two out of the forty-five millions of British citizens of European stock.

375. Mr Gladstone's peculiar scheme has been sprung upon the public by the latest pervert to this strange dogma, and the country has not yet had time to become familiar with the question; but as it gradually does so, there will grow up an overpowering conviction that Mr Gladstone's proposals, even if they were practicable, which they are not, would undoubtedly threaten the prosperity and integrity of the whole empire, and certainly compass the ruin of Ireland.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOME RULE PRECEDENTS.

376. WHEN the Home Rule Bill was defeated Mr Gladstone wrote a letter of comfort to his followers in Bradford, in which he stated: "The gradual extension of historical information, and the progress of reflection on the subject, will in no long time, we may rest assured, bring about the triumph of right." A Nemesis, we know, has fallen upon him and all his supporters. Right has triumphed, and it has triumphed owing, in great degree, to the gradual extension of historical information.

377. In no respect is this more conspicuous than in regard to one of the main appeals to history made by Mr Gladstone, and supported by some of his ablest lieutenants, and this was the appeal to Home Rule precedents and Home Rule analogies. Mr Gladstone himself told us that these precedents illustrated the basis and principles of his policy. He spoke warmly of the precedents in foreign countries, and his ardour culminated in the definite challenge, "I defy any one to bring forward

one single instance in which the grant of self-government has imperilled the Imperial unity." At the present moment, in 1898, it would appear that the leader and his followers are clinging still to the Gladstonian formula, and that the gradual extension of historical information has not yet reached the minds of Mr John Morley or Sir William Harcourt.

378. Mr Gladstone, in introducing his bill, said: "The last half-century is particularly rich in its experiences of the subject, and in its lessons. There are many cases to show how practicable it is to bring into existence local autonomy and yet not sacrifice but confirm Imperial unity."

379. The cases in point which he produced were from the history of the colonies and of foreign countries; but in every single one of these cases that either he or any one else has named, either the circumstances were so diametrically opposite as to make the assertion true that what suited those cases could not possibly suit Ireland, or the grant of local autonomy resulted speedily in absolute political separation.

380. With regard to his appeal to "the successful experience of granting self-government to our colonies, give to the people of Ireland that which you have given to the people of your colonies, the power to manage not Imperial but Irish affairs"—I have already shown the entire unsoundness of the analogy. Here it will suffice to point out in summary, the circumstances and conditions under

which the colonies received autonomy were the very reverse of the environments of the Irish case. They were distant—very distant—young, and rapidly-growing communities, proud—intensely proud—of their common nationality, eager to absorb the surplus population and capital of the mother-country, and wisely bent on maintaining as close a union as possible with the empire that is the pledge of their security and their liberties. And in addition, there was, in their case, the fundamental difference that the colonies were not, and at the time could not be, represented in the Imperial Parliament or the Imperial Government. Of the colonies the truth is that, according to all true logic, what suited them was not likely to suit Ireland, and what suited Ireland was impossible for them.

381. But Mr Gladstone had said, “The last half-century is particularly rich in its experiences.” We presume he did not mean us to go with political economy to Saturn or to Mars, but to confine our intellects to inquiries in this world. Yet of all this wealth of precedents Mr Gladstone could, or would, only name two—viz., Norway and Sweden and Austria-Hungary. He was particularly supported in this argument by his most able lieutenant Mr Bryce, who added to this list Bavaria, Iceland, Belgium, Schleswig-Holstein, Poland, and Finland. It is, however, remarkable to find that our leading statesman and our leading historian seem never to have heard of other precedents, such as the United

States, Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria, Brazil, and all the Spanish colonies in Central and South America. It is difficult to understand why these obvious precedents were ignored. We shall examine them in detail later on.

382. It thus appears to be very necessary to remind ourselves briefly of the real facts in each of these cases produced by Mr Gladstone. Historical information gives us, indeed, a long string of precedents concerning Home Rule. But are they in favour of Home Rule? Are any of them in favour? Or, to parody Mr Gladstone's own challenge, shall we not find it true to say we defy any one to bring forward one single instance in which the grant of local autonomy has not imperilled or destroyed Imperial unity?

Mr Gladstone himself puts forward the cases of Norway and Sweden and Austria-Hungary.

1. *Norway and Sweden.*

383. "Immediately after the great war," Mr Gladstone tells us, "the Norwegians took sword in hand to prevent them from coming under the domination of Sweden, but the Powers of Europe settled the question and united those countries upon a footing of strict legislative independence and coequality." Mr Gladstone does not explain, and presumably does not know, that Norway was joined to Denmark until the year 1814, when Denmark was compelled by force of arms to cede Norway to

Sweden. Bernadotte at the head of the Swedes endeavoured to conquer Norway, and, without bloodshed, managed to pacify Norway by confirming the ancient Constitution which included the parliamentary institutions.

384. It will not be forgotten that so long ago as the year 1397, by the compact of Colmar, it was decided that the three independent States, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, should "henceforth be under one Crown, but each retain its respective laws, customs, and Parliament." This arrangement of Imperial unity, but without any one common or supreme Parliament, was made in order to banish war and political dissension between three independent nations, never previously united. But let Mr Gladstone take note that the scheme broke down completely within one hundred years. Indeed, by the year 1523 Gustavus Vasa, by the aid of revolt and civil war, had won separation for Sweden from the alliance, and in 1772 Gustavus III. had become a despotic monarch.

385. Thus Sweden and Norway, "two coequal kingdoms independent of each other, but linked to the same Crown," in Mr Goldwin Smith's well-chosen words, had been for centuries foreign Powers one to another, and the "grant of Home Rule" to Norway in 1814 was merely confirming rights to a foreign nation which had not until that year lost its absolute independence or been brought into subjection except by compulsion of the Powers.

386. On January 1, 1893, there appeared in the

'Times' a very powerful letter from Dr Nansen, who was then resting after his marvellous sledge journey across frozen Greenland and preparing for his great Polar Drift Expedition. This letter of his dealt with the grave political position then existing between Norway and Sweden.

387. In that letter Dr Nansen wrote :—

Your correspondent has confounded the relations between Norway and Sweden with the Irish Home Rule question. But this is totally misleading, as there is no similarity between the two cases, neither historically, nationally, nor constitutionally. . . . Juridically the union was reduced to a personal union with the Royal house, and an agreement to carry on war in common.

388. I drew attention to a portion of this letter as affording a timely lesson from Norway and Sweden in regard to Home Rule. I wrote in the 'Times' of 3rd January :—

“SIR,—In Dr Nansen's admirable letter in the 'Times' this morning there is one passage in particular of very pointed application to the Home Rule controversy, even though it clashes with Mr Gladstone's assumptions as to nationalities and their uses.

“Dr Nansen writes :—

When the Norwegians and Swedes were united in 1814 they had nothing in common as regards history or nationality. . . . The first virtue of the Norwegian people was, at the time, loyalty towards the hereditary Royal house. . . . The Treaty of Kiel could only be valid for the Norwegians in so far as the Danish king set them free from their oath

of fealty. This he had a right to do, but he had no right to compel them to be the subjects of the Swedish king. . . . [When the Powers aided] to compel the Norwegians to submit to the Treaty of Kiel, . . . this was a political crime to be compared with the division of Poland.

“The analogy is close. The northern part of the island of Ireland is inhabited by a people having with the Celtic population of the southern and western parts nothing in common as regards history or nationality. To offer to set these people free from their fealty to the closest Imperial connection may be within the competence of the Imperial Parliament. To force them to accept such an offer is clearly outside the competence of this or any other Parliament, especially seeing that their ‘first virtue is loyalty towards’ this connection. But ‘to compel them to become the subjects,’ against their will, of a new power to be set up in Dublin, differing *in toto* from them in religion, history, and nationality, would be a political crime before which even the partition of Poland must pale its ineffectual fires.

“The British empire has been slowly built up, not by stimulating the segregation and antagonism of the different local nationalities, but by promoting their willing co-operation and union. To reverse this historic course is to check us in our prosperous progress and to back us into all manner of dangers and disasters.—I am, &c.,

“GEORGE BADEN-POWELL.

“CARLTON CLUB, *Jan. 2.*”

389. How such a case can be made in any way to refer to the present position of Ireland it is impossible to see.

2. *Austria-Hungary.*

390. On April 8 Mr Gladstone states in the House of Commons:—

I will take another case—the case of Austria and Hungary. In Austria and Hungary there is a complete duality. At Vienna sits the Parliament of the empire; at Buda-Pesth sits the Parliament of Hungary; and that is the state of things which was established, I think, more than twenty years ago. I ask all those who hear me whether there is one among them who doubts whether or not *the condition of Austria be at this moment or be not perfectly solid, secure, and harmonious*,—whether or not in every minute particular, this at least cannot be questioned, that it is a condition of solidity and of safety compared with the time when Hungary made war on her—war which she was unable to quell, when she owed the cohesion of the body politic to the interference of Russian arms, and when, at the same time, she had a perfect legislative union and a supreme Parliament sitting from year to year in Vienna. What, again, was the case of Austria, where the seat of empire in the Archduchy was associated not with the majority, but with a minority of the population, and where she had to face Hungary with numbers far greater than her own.

391. To say that this speech bristles with historical inaccuracies is to use mild language. There is not, and never has been, a “Parliament of the empire” in Austria-Hungary. Nothing of the kind was ever established. To say that the condition of the dual monarchy is perfectly solid, secure, and har-

monious is simply to be blind to the most obvious and well-known facts. There never was, and is not now, "a perfect legislative union and a supreme Parliament sitting from year to year in Vienna." The "seat of empire" contains 25 millions population, as compared with 18 millions in the kingdom of Hungary. The Dual State is an alliance between an empire and a kingdom, and not the absorption of a kingdom within an empire. Yet such is the statement on which a Prime Minister relies to pass a measure of Home Rule. The "gradual extension of historical information" had evidently not reached Mr Gladstone.

392. But the case of Austria-Hungary has been pressed so prominently by Mr Gladstone and his followers that it becomes necessary to go a little more into detail. The real facts are, that in the opening years of this century Austria had lost all her constitutional government. All Austrian provinces had been stripped of their ancient institutions, and were ruled despotically by Imperial edicts from Vienna. In 1848 the revolution in Austria brought Francis Joseph to promise equality of rights to the different populations: but in writing the history of these movements Baron Pillersdorf talked of the very striking contrast of the Hungarians, one-half of the people, enjoying during many centuries a constitution and full right to participate in all legislation; and Hungary, struggling to maintain this freedom, was only brought to terms with despotic Austria by the aid of the

armed forces of Russia. And even thus Austria could only arrange matters by leaving to Hungary her ancient constitution. Indeed, the great popular leader, Szechenyi, insisted that there could never be true union between constitutional Hungary and absolute Austria: "We may perhaps be murdered, but we can never be fused into Austria."

393. Mr Gladstone's idea of Austria-Hungary is of "a perfect legislative union with a supreme Parliament sitting in Vienna, while Austria and Hungary each have their home Parliaments, and so forth." But what are the plain facts? In the first place, the two States are nearly equal:—

	Austria.	Hungary.	Great Britain.	Ireland.
Area .	116,000	125,000	81,000	32,000
Population	25,000,000	18,000,000	33,000,000	5,000,000

In the second place, each of the States has its separate Legislature and Administration. It may be interesting to note that the "common expenses" of the two States were in 1895 £13,617,000, of which Austria contributed 68 per cent and Hungary 32 per cent.

394. There is no supreme Parliament in our sense of the term, and certainly no supreme Parliament in the sense in which that term is used in either of the Home Rule Bills—that is to say, a supreme Parliament of the British empire in which Ireland is or is not to be represented. There are Delegations, the appointed representatives of the separate Austrian and Hungarian Parliaments, which go to Vienna, but hold their sittings apart

and vote apart. It is only when their decisions are at variance that they meet and vote together, but without deliberation or discussion, and the numbers of members voting must be equal for each country. These Delegations have no legislative functions whatever. Even the question of Imperial or common revenue is settled for each ten years by the positive treaty, *Ausgleich*, which determines the quota to be contributed by each country for that purpose. There are therefore none of the attributes of Parliament. There are no responsible Ministers appointed by or controlled by the Delegations, who merely represent the voice of two independent Parliaments on certain matters of common concern.

395. The one connecting-link in the constitution is the monarch, and he appoints and dismisses the three Ministers of War, Foreign Affairs, and Finance, who are the Executive of the united monarchies.

396. Thus the example of Austria-Hungary is of a union between two independent States and nationalities, neither of which was ever part or parcel of the other, or of any joint State with one supreme Parliament and administration. The Dual Constitution is in the nature not of a fusion but of an alliance for specific and definite purposes. There was no grant of Home Rule to any small portion of one kingdom—there was no grant of local autonomy; but, so far as this illustration is at all applicable, on more than one occasion, and especially

just now, the Imperial unity has been in great and grave peril, and all depends upon the strength and wisdom of the Crown, the only bond of union.

3. *Iceland.*

397. Iceland is an interesting case. It is an island more than a thousand miles from Denmark. Its population is 70,000, as compared with 2,185,000 in Denmark. Anciently a Norwegian colony, it became subject to Denmark in 1380. At the present time the great proportion of its trade is with a foreign State—viz., the British Isles, which are not 500 miles distant. Iceland has never been permitted representation in the Imperial Parliament at Copenhagen. These are all conditions the very reverse of those obtaining in Ireland.

398. During this century, and especially as prosperity slackened, the cry arose in Iceland for local autonomy, and after much discussion in 1874 the ancient Legislature was resuscitated, and the people of Iceland now meet in their Thingvalla Mote, and issue mandates to their own Diet or Althing to consider any special subject. Complete local legislation and administration was given to Iceland, and as the island is not represented in the Danish Parliament, Imperial charges, such as the Civil List, or naval and military expenses, are entirely defrayed by Denmark. The king retains a veto on legislation, and one acknowledged reason for interference is in case any Act—such as that passed in 1875, limiting fishery rights over terri-

torial waters to Icelanders — injures any other Danish subjects or is contrary to the Danish treaty obligations with foreign Powers.

399. Twelve years of this Home Rule led to the apparently inevitable “asking for more.” The Minister for Iceland was domiciled in Copenhagen, and was one of the Danish Ministry. Thus, in Lord Durham’s words as to Canada, “they made their own laws, but did not execute them.” Agitation arose claiming for Iceland actual independence in everything save the one link of the Crown, and the leaders of the movement were known to regard this as a mere stepping-stone to final and complete independence; in short, the realisation of “the right to direct their own course among the nations of the world.”

400. In brief, the grant of Home Rule has been taken as the stepping-stone to separation, and the severance of the last link binding Iceland to the kingdom of Denmark. Unfortunately the climate of Iceland seems to deteriorate year by year; and certainly poverty and distress steadily gain ground, and naturally breed discontent with the Constitution. But, as a well-qualified correspondent wrote in the ‘Times,’ the Danes were saying at Copenhagen: “Well, we can afford to part company with a distant island that contributes nothing to the State, gives us no soldiers to the army, no sailors to the navy, no cash to the Treasury, but makes us pay them instead.”

401. Thus this quoted example of Iceland is,

indeed, an example of the grant of Home Rule really more perfect and more absolute than any offered to Ireland by Mr Gladstone. But the issue has been a steady growth of the great idea of independence and separation, even though the conditions, fundamentally different from those existing in Ireland, were far more favourable to the success of the grant of necessary local autonomy.

4. *Finland.*

402. Finland is probably one of the oldest of constitutional countries. Even after its conquest by Sweden so long ago as 1150, Eric IX. gave the Finns representation in the Swedish Diet. Coming to later times, in 1808 Finland was conquered by Russia, but Alexander I. proclaimed it to be a duchy of his own, and then pledged himself to preserve its religion, laws, and liberties; and to this day Finland retains a separate army corps in the Russian army, and a separate squadron in the Russian fleet. This is, of course, no analogy whatever to the grant of local autonomy to an integral part of a United Kingdom. Finland never was represented in the Russian Imperial Parliament, for the obvious reason that no such Parliament has ever existed. Finland is a conquered country, to which the conqueror conceded its previous constitution on sufferance, but at the absolute will and disposal of an arbitrary despotism. The duchy, as Mr Goldwin Smith wrote, is absolutely in the power

of the Czar, and would be at once coerced without scruple or difficulty if it attempted to break away from the general policy of the empire, or to connect itself with any foreign Power.

403. Finland possesses a population of two and a half millions, which is one-fiftieth of the total population of the Russian empire,—more or less the proportion in which the population of the Channel Islands, as an autonomous duchy of the British Crown, stands to that of the United Kingdom. Finland when first conquered was given local autonomy, or Home Rule if you will, but with no power and no chance of obtaining any power whatever in Imperial affairs, and no hope whatever of ever imperilling the Imperial unity.

5. *Bavaria.*

404. Mr Bryce introduced Bavaria as an instance of a country equalling Ireland in population, but alien in religion so far as Prussia was concerned, and therefore comparatively in the position in which Ireland stands to Great Britain.

405. But what does history tell us in regard to assuming any grant of Home Rule to Bavaria? In the Napoleonic wars Bavaria took part first with one side and then with another. In 1796 Bavaria assisted France against the German emperor. In 1809 at Tilsit we find Bavaria accepting concessions of territory from Napoleon, and fighting well for him. In 1813 Bavaria joined the

Allies. But all through these political and politic alliances Bavaria retains her old constitution, hereditary monarchy and a representative Parliament.

406. In 1871 amalgamation into the latest formed German empire did not deprive her of any of her prerogatives or institutions, but she voluntarily took up her place, duly represented in the supreme councils of the new empire. Imperial unity in the Germany of to-day rests not on any grant of Home Rule, not even on the retention of a local Parliament, but on the voluntary combining together of several formerly independent States to create, to support, and to become parts of the uncontradicted supremacy of the truly Imperial Parliament and Government. Bavarian autonomy is the conditional remainder of a voluntarily surrendered independence. Bavaria herself is in a newly created empire obtaining full and permanent representation in the Imperial Parliament of that empire. If the instance is applicable at all, it would appear to be an instance of the very reverse of all the conditions and circumstances of the Irish case.

6. *Belgium.*

407. Mr Bryce pointed out that Belgium broke from Holland because Holland would not concede any recognition of Belgian nationality. It is therefore well worth while to give the history of Belgium more in detail.

408. The area we now know as Belgium was

under the dominion of Spain for many years. Afterwards the Ten Provinces formed part of the Austrian Netherlands, with intervals of Dutch reconquest and rule. Passing to more modern days, in 1780 Belgium revolted against the rule of the Emperor Joseph, although he had freed Belgium from the Dutch yoke, opened up the Scheldt to navigation and encouraged trade and commerce, and respected the Belgian national Parliament. Belgium revolted from this Austrian rule, although at the time Belgium was prospering well, and also in the full enjoyment of Home Rule. In 1792 all the Netherlands were conquered by France, and in 1811 annexed to the French empire. In 1813 Belgium was delivered by the Allied Powers.

409. In 1814 these Powers organised the Netherlands into one independent State with representative institutions. Holland and Belgium were placed in all respects on an equality, the States or Imperial Parliament to assemble in alternate years in Belgium and in Holland. This proposed Constitution was indeed negatived by a special Assembly of the Notables of Belgium, but it was accepted by the majority of the total votes of the common Diet of both countries, and it was ultimately adopted, the adoption being ratified on the sudden scare following upon the escape of Napoleon from Elba. The union was cemented by the battle of Quatre Bras and the heroism of the Prince of Orange. Gradually, however, causes of disagreement manifested themselves. Religious and racial differences became

accentuated; inequalities in official employment were insisted upon, and other causes of divergence arose. Meanwhile Belgium advanced in rapid strides in all industrial and commercial development and prosperity. Nevertheless, in 1830 riots were followed by revolt, and the Prince of Orange, at a specially summoned conference in Brussels, decided to offer separate administration to Belgium on the model of Sweden and Norway, in concession to violence. We may trust that Home Rulers do not regard this as one of their precedents. The council of the king at The Hague agreed, but the riots and plunder continued, and the Allied Powers were compelled to intervene, and then eventually decide that Belgium was to become a separate and independent State.

410. All this is of direct significance to Ireland, but it can hardly be said to prove that "to bring into existence local autonomy will not sacrifice but confirm Imperial unity." Still less does it show that to offer separate administration as a concession to violence and revolt results in anything but separation. Belgium, in short, affords a remarkable historical instance of separation arising out of a grant of Home Rule.

7. *Schleswig-Holstein.*

411. The case of Schleswig-Holstein is again a case of separate countries more nearly equal in population, for that group of duchies contained 1,300,000

of population as contrasted with the 2,180,000 of the kingdom of Denmark. The original union was brought about through the Crown. In 1448 Christian I. became King of Denmark, and was also elected Duke of Schleswig and of Holstein. In 1815 the "States" of Holstein came to be disaffected because their Assemblies were never convoked. In 1830 there were bitter animosities between the Danish and the older German populations, but the proposal to give separate deliberative Assemblies was rejected because Holstein demanded its old Constitution. In 1842 the desirability of uniting Schleswig to Germany was openly discussed. In 1848 and 1849 revolutions occurred, and with the aid of foreign Prussia they continued until 1852, when a new Constitution with one Parliament was set up.

412. Schleswig was more Danish than German, and did not belong to the German Confederation. Holstein was mainly German, and did belong to the Confederation. On the accession of Frederick the Seventh to the throne of Denmark, Holstein refused to take the oaths of allegiance. The forces of the Diet at once occupied the two duchies, although Prussia and Austria intervened to confine the occupation to Holstein. In the result Denmark fought Germany and was beaten, and the two duchies passed first to Austria and Prussia, and finally into the new German empire.

413. Here again, although the conditions are very different from those of Ireland, nevertheless

we have an instance of local legislative autonomy in various stages, so weakening the national unity, so gravely imperilling the imperial unity of Denmark and the united duchies, that these become a very clear case of separation and disruption following as a direct result of Home Rule.

8. *Poland.*

414. The facts as to Poland are simple, but do not appear to be generally known. The union of Poland with Russia in 1815 was made on the basis of certain stipulations which included the preservation of the national bi-cameral Parliament. It is true that the Poles openly regarded this "as a first instalment of that restitution of their ancient privileges which they hoped would one day be complete"; that is to say, they hoped this concession of limited Home Rule was merely the forerunner of complete Home Rule. For several years everything worked well, so much so that in 1820 the Czar Alexander declared that the results were so excellent he intended to extend similar institutions all over Russia. But these good intentions were frustrated. The Grand Duke Constantine as governor acted despotically, and he also found the Diets open to bribery. In 1830 there came the revolt which ended in the abrogation of the Constitution and the final crushing of Poland.

415. Here again we have a national Parliament actually conceded and actually at work, but with-

out representation in the supreme governing body—which was, indeed, impossible in this instance, as the supreme power resided in an autocratic despotism. The consequences were the suppression and extinction of this local national Parliament by the supreme Imperial Power, in which the nation concerned was not represented. It is difficult to see how the case of Poland can in any way be brought into useful or truthful comparison with that of Ireland, except that Poland did enjoy Home Rule without representation in the Imperial Parliament or Government, and this was at one time Mr Gladstone's plan for Ireland. The result was the complete annihilation of Poland as a nation or State. No doubt Poland struggled for independence as a natural consequence of her Home Rule, but eight millions of people struggling against a despotism having at its command a hundred millions simply meant national suicide, and since then Poland remains merely a province representing one-fourteenth of the great absolute monarchy of All the Russias.

416. "The last half-century," said Mr Gladstone, "is particularly rich in its experiences," with reference to Home Rule. But, as I have said, with all this boasted wealth of precedent, Mr Gladstone did not, nor did any of his lieutenants, refer to all or anything like all of those experiences of this last half of the century. It is only fair to his argument that, having explained the several experiences actually named by himself or his supporters, we

should also explain the remaining cases occurring in the last half-century.

9. *The United States.*

417. We cannot, for instance, omit the gigantic struggle in the United States. At the beginning of the century, speaking in general terms, the States of the United States represented communities fringing the coast-line, and pushing some way into the great river valleys. In each State there was complete local autonomy, with a local Legislature subject to a central authority and central Legislature supreme in certain common affairs elaborately defined by agreement from the first founding of the United States. As the nation extended itself over new areas and organised the government of new territories and gradually brought them within the dominions of civilisation, so from time to time to these territories was conceded full local autonomy by the State. These were definite concessions of Home Rule to newly formed and new forming States, but the paramount power of one supreme Legislature and Executive was the leading element in the concession, and the basis and foundation of the concession was the permanent and adequate representation of the new locally autonomous State in that supreme authority.

418. Thus although this analogy is by no means on all-fours with Ireland, the jealousy for their independence generated by this local autonomy

culminated in the most disastrous civil war ever recorded. Gigantic national efforts were made, and the actual severance of the nation into two hostile States was barely averted, and peace and union only ultimately secured by full restitution of all constitutional rights to the States which had fought in favour of separation. Mr Gladstone himself at the time, and with all the facts fresh in his mind, gave his whole-hearted support to the Separatist party in that great struggle.

10. *The Turkish Provinces.*

419. Again, it is remarkable to find that Mr Gladstone and his supporters have never mentioned in any shape or form perhaps the best known and most notorious of recent concessions of Home Rule. For the first quarter of the present century the boundaries of Turkey in Europe included an area which to-day is covered by no less than six independent States.

420. In reference to this modern instance of separation, following in most instances on the definite grant of Home Rule, I may quote what I wrote in regard to Crete in the 'Fortnightly Review' for April 1897 :—

“On the 2nd of February the Powers at last determined to send their ships into Cretan waters. On the 15th the Greek Government, in addition to its ships, sent a well-equipped military force on the plea of preserving Christian life and pro-

perty, which landed in Crete without opposition or comment by the Powers. Then the Powers decided to make joint occupation of certain towns for the protection of life and property. The next steps followed of collective and identic notes to Turkey and to Greece, which in a word forbade Turkey to send troops to Crete, called upon Greece to withdraw her forces, and proclaimed that Crete was now to have an 'effective autonomy under the suzerainty of the Sultan,' and that 'in no circumstance would Crete revert to the rule of the Sultan.'

The Concert of Europe.

421. "It is well to hold correct ideas as to what is this concert of Europe,—on what principle it is based; by what bonds held together, and with what effect.

"Cynics tell us that the principle on which it is based is simply that which actuates a band of hungry lions watching in the desert a dying buffalo—in full vigour of life quite their equal; and the concert of lions is simply the agreement of each with some of the others, not to permit any one lion to step in to seize the best portions. But these mutually jealous lions cannot prevent a jackal stealing a march upon them all.

422. "Sir William Harcourt tells us that the one basis of policy is to uphold Turkey in her integrity—to do nothing to hasten the end of the dying buffalo. Further light is shed by an examination

of the conventional bonds that hold the concert together. The Treaty of Paris in 1856 bound all the seven Powers. Its first article is a strange compact: ‘Il y aura à dater du jour de l’échange des ratifications . . . paix et amitié . . . à perpétuité.’ Its seventh article declares, ‘Leurs Majestés s’engagent à respecter l’indépendance et l’intégrité territoriale de l’Empire Ottoman, garantissant en commun la stricte observation de cet engagement.’ These are solemn treaty obligations.

423. “Now, let us turn to facts and set out the area and population of Turkey in Europe at four approximate dates:—

	Area sq. miles.	Population.
1817	218,600	19,600,000
1857 (after Treaty of Paris)	193,600	17,400,000
1878 (after Treaty of Berlin)	129,500	9,600,000
1897 (to-day)	81,200	6,300,000
(Excluding Bosnia and Herzegovina under Austrian rule)	57,000	4,700,000)

424. “What has become of the integrity of the Ottoman empire as it existed in 1856? Turkey in Europe has lost over one-half of its territory and nearly two-thirds of its population, by means of the direct action of the Powers in their ‘protection’ of Turkey in her wars with rebellious subjects in all the lost provinces and foes declaring war against her, as Montenegro and Servia in 1876 and Russia in 1877. Thus it is that the concert of Europe respects and guarantees the independence and the territorial integrity of the Turkish empire!”

425. The following table will help to keep memories green on these significant cases :—

State.	Area.	Population.	Autonomy granted.	Independence.
Roumania . . .	46,300	5,500,000	1856	1878
Servia . . .	18,760	2,315,000	1869	1878
Bulgaria . . .	24,700	2,318,000	1878	1878
{ E. Roumelia }	13,860	993,000	1878	1886
{ S. Bulgaria }				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	14,750	1,600,000	(1878 to Austria)	...
Turkey in Europe . .	66,500	4,670,000	...	...

426. Thus these provinces of Turkey, which were successively made into “an autonomous and tributary Principality under the suzerainty of the Sultan,” one and all have now become independent States separated from Turkey. Mr Parnell claimed for Ireland: “We will never accept anything but the full and complete right to arrange our own affairs and make our land a nation; to secure for her, free of outside control, the right to direct her own course among the peoples of the world.” Had he been a leader in a province of the Turkish empire his first step towards securing this national independence would have been a demand for local autonomy or Home Rule. And history tells us his judgment would have been right if his wish was separation.

11. *Brazil.*

427. It is true that Brazil is in the category of colonies situate at a great distance over the sea

from the mother-country. For many years after its first discovery and settlement, Brazil remained very closely connected with its mother-country, Portugal; but all those years the Portuguese left Brazil to work her own way in the world, and never was there any interference. During the nineteenth century, however, a change occurred. Napoleon, when he had overrun Portugal, gave orders to that State to oppose and crush the British power everywhere. Portugal boldly refused to obey. The Crown and Court and many of the leaders of the people were then driven from their own country and sought refuge in their great colony of Brazil, where they remained from 1807 to 1821. In the latter year, the mother-country being free again, her king returned, and very shortly afterwards it was sought to set up the sovereign power of Portugal over Brazil, but no steps were taken or advocated to give Brazil representation in the Imperial authority. The consequences were immediate. Brazil at once declared for separation, electing as Emperor the Crown Prince, who had been left as Regent. Thus we have a case in which local autonomy preferred positive separation to continuing under a supreme Parliament and Government in which it was not represented.

12. *Spanish America.*

428. The Spanish colonies in Central and South America were despotically ruled from the first, and

the colonies had no voice whatever in the management of their own affairs. The thirteen English colonies to the north had always been practically self-governed, free, and *quasi*-independent. They broke away from the mother-country in order to maintain this autonomy; but the Spanish colonies never enjoyed autonomy. An endeavour had indeed been made towards the end of the eighteenth century to start a new colonial policy for the Spanish empire. Mexico, Florida, Peru, New Grenada, and the States on the Plate river, and even Chili, were to be organised into separate kingdoms under Spanish princes, and a grand commercial and military alliance of all the Spanish nation was to be built up. In short, federal Home Rule all round was promised right and left in the Spanish empire.

429. But at this time the declaration of the independence of the United States fired the jealous ambition of the American Spaniard to seek autonomy, and the influences of the French Revolution were felt throughout the world of the Latin races. But the American leaders were above all things Spanish, and when the French occupied Spain Spanish America proclaimed itself loyal to Ferdinand VII., who had just been compelled to abdicate by Buonaparte. In the name of Ferdinand VII. local Parliaments or Juntas were established in Venezuela, New Grenada, Mexico, Chili, and at Buenos Ayres. They were only established when and so soon as the Imperial Parliament of the

mother-country ceased to exist, and when the mother-country was occupied by a foreign conqueror.

430. Shortly afterwards the French were driven out of Spain, and then the regency at Cadiz refused to ratify any concession in the direction of the desire of Spanish America for self-government, and determined efforts were made by the mother-country to reduce the colonies to their old subjection and to put an end to the new Juntas. These efforts were continued at the restoration of Ferdinand, and the final result was the separation of the Spanish American colonies from the Spanish nation. These colonies had, however, enjoyed no powers whatever of local self-government, still less were they represented in the national Parliament, until they established Home Rule when and because the mother-country was actually in the hands of alien invaders.

Conclusion.

431. Such then are, in brief outline, the chief characteristics of the leading cases of Home Rule—of the leading experiences of the grant of local legislative autonomy known to history. Mr Gladstone definitely stated, “There are many cases to show how possible it is to bring into existence local autonomy and yet not to sacrifice but to confirm Imperial unity.” Where are we to find these many cases? I have analysed the actual historical con-

ditions of all the cases named by Mr Gladstone himself or by his supporters, and also of all other cases in which local legislative autonomy has been brought into existence.

432. In no single case do the analogies happen to be on all-fours with Ireland. In no single case have we a country "territorially continuous"; in blood, religion, and language identical; for centuries in the closest national ties; with similar forms of local administration; and with the fullest representation in the Imperial Legislature and Executive, all of these the inseparable attributes of Ireland.

433. But in no single case has the grant of local legislative autonomy ever had any other issue than to imperil or to destroy the Imperial unity. In no single case where there had not been union before have we union as a result. In every case where there had been union before the grant of local legislative autonomy, separation and independence have been the result. The first lesson is taught by Norway and Sweden, Austria-Hungary, Denmark, Finland, Iceland; the second lesson by Belgium, Schleswig-Holstein, the United States, Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria, Brazil, and all the Spanish provinces in America.

434. Mr Gladstone has told us that these very precedents illustrate the basis and principles of his policy. His definite challenge is, "I defy any one to bring forward one single instance in which the grant of self-government has imperilled the Impe-

rial unity." But if we make a real appeal to historical information, the answer to this challenge would best be conveyed by a counter-challenge, to the effect that "we defy any one to bring forward one single instance in which the grant of self-government to a portion of a State has not imperilled or destroyed Imperial unity."

CHAPTER XVIII.

SELF-GOVERNMENT *VERSUS* HOME RULE.

435. It is a commonplace of the Irish grievance-monger that Ireland has sadly lacked the sympathy of the average Englishman; and the Irish agitator, especially when once he crosses the Atlantic, at all events, permits the idea to flourish that Ireland is a down-trodden nation, ruled despotically by the hated Saxon, and withering away in an atmosphere in which all efforts of local self-government are choked and stifled. Wherefore I republish a report I drew up in the year 1878 for a committee of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science. Apart from any value this may possess in assisting in the reform of local government in Ireland, it will serve to indicate that in those pre-Home Rule days Englishmen who busied themselves with social reforms gave attention and sympathetic consideration to the problem of the amelioration of the condition of Irishmen, and especially of the poorer among them. It will also indicate that local self-government was

at that date one of the recognised and established conditions of Irish life.

436. *Irish Poor Law Rating Areas.*

Supplementary Information to accompany Report from Joint Committee of Municipal Law Section and Economy and Trade Department of the Social Science Association.

Poor Law of 1838.—After a long series of struggles and trials, the Poor Laws of Ireland were definitely given statute form in 1838. Ireland was, by Lord John Russell's Poor Law Act of that year, divided into Unions for the administration of poor relief at the hands of Boards of Guardians. Each Union was arranged so as to be within easy distance of its central station; but each was subdivided, for rating and other purposes, into "electoral divisions." These became the ultimate units of area for Poor Law purposes in Ireland. Each elected its own guardian to represent it on the Union Board; each was chargeable with its own poor; each contributed, in addition, Union rates for the maintenance of the central workhouse and other common purposes, such as provision for lunatics and medical aid. The poor-rate was struck and collected for each electoral division. In size the divisions as a rule exceeded the average of English parishes; but they differed from the English parish in being new divisions specially marked out for the purpose, and clear of all traditionary landmarks of

divisions of property and responsibilities and claims.

437. *Subsequent Alterations.*—This scheme, promulgated in 1838, has since then undergone much alteration. The tendency of these alterations has been to follow in the steps of English experience. In England, union rating has been substituted for parish rating, though not until thirty years had elapsed after the parish had been consolidated into the Union for purposes of “local government.” The tendency has been to assimilate the Irish system to the English system in the two points of central and local control.

In regard to central control the Act of 1838 allowed of no appeal or discretionary powers either to any Central Board or to the Board of Guardians itself. Poor relief was entirely regulated by statute law. For instance, it was once for all arranged which particular classes of cases might be relieved and which not; and that there should be no relief by employment on works. But the Central Board gradually became more independently powerful; the “English Commissioners” became embodied as the “Irish Poor Law Commissioners”; and these again became in 1872 the “Irish Local Government Board”; and latterly, during the distress 1880-81, full discretion has been temporarily allowed to this Board. It is, however, necessary to watch carefully that this tendency towards centralisation do not become excessive. In Scotland complaints have become rife that the “Central Board of Super-

vision," that sits in Edinburgh, neither understands nor listens to local needs and necessities. In regard to the Boards of Guardians, they are still bound by the statute laws and regulations, and are not able to exercise those discretionary powers that give to the English Boards of Guardians their importance, responsibility, and value.

438. In regard to local control, after several changes, the latest stage has been reached in the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876. This Act, a result of an elaborate inquiry by a Select Committee (1870-71) into the whole subject, enacts that the Union is to arrange for and provide all poor relief excepting (1) applicants for *outdoor* relief, who remain chargeable on the electoral division; and (2) applicants for *indoor* relief who have resided in any electoral division for full four years of the five immediately preceding the application, and who remain chargeable on the electoral division. This Act further orders that an average rate for indoor relief for the whole Union is to be struck, and that when in any division this rate is exceeded by more than a certain percentage, the excess is to be thrown on the Union at large. Thus the tendency is to leave to the electoral division nothing but the provision and control of outdoor relief, the Union becoming the unit of area for all other purposes. There seem to be no adequate reasons for making this exception in the case of outdoor relief.

439. *Large versus Small Areas.*—For the general purposes of poor relief the bulk of argument is in

favour of the larger as opposed to the smaller and subordinate areas ; it is in favour of the total abolition of the electoral divisions in Ireland as areas of rating. The argument may be briefly summed up as follows :—

In regard to *economy of management* considerable saving is secured in the simplification of accounts and of all standing expenditure. Better organisation is possible in the paid staff, and generally by centralisation greater economy is secured in the expenses of working. On the other hand, the larger the managing body of the area, the larger the views of the duties involved ; and in such case there is the abiding danger of excessive expenditure. At the same time, by free selection over a larger area, a better type of guardians is secured, and more competent administration is the result.

The considerable danger of *jobbery* is equally present in large or small areas.

Efficiency in the *actual distribution of relief* is certainly better secured with large than with small areas. Paid relieving officers are substituted for the divisional guardians ; relief is made professional and not personal ; destitution and not locality gives the claim. There is thus obviated the undue influence of the local representative for or against his own poor ; and local knowledge and personal interest find better expression at the hands of the impartial paid agent.

Large united areas mitigate in effect the *jealous*

conflict of small subordinate divisions. Divisional guardians exhibit a natural tendency to protect the interests of their particular divisions against those of all the other divisions in the same Union. And if they seek to check expenditure for other divisions which will press upon their own, it is often only so long as they could not strike a good bargain in favour of their own division. There can be none of this self-seeking when all divisions are treated equally. There is, however, the considerable risk to be guarded against, that the larger the area the greater the tendency to generosity in relief; and that means increased burden to the ratepayer, a matter of very serious moment in so poor a country as Ireland.

440. This conflict of subordinate divisions has given rise to many evils. In Scotland serious additional burden has been thrown on the ratepayers of the Union by the constant litigation between "parishes" as to the localisation of particular paupers. And again, electoral divisions that happen to contain towns are unduly burdened in times of distress by the inrush of destitute country-people, who know that casual earnings, impossible in the country, are always possible in towns. A cognate effect is that of the disinclination of residents in some one division to provide dwellings for the labouring classes. The small area of the division renders it possible for labourers employed in it to reside outside its boundaries. Landowners and others have been known unscrupulously

to relieve the rates of their own division by refusing accommodation within its boundaries to labourers. Many evil results followed. There was a waste of energy and time involved in the distance travelled by the labourer to and from his work. The risk of relieving pauperism was shifted to innocent shoulders. And again serious impediment was set up in the way of the free migration of labour. Each small district became very jealous of any new additions to its labouring or "hand-to-mouth" population, for fear of the incidental risk of a heavier poor-rate. The consequence followed that labourers could not change their place of residence; they were prevented from seeking work elsewhere, even though none was to be obtained in their own district: in effect they became *adscripti glebæ*, and much pauperism resulted from this one cause. It is perhaps hardly necessary to add, that to remedy this very evil parish areas were abolished in England; and that the growth of this same evil was one main cause of the Land Act (Ireland) of 1870.

The superiority of large areas is shown conclusively in the *rating* itself. The burdens can be adjusted with far greater fairness. The *valuation* can proceed on more equable basis. For instance, nothing is heard of the grievance, incident to small areas existing within larger, that the divisional valuations, made separately and often by different men with different views, are not at all uniform or even. And in regard to *assessment* in a large area, variety of occupation and profits can be arranged

for. For example, it is one great grievance that at present a farmer who happens to reside within a division which contains a town, is often rated at two or three times the amount of his next-door neighbour, who happens to dwell in a purely agricultural division, though both enjoying in practice precisely the same advantages and facilities of proximity to the town. With a larger area it is found possible to classify the assessment on a more general, more generous, and more equitable basis.

441. A further question, and one that appears to be commanding more and more attention, is the amalgamation of all varieties of area into some one unit, with a view to producing entire uniformity in rating and in administration for *all* purposes of local government. For many reasons counties suggest themselves as just and practicable limits of area for *all* local purposes; and they probably present the outside limits of size to which it would be desirable to go in the units of local government. The rating for and administering poor relief would thus become one of the functions of county government.

442. *Conclusion.*—Such is a brief statement of the case as it stands at present. Actual experience has been proving that the consolidated Union area is far preferable to the subordinate dividing off into electoral divisions obtaining at the present. And this experience is gradually pressing its influence into action. There seems to be no reason why the

complete realisation of these tendencies should not be consummated without further delay.

GEORGE BADEN-POWELL.

443. It¹ is well to remember that the "saving common-sense" of the nation, as represented in Parliament, rudely awakened by Mr Gladstone's sudden and crude scheme of Home Rule, at once and forcibly asserted an independent but vigorous repudiation of so novel, so futile, and so obviously fantastic a proposal. The short breathing-space between the defeat of the bills in the House of Commons by a majority of 30 and a general election, fought out on this very subject, served only to increase the majority against such proposals to 120. Since then, and in spite of the serious but always unpopular necessity for greater stringency in the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, intelligent public opinion has steadily and surely rallied to the side of those who see nothing but evil in the crude dogma of Gladstonian Home Rule.

444. But in spite of the undenied growth of Unionist principles, there are many politicians who still believe in the Home Rule cry; and some of their number have been astute enough to sow broadcast the seeds of the pernicious fallacy that Home Rule means self-government, and that self-government means Home Rule—seed that may likely enough germinate in the hearts, if not in

¹ What follows is taken, by permission of Messrs Blackwood, from an article in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for December 1887, and a chapter in the book 'The Truth about Home Rule,' 1888.

the brains, of that section of the British electorate whose generous sympathies are not always under the control of adequate knowledge. Consequently there arises the pressing necessity of showing, on the highest authority, that Gladstonian Home Rule is the very reverse and negative of self-government—a necessity all the more pressing the more we give credence to the rumours that Mr Gladstone is more than ever determined to raise the banner of his Home Rule scheme at the earliest opportunity in the coming session.

445. On the very threshold of the problem stands the necessity for some definition of Gladstonian Home Rule. Happily we can go to the fountain-head at once. Lord Thring, who has been named the wet-nurse of the scheme, thus describes Mr Gladstone's twin bills (p. 204 of the 'Handbook of Home Rule') :—

Absolute local autonomy was conferred on Ireland. . . . The bill provided that, after a certain day, the representative Irish peers should cease to sit in the House of Lords, and the Irish members vacate their places in the House of Commons. . . . The legislative supremacy of the British Parliament was maintained, by an express provision excepting from any interference on the part of the Irish Legislature all imperial powers, and declaring void any enactment which infringed that provision; further, an enactment was inserted for the purpose of securing to the English Legislature in the last resource the absolute power to make any law for the government of Ireland, and therefore to repeal, or *suspend*, the Irish Constitution.

446. Place this most authoritative description

side by side with Mr Parnell's persistently declared policy, "to secure for Ireland, free of outside control, the right to direct her own course among the peoples of the world." It is at once evident how far it is true that the Parnellite party support Mr Gladstone's scheme, shrewdly regarding it as a stepping-stone to other things. They see that "as a practical scheme it is hopelessly impracticable"; they well know it would simply kill the existing body politic; and that citizens must pin their faith on the belief that out of their dead selves they may make stepping-stones to rise to higher things.

447. On the political side, Ireland is coolly asked to take a back seat, and to surrender all privilege of representation in that Imperial Parliament which is to remain more supreme than ever. But whether we give heed to the principles involved or to the declared wishes of the Parnellite leaders, it is indeed difficult to see how, with Lord Thring, we can confer "absolute local autonomy" on Ireland, and yet retain for the Imperial Government, as Mr Gladstone's scheme retains, all control over the police, and therefore all responsibility for law and order. In this, as in the control of the land policy and many another matter, the self-contradictory rule is to prevail, that the Imperial Parliament, in which Ireland is not to be represented, is to remain supreme in a country which nevertheless enjoys "absolute local autonomy"; and Mr Gladstone very properly tells us that "the unity of the empire rests upon the supremacy of Parliament."

448. Again, in the matter of taxation, this same Parliament is to have full and free control over customs and excise, and thus, with a vengeance, to deprive Ireland of what Liberals were used to deem a cardinal principle—"No taxation without representation." Politically, then, Mr Gladstone's Home Rule scheme reduces Ireland to vassalage, by a grudging gift of a certain measure of local autonomy in return for an absolute surrender of national freedom, and of the highest prerogatives and rights of self-government, notably those of a voice and share in imperial counsels and control.

449. Mr Gladstone is proverbially blind to expressions of opinion that militate against the cause he may happen to advocate. Mr Gladstone remains in pitiable ignorance of what the "Parnellite paymasters" resolutely and consistently demand. It would be well if Mr Gladstone could be induced to read the following resolutions, accepted with enthusiasm last August at a great gathering of these "paymasters" in Chicago:—

That any measure of self-government proposed by the British Parliament which refuses to recognise the independence from foreign control and dictation of the projected Irish Legislature would be inadequate for the relief of Ireland, and ought to be rejected by the leaders of the Irish people. That we will cheerfully sustain by every means within our reach the struggle of the Irish people for liberty and independence, so long as the Irish people remain true to the cardinal principle of Ireland's right to be a free nation.

Another resolution recorded the conviction that—

The weak compromise of so-called Home Rule, proposed by Sir G. O. Trevelyan and apparently accepted by the Liberal leaders, . . . would lower the dignity of the Irish nation, and work great injury to the cause of Irish liberty.

Mr Gladstone has yet to learn that it is not only the wicked Unionist legislators but the good Clanna-Gael paymasters who scout his pet Home Rule scheme, as insulting to Ireland, and as being impracticable, and, in its nature, an impossible compromise.

450. And yet this strange policy has attracted and continues to attract a large measure of purely *adventitious* support. Its impracticabilities have been proved to demonstration over and over again, and yet even reasoning men continue to support the scheme. Radical Gladstonites who pin their faith on representative government, not less than philanthropic Liberals who abominate all forms of political tyranny or autocracy, nevertheless support this scheme for the disfranchisement of Ireland. And the *causa motiva* is not far to seek. *Cherchez le nom*, and you have the whole story. It is all in a name. The phrase "Home Rule" bears upon the surface the meaning of local autonomy, of local self-government; and the heedless world, forgetting the important limitation implied in the word "local," accepts without further question or query the creed that Home Rule means autonomy or self-government, and that self-government means Home Rule. So wholesale a fallacy gives to Mr Gladstone's scheme its chief strength and all the real power it

wields. Mr Gladstone was indeed in luck's way when he happened upon, or, as his enemies wickedly say, purloined from Mr Parnell's vocabulary, a sounding title that in original intention contains another and a deeper meaning.

The phrase "Home Rule" means ruling your own domestic affairs. This may be a form of self-government, or it may be the very reverse. All depends upon whether or not there exists above you an Executive and Legislature in which you are not represented, but which none the less legislates and administers for you. If so, then your Home Rule means that you are a mere dependency, a subject community, inferior to, and governed by, some other community.

451. If we summarise Mr Gladstone's Home Rule, we find it involves that Irishmen are deprived of all voice in Imperial affairs; taxed by a Parliament in which they are not represented; and their laws, in such matters as they have liberty to legislate upon, made liable to disallowance by an entirely external Legislature. Mr Gladstone would fain place Ireland in a status of vassalage and subordination such as no free people has ever willingly endured, and no dependent nation ever willingly accepted. In a word, Gladstonian Home Rule means the political degradation, the fiscal slavery, and the legislative subordination of Ireland to the Imperial Parliament.

452. But a generous public, mistaking Home Rule for self-government and self-government for

Home Rule, for the moment ignores all logical and practical alternatives; and this illogical confusion of ideas still holds sway even in high places. In one single sentence, for instance, Mr John Morley explains the grounds of his Irish creed—a creed which has painfully puzzled the many who admire his genuine and brilliant literary abilities. He writes, on p. 246 of the ‘Handbook of Home Rule’ :—

The business in hand is not a theorem but a problem; it is not a thesis to be proved, but a malady to be cured; and the world will thank only the reasoner who winds up, not with Q.E.D., but with Q.E.F. To reason that a patient ought not to take a given medicine because it may possibly cause him more pain than some other medicine which he has no intention of taking, is curiously oblique logic. The question is not oblique, it is direct. Will the operation [of Home Rule] do more harm to the constitution than the slow corrosions of a disorder grown inveterate?

Possibly ere this Mr Morley has seen that, as it stands, this reasoning of his contains a fallacy well known to the schoolmen and even to schoolboys. Some of us have before now heard of cases of “un-distributed middle”; and we naturally ask, Is there no third medicine which the patient may be willing to take in place of one of two given medicines? Is there no other operation besides that of Home Rule, which, doing not harm but good to the constitution, will stay and eradicate the “slow corrosions of a disorder grown inveterate”? To argue without this completed syllogism is to bring the reasoner perilously near to

a conclusion that would in Euclid wind up, not with Q.E.D. or Q.E.F., but with Q.E.A.

453. As a matter of fact, there is an alternative. Just as Mr Gladstone's shibboleth is *Home Rule*, so is *Self-Government* the watchword of the Unionist statesmen. Self-government means that the residents in any and all parts of a nation's territory shall enjoy all the rights and prerogatives, perform all the duties, and bear all the *self-imposed* burdens which free citizens enjoy, perform, or bear. Among the most cherished and most essential of the rights and prerogatives is a voice in imposing and adjusting the necessary burdens; and among the highest and most necessary duties is the preserving intact these rights and prerogatives. Counsel, Control, and Contribution are the three C's of a free State. Mr Gladstone offers Ireland one only of the three, and reserves the other two for a Parliament in which Ireland is not represented. But self-government, which all Unionists would ensure, implies that Irish representatives shall retain full equitable voice in Imperial Counsel and Control, and especially in the adjustment of all Imperial Contributions. In regard to purely local affairs, the Imperial Parliament is nowadays only too willing to shift from its own shoulders the vexatious burden of local administration. Lord Thring and others have written learnedly on the distinctions between federal, confederate, and imperial forms of political union; but in one and all—whatever the liberties or prerogatives of localities—

all localities must be equitably represented in the sovereign councils of the nation. This is the great feature that is lacking in Mr Gladstone's idea of Home Rule, and it is the leading feature in the Unionist idea of self-government.

454. Mr Gladstone's scheme is one for the despotic rule of Ireland by another country; and Mr Gladstone has gained the support of a majority of the representatives of Ireland. But the reasons are not far to seek. Mr Gladstone, like many capable men, lives, moves, and has his being in office. Opposition to him is an atmosphere of suspended animation, and an atmosphere in which he breathes with difficulty. The general election in 1885 proved to Mr Gladstone that the Liberals were powerless against the Conservatives and the Parnellites combined. Accordingly he determined to engineer a split, and by attaching to himself the Parnellites, again to succeed to power. But in order to achieve this, he had perforce to steer between the perplexing Charybdis of Liberal secession and the obstructive Scylla of Parnellite refusal. He escaped Scylla, but became engulfed in Charybdis. Stanch Liberals sided with Conservatives to withstand this degradation of Ireland. Weak Liberals thought there must be something good behind this apparent degradation, or the Parnellites would not accept it. There was indeed something behind; but was it good?

455. The Parnellite idea is supported by three among other classes of persons, each class honest

and determined in its own policy. One class has high-flown ideas as to Irish independence; the second seeks to discredit and damage the British empire; and the third seeks, if we speak bluntly, an easy livelihood. Each class leads honest dupes in its train; and the three may be known by the titles—Separatists, Fenians, and, for want of a better word, Dollarites. Separatists regard Home Rule as a stepping-stone to independence; Fenians and Dollarites unite in rejoicing at the political degradation for Ireland involved in Mr Gladstone's scheme, for the common reason that there is thus created a new and great grievance for Ireland. The Dollarites are shrewdly clear on the point that the political agitation, which alone brings them dollars, can only thrive on some tangible grievance. The old grievance of religious tyranny has been disestablished, and there is serious prospect that the wicked landlord will soon cease to trouble. "Rackrenting" and "evictions" have for long been the "open sesame" to the hoarded earnings of the farmers in Ireland and of the servant-girls in America. Mr Gladstone speedily devised a system of dual ownership of the soil in Ireland, whereby that growth of freedom, "private property," which permits a man to own land and even to allow others to use it, was to be declared null and void. Mr Gladstone persuaded Parliament to enact that in Ireland those who were allowed by the owners to use other people's property were to become part owners of that property. This created turmoil and trouble,

specially gratifying to the grievance-mongers. But now Parliament seeks, so far as may be possible, to make amends for its misdeeds and put an end to this dual ownership; and it needs no prophet to show that in so far as this task succeeds, in so far an end is put to "rackrenting" and "evictions."

But the Dollarite must live, and he can only live by sowing some fresh crop of grievances.

456. The Dollarites and Fenians at once saw that Mr Gladstone's specific, even in its treatment of customs taxation alone, offered to Ireland all the right of rebellion and separation once asserted with success by the United States. It was equally evident that, in its treatment of police and defence questions, the scheme would absolve Ireland from all responsibility in repelling foreign invasion; and, in its denial to Ireland of any voice in the control of Imperial affairs, it would justify Ireland in sullenly standing aloof in grave national difficulties, and holding that, with no constitutional part in treaties or declarations of war, she had a right to remain neutral, even if not to become the active friend of an enemy. In addition, at every turn of the tide of material prosperity Ireland would with force throw all blame on her exacting mistress. In brief, Ireland would have a stock of material and well-founded grievances sufficient to win the sympathy of all civilised nations, and to fill the pockets of the Dollarites for centuries to come.

457. How soon such a system would bring Ireland to industrial and commercial ruin, or lead to

political separation, it is not my present purpose to determine. But, taking it at its best, it is obvious that Gladstonian Home Rule, being the very anti-thesis and negation of self-government, would be the greatest curse with which Ireland could be saddled.

458. There is another point too often overlooked. Mr Gladstone, frequently defeated as to details of his Home Rule scheme, at once seeks to cover his retreat in the confusing assertion that all he requires is that "the Irish should manage Irish affairs in Ireland." This is a well-rounded period; but if we analyse its terms we shall find ourselves at a loss as to its meaning. Before such a problem can be brought into the arena of practical politics it is necessary to define what Irish affairs can be managed by the Irish in Ireland. As a matter of fact, the most important Irish affairs are inextricably mixed up with English affairs, and can be best managed by common action between English and Irish in some one common Parliament and Government. In foreign policy, defence, taxation, maintenance of law and order, loans, credit, and other leading political matters, it is obvious that Irish affairs cannot be successfully separated from English. These are matters in their very essence common to the two islands, and they must accordingly be dealt with by some common authority.

459. And as in political, so in commercial affairs—in trade, investments, land legislation, railway control, harbours, fisheries, and so forth—there is

a close network of mutual action and advantage which ties England to Ireland and Ireland to England, and which can only be cut away to the abundant injury of both. It is a network which has become more than ever possible and essential, in consequence of the more intimate and closer intercourse that follows as steam and electricity disestablish distance and time. There remains, indeed, a residuum of purely Irish and a residuum of purely English affairs, which can best be controlled and managed by Irish and English in Ireland and England respectively. But this is a phase of the local government question which is to be dealt with next session, and which does not involve either the degradation or the separation of Ireland, but merely the reform of existing administrative machinery.

460. It is useful to remember what manner of self-government Ireland at the present enjoys. To state the case briefly: Ireland has, in the first place, even more than her fair share of representation in the sovereign Parliament of the nation. In the second place, the Irish in Ireland to a large degree manage local Irish affairs in Ireland. The cities and towns and harbours, and the county poor-law affairs, are managed by elected bodies; while, in other matters of county government, the nominated county cess system is the successful counterpart in Ireland of the quarter-sessions system in England.

461. In Ireland there is, indeed, more centralisation in regard to control of local administration

than there is in England; and the control of the police and responsibility for the maintenance of law and order rest essentially with the central authorities. Thus the problem fines itself down into possible improvements of Castle control and police management.

462. We will not here discuss either reform; but they will, no doubt, receive adequate and full consideration in that general Local Government Bill for the whole United Kingdom which is to be a main work for Parliament. It is probable that much may be done by throwing on localities a more direct and full responsibility for the local maintenance of law and order. But it may not be forgotten that much of the Castle control of local administration arises out of the fact that Government financial assistance, by way of loans and advances on the Imperial credit, is far more general in Ireland than it is in England. For instance, to the five million inhabitants of Ireland fifty-two millions sterling have been advanced in local loans, whereas to the thirty million inhabitants of Great Britain there have only been advanced fifty-five millions. It is also to be borne in mind that whereas eleven millions of these loans have been remitted to the five million Irish, only one and a half million have been remitted to the thirty million inhabitants of Great Britain; so that the Irish owe a debt of gratitude of, at the least, some eight or nine millions sterling to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom.

463. Ireland always has been, is now, and, we

fear, will continue to be, the batten-ground of agitators, who can only batten on grievances. But the agitators commit a great error in forcibly withstanding the law, though probably their error is less suicidal than that of Mr Gladstone in indorsing such conduct. The British people retain an ineradicable pride in their system of representative government, that is now so many centuries old; and the backbone of this system is the hitherto unchallenged rule, that all laws made in Parliament by the representatives of the people must be obeyed. It is strange to have to restate so elementary a truism. But it is one quietly ignored by Mr Gladstone in his latest phase of faith, and yet it is one that lies at the very root and foundation of parliamentary representative government, and it is one which the British nation will never abandon. The Blunts and O'Briens and Grahams may determine that the great majority is wrong, and that the law, being obnoxious to their superior intelligence, must and may be broken. But the majority, thinking otherwise, deal with them as with all law-breakers, and the will of the great majority of the people is a power not to be lightly interfered with.

464. Thoughtless people have asked how it is that Mr Gladstone, an ex-Prime Minister of England, continues to agitate and declaim just as though the elected representatives of the people had not decisively declared against his Home Rule scheme,—a decision emphatically indorsed by the electorate

at a consequent general election. The real reply is that Mr Gladstone had, just before, emphatically laid down the law on the subject: "We have no right to question for a moment in this free country, under a representative system, that the vast majority of the representatives speak the mind of a decided majority of the people." The time had therefore arrived, in due course of his guiding "policy of reversals," for Mr Gladstone to act in diametrical opposition to the principle he had himself enunciated. Vast majorities in Parliament, speaking the mind of a decided majority of the people, cannot for one moment be allowed to block the way to the hasty ideas of one man. The cherished sanctity of the union of Church and State, or the authority of political economy, are conveniently forgotten or banished to remote spheres if they obstruct the views of one man; and under the same provocation a similar fate awaits that cornerstone of the Constitution—representative government. Traditions, experience, polity,—all must yield to the political whims and exigencies of one individual citizen, if only the nation would allow. Happily for the nation, although it can forgive and forget a great deal, it cannot forgive and forget all; and the time arrives, and indeed is now come, when the nation is alive to the dangers that threaten, and will boldly decline to abandon its Constitution or again to intrust its destinies to one who would, without compunction, substitute for representative government one-man rule. At

bottom, the British nation is true to itself and to its brightest traditions ; and the poet of the British nation, in portraying the best British type, paints the true character of the nation :—

“ Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control ;
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power :
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncalled for), but to live by law,
 Acting the law we live by, without fear.”

465. Thus we see clearly that the Unionist cause, regarded, and rightly regarded, as the full contrary of Gladstonian Home Rule, means complete as opposed to emasculated self-government. As such, the Unionist cause will commend itself without fail to the robust citizenship of the British nation. It is true that to the week-kneed—to those who lack moral fibre—to those who seek in politics some high-priest on whom they may lean with as much emotional fervour and as little intellectual conviction as a Southern *señora* on her father confessor, or an American Indian on his gyrating medicine-man, —to these the emasculated form of self-government, perfected by Mr Gladstone’s self-deceiving ingenuity, may well commend itself. But, unless it has reached its dotage, the British public, as a whole, is morally too robust and politically too vigorous to bend the knee to any such degrading idolatry ; and in the long-run it will burst all bonds of misrepresentation and hero-worship, and, declining to abandon those political traditions and principles that have enabled it to attain its present condition of well-ordered

freedom and widespread prosperity, the nation will assert with increasing force the rights and powers of its representative institutions, and its unalterable determination to repel with consistent and triumphant vigour all proposals that assail or endanger the integrity and unity of its great empire.

DIVISION V.

CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER XIX.

CONDITIONS AND WRONG REMEDIES.

466. IN previous chapters I have gone into the necessary detail in the endeavour to bring facts and arguments into line on my main thesis that Ireland can be saved from herself, from her enemies, and from a disastrous future — but not by means of Home Rule.

467. I have quoted freely to indicate that my method and my conclusions are not creations of yesterday or to-day ; and I have, not without much heart-searching, consciously admitted repetition and reiteration, partly because the world in these days is little given to read right through a book, and much given to dip and quote copiously from very scant dips ; and partly because reiteration and repetition are great forces in this world of scurry, when we most of us attempt to do in twelve hours what should take twenty-four.

468. The economic situation and needs I placed first, because they are not only the most important but the most generally overlooked elements of the

problem. Ireland has indeed a hard fight for prosperity against agitators and faddists, official and unofficial, sordid and noble, interested and disinterested.

469. The people themselves persistently retain many remarkable habits and qualities, especially in what were originally the more Celtic portions of Ireland, and even in such purely Saxon portions as the old Pale, where is proof that the original Celts conquered the national and individual characteristics of the successive waves of invaders, Norman, Saxon, or Caledonian, by the means of intermarriage. Quite a leading trait in their character has been pithily described to me in a recent letter from Sir William Farrer:—

To my thinking, one great cause of our failure to manage the government of the Irish people has been our overlooking, perhaps our inability to grasp understandingly, a main element of Irish character—that element being their clanship, their tribal devotion, in the first place to the head of the sept, but if he fails then to some other leader; but a leader they must have. Englishmen being great Irish landowners failed to take the lead, and it fell in the second place to the priests, and when they were in a measure discredited, to the demagogues. Coupled with this clan feeling is that of the tribal ownership of the land. *We* look to personal independence and correspondingly to personal ownership; *they* to community of ownership and to dependence on their chief,—and I take it that other Celts have the same characteristics—*e.g.*, Highlanders, Bretons, &c.

470. In other parts of Ireland, in many populous centres, and in the northern parts of Ireland, habits, ideas, and customs were always very different from

what obtained among the pure Celts ; and perhaps the one big error usually made in the treatment of Ireland was the persistent endeavour to meet these peculiarities, singular to each district, by special and peculiar laws and measures devised out of the inner consciousness of those who did not know the Irish, but made to apply to all districts. In no community of men in any place or age in history has there been more conclusive evidence than is afforded in Irish history of the folly of such ignorant State interference. What Ireland has all along needed, and all along been denied, was a full measure of local and individual, civil and religious, liberty. From the days of the first Conqueror, through all the ages to the days of the last Land Bill, statesmen, strong in their own conceit that they knew best what the Irish needed,—many of them Irishmen themselves,—have laboriously and unflinchingly devoted themselves to providing for Ireland that legislation, that administration, that executive which could only result in the ruin and degradation of the people. What is plainly necessary, and always has been, is the forgotten principle of trust in the communities in Ireland to manage their own local affairs.

471. Mr Gladstone came nearest of all statesmen to realise this great principle, but he overstepped the mark in more than one fatal direction. His land legislation has been the greatest curse that ever fell upon Ireland, and his surrender to Home Rule agitators, as I have already shown in this

book, would have compassed the total ruin and degradation of Ireland had he not been thwarted, and successfully thwarted, by the stalwart adhesion of his ablest lieutenants to general Liberal principles and traditions.

472. With the exception of the illusion, his one overbearing hallucination, that his Land Acts were a blessing and not a curse to Ireland, Mr Gladstone's written address to the electors of Mid-Lothian in 1885, *while he was still a determined Unionist*, contains the most lucid and correct account of the very circumstances of Ireland with which statesmanship has now to deal. Mr Gladstone wrote :—

Those grievances of Ireland, with which we had been historically too familiar before and since the Union, have at length been happily removed. The poison of religious ascendancy, in its various forms, has been expelled from the country ; and the condition of the cultivators of the soil, constituting the majority of the people, which had been a scandal and a danger to the empire, has been fundamentally improved, at the cost of no small effort, by the action of Parliament.

But the wants of Ireland have to be considered as well as her grievances. Down to this hour Ireland has continued greatly in arrear both of England and of Scotland with respect to those powers of local self-government which associate the people, in act and feeling, with the law, and which lie at the root, as I believe, of political stability, of the harmony of classes, and of national strength. This is a serious evil ; and it is the more to be regretted, because both the circumstances and the geographical position of Ireland may appear to invest her, as a portion of the empire, with special claims to a liberal interpretation and application

of the principles which the people of Great Britain have traditionally held so dear.

Whatever be the obligations of the party now in power to those known in the existing Parliament as Irish Nationalists, the Liberals of England and Scotland will have to draw the inspirations of their future policy from a higher source, and to cast aside the recollections of party action during the last few years, which ought not to prejudice in any way any just claim of the Irish people. . . .

In my opinion, not now for the first time delivered, the limit is clear within which any desires of Ireland, constitutionally ascertained, may, and beyond which they cannot, receive the assent of Parliament. To maintain the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the empire, and all the authority of Parliament necessary for the conservation of that unity, is the first duty of every representative of the people. Subject to this governing principle, every grant to portions of the country of enlarged powers for the management of their own affairs is in my view not a source of danger but a means of averting it, and is in the nature of a new guarantee for increased cohesion, happiness, and strength.

473. As in 1885, so in all these after-years, there can be no quarrelling with Mr Gladstone's fundamental statement, that while it is distinctly no grievance, it is an undeniable "want of Ireland" if Ireland has "continued greatly in arrear both of England and Scotland with respect to those powers of local self-government which associate the people with the law."

I have detailed elsewhere what followed. Another fad had been taken to heart by a powerful statesman and put on trial. The true course of Irish history was once again interrupted.

474. But of all the economic evils under which Ireland has suffered, the Land Legislation, commencing in 1870, aggravated in 1881, and since then necessarily carried from bad to worse, has had the most direct effect in hampering progress and prosperity. The main results are simple, although none the less on that account appalling. In 1870 Mr Gladstone introduced his Land Bill for Ireland on the express plea that it would finally remove the land grievance. On September 25, 1871, he was enabled to state to his admirers at Aberdeen: "There is nothing that Ireland has asked and that this country and this Parliament has refused. This Parliament has done for Ireland what it would have scrupled to do for England and for Scotland." We now see that it has indeed *done for Ireland* what it not only would have scrupled to do, but what it would have been a criminal act to do, for England and for Scotland. In 1881 Mr Gladstone had perforce to introduce yet another final land scheme for Ireland. In 1885 he was assuring his Mid-Lothian electors of the certain success of that scheme.

475. In regard to the immorality of all this land legislation, as well as to its folly, we may well remind ourselves of Lord John Russell's strongly expressed opinions. He wrote:—

I quite admit that if Irish landlords are robbed of their property, no other kinds of property will be safe; but no man of sense imagines that the Government will be wild enough to propose such a robbery, or the House of Commons unprincipled enough to sanction it. . . . Shall we transfer

the custom of Ulster to Munster and Connaught? . . . It is by no means equitable to introduce compulsory copyhold when tenancy from year to year has been the general custom. . . . What makes Ulster rich may make Munster poorer than before.

476. In general terms Mr Gladstone's land legislation in Ireland has forced on a great area of Ireland customs of agricultural tenancy which had never existed there before or been thought of. It has absolutely abolished freedom of contract; has robbed individual owners of rights of ownership and of actual property; has abolished in Ireland the sacred right of full private ownership of land lawfully acquired; has deprived owners of land of the right to hire out the usufruct of their own land; and has set up a State despotism in all matters affecting land-ownership.

477. The folly of all this, to say nothing of its immorality, is evident in the results. Dual ownership has been created where it did not exist before, and has been made the legal status where it had never even been a free custom before. *Fixity of tenure* has given the lessee half the property in the land; *fair rents* have been interpreted in courts of adjudication to mean only lower rents, and the reductions have been out of all proportion to any fall in agricultural values; and, as was well pointed out in the 'Times,' in regard to *free sale*: "The market for land has been closed to all except such tenants as are willing to buy at their own price and with the liberal assistance of the State." This latter

assistance, if the Financial Relations Commission could have its way, means the assistance of the tax-payer of England, Scotland, and Wales.

478. Facts are worth tons of fiction. One is from my own recent experience. I was making inquiries for the purchase of an estate on which I could make a home, with special regard to good fishing and shooting in the British Isles. An excellent estate was offered in Ireland, tempting in all its accessories, scenery, climate, and sporting of every kind. There was, however, one big But! Under the Land Laws, instituted by the great Liberal party at Mr Gladstone's bidding, it was so enacted that if I bought that estate of three thousand acres I could not let any of the land without *ipso facto* parting with half my rights as owner. A parliamentary rent and permanency of tenure were the conditions to any tenant hiring any of that land. In other words, in Ireland under this upas-tree of land legislation one can no longer hire out to others the land one owns. The consequence is, that others like myself seeking to buy estates and live on them, with all the necessary and comparatively large local expenditure, avoid Ireland with its artificial dual ownership, and seek in other countries to set ourselves up homes where a man can enjoy full right for what he invests his savings in.

479. Let me give one other fact, taken from the 'Irish Times' of October 18, 1897:—

On October 15, 1897, a farm of land containing thirty-three statute acres, and held heretofore by Mr John Millar

at the yearly rent of £18, was sold by public auction in Stewartstown. The bidding was of the most spirited description, several farmers holding adjacent farms being most anxious to get the one under the hammer. Finally it was knocked down at £735 to Mr Robert May of Lower Beck. . . . Nor is it an isolated case, as several farms here within the past few months changed hands in Stewartstown district at enormous prices.

Fixity of tenure costs this farmer actually more than all he pays in rent to his landlord.

480. The result of this land legislation is twofold. On the one hand, proprietors with capital will fight shy of purchasing estates where they know they cannot let any of the land to tenants without under the law parting with half their own proprietary rights. On the other hand, tenants are vigorously competing to own the farms they till. The consequences are, that big houses are being shut up or abandoned, wealthy residents becoming scarce, and farmers who were told to complain bitterly that they were being ruined at the rents they had to pay, now find themselves owners, having, in place of mere rent and many abatements, to refund to themselves the interest on the capital value of their land, to pay *all* the rates and taxes, and also to meet the burdens of charitable, religious, and other contributions, but without any possibility of any abatement of rent or relief or other assistance from landlords, and, moreover, without any power to hire out any of the land they own to others.

481. Agriculture in Ireland will have to struggle on against all these adverse conditions. But it is

to be borne in mind that single ownership cannot possibly be substituted, with all its rights and prerogatives, for dual ownership in Ireland until Mr Gladstone's Land Laws are absolutely repealed, and until it is again made legally possible for a man to hire out to the use of others any land he has purchased without by the same act robbing himself of half the rights and prerogatives he so purchased with his hard-earned savings.

482. Little less damaging to the general prosperity than this crushing evil of Mr Gladstone's repressive land legislation is the sad tale of lawlessness which even recent years have seen dominating Irish prospects. Irresponsible and secret associations have done enormous evil to the prosperity of Ireland; and when Irish members complain that there has not been equal prosperity or equal commercial advancement in Ireland in recent years to what has taken place in Great Britain, they must know—that is, if they really understand Irish conditions—that a great deal of this backwardness is entirely attributable to the evil interference with law-abiding populations by political agitators. Not only has there been direct action at times and in places, but the indirect effect in checking enterprise, discouraging industries, and above all in scaring investors, has been a material factor in preventing the growth of commercial prosperity in Ireland.

483. Perhaps the greatest blow of all to economic advancement was the baleful Home Rule legislation, which, so long as it remained or remains possible,

effectively blocks the way to that commercial confidence without which no commercial prosperity can be hoped for or expected.

484. Another blow scarcely less severe to the general confidence has been the issue of the reports of the Financial Relations Commission. These I have dealt with *seriatim*. But although they are essentially conflicting and contradictory, where they are not ridiculous, none the less they have assisted materially in fomenting the recrudescence of all manner of false aspirations, of vague and vain hopes, and of general unsettlement.

485. There is in these reports a residuum of determinate grievance, if it can be proved that there still remain any special circumstances in Ireland which call for more abatements in taxation than those at present in full force. There is a kind of consciousness in the various reports of the Commission, even in the conspicuous absence of any unanimity or agreement, that, as Mr Childers phrased it, "the main cause of the inequality of taxation may be stated to be that tea, tobacco, and spirits, articles which the average Irishman consumes equally or almost equally with other inhabitants of the United Kingdom, are more or less heavily taxed, while the income out of which he can purchase them is very much smaller."

486. As to the fact of the alleged inequality, what proof is there that Mr Gladstone's words at Aberdeen in 1871 do not remain perfectly true in 1898?

What are the inequalities of England and Ireland? I declare that I know none, except that there are certain taxes still remaining which are levied over Englishmen and Scotchmen, and which are not levied over Irishmen—(cheers and laughter)—and likewise that there are certain purposes for which public money is freely and largely given in Ireland, and for which it is not given in England or Scotland. (Cheers.) That seems to me to be a very feeble case indeed for the argument which has been used, by means of which, as we are told, the fabric of the United Parliament of this country is to be broken.

487. The inequalities thus defined by Mr Gladstone might indeed be levelled up. But if the average income of a man in Ireland is unable to bear its share in the common taxation, is there not much to be said for the view that the best thing to do is to enable him to earn more income? We may indeed inquire into the whole of this question of relative abatements, but the inquiry is, as it were, a two-edged dissecting-knife. There are wage-earners with a doubtful margin of income over necessaries in far greater number in Great Britain than in Ireland, and many of them are Irish. The first principle of taxation is to be just in regard to all the contributories.

488. John Stuart Mill wrote well in 'Representative Government':—

No Irishman is now less free than an Anglo-Saxon, nor has a less share of every benefit, either to his country or to his individual fortunes, than if he were sprung from any other portion of the British dominions. . . . There is now next to nothing except the memory of the past and the difference in religion to keep apart the two races, perhaps

the most fitted of any two in the world to be the complete counterparts of one another.

489. As we have seen, to act as if Ireland was or could be a separate fiscal entity is to fly in the face of the Act of Union and all administrative and legislative measures during this century. To acknowledge relative taxable capacity by area is to set up a principle in taxation which has no visible limits, and can only issue in the hopeless multiplication of areas with claims to be considered less able to bear taxation than their fellows. All such false leadings tend towards separation and antagonism and rivalry, in the place of that union, co-operation, and friendship which are without doubt most conducive to industrial and general prosperity.

490. But all I have set out in the book amply proves that Ireland has still one crying need, and one we should do our best to remedy. Neither individuals nor localities in Ireland have as yet that full measure and share in the administration of their local affairs which braces up a people to mind its own business successfully.

491. When we come to consider the remedies proposed for Ireland's ills, we find far too generous, because far too unheeding, has been the tendency of liberal-minded men to attribute to Mr Gladstone's Home Rule scheme the quality of "satisfying the needs of Ireland." Mr Gladstone had written in November 1887, "This controversy, and even the recollection of it, will gradually die away

with the certain triumph of Home Rule." Nevertheless, in 1898 we look in vain for the triumph of Home Rule so confidently predicted by Mr Gladstone in 1887. But we cannot admit that the controversy has in any sensible degree as yet died away. Indeed, the most trusted leaders of one of the remnants to which the Home Rule policy has reduced the once great Liberal party—viz., Mr Morley and Mr Asquith—still place Home Rule right in the forefront of their programmes.

492. It is true that in the autumn of 1897 at Derby there was promulgated what I would term the Programme of Despair,—a programme which abandoned definitely all constructive policy of a Radical character, on the plea that nothing of the kind would ever commend itself to or be successful under the British Constitution as it stands constituted; a programme which confines itself simply to creating another kind of Constitution for the United Kingdom in the Micawber hope that something might turn up to the Radical advantage if such a revolution could be brought to pass; a programme remarkable in itself as the first Radical programme for twelve years which omits any mention whatever of Home Rule.

493. But the Derby congregation of theorists at every by-election since that date have had to yield to the local exigencies of conciliating the much-needed Irish vote. One after another, Radical candidates are forced to their knees by this dire Irish necessity. At York the candidate has in all

humility and under compulsion of Mr Dillon to apologise for having left Home Rule out of his address, and to declare it to be the chief plank of his platform. At Plymouth and elsewhere the Radical candidates deliberately nailed their colours to something more definite than the mere idea of Home Rule, for they actually professed allegiance to Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. Which one of the three contradictory bills is the bill of their choice we are not told, but the bills remain to this day very live factors in Radical electioneering politics, and it is for this one and urgent reason that I have endeavoured now to stereotype the main features of the Home Rule controversy, feeling that in each by-election as it occurs there is necessity for informing the public mind correctly on this Irish problem.

494. It is perhaps as well that in the twin bills of 1886 and the separate bills of 1893 we have reduced to black and white the final attempts of the uncontrolled genius of Mr Gladstone to settle this mighty Irish question. In black and white we thus have recorded the only schemes as yet devised by the wit of any responsible statesman to establish Home Rule for Ireland. But, as I have shown in detail, it matters not which of the three Home Rule Bills we accept as our standard. Each one of them in its degree proposes not to honour but to degrade Ireland to an inferior and tributary position. In the one case Ireland is to be excluded from the Imperial Parliament, which

none the less retains its supremacy; in the other case the bill saddles Ireland with the payment of a tribute in the shape of one-third of its public revenue, and imposes upon Ireland the collection in Ireland by and for the Imperial authorities of all duties of Customs and Excise. No such arbitrary and autocratic rule, the direct negation of representative government, would or could for one moment be permitted in any truly British community.

495. It is indeed impossible for those who have practical experience of the systems of raising revenue and controlling expenditure to treat seriously the wild inchoate financial proposals necessary to, and to be found in, all the three Home Rule Bills. Certainly in this case necessity was the mother of many an invention. I cannot resist one more instance by simply quoting verbatim Mr Gladstone's proposal in clause 19 of the 1893 bill:—

If the Irish post office revenue is less than the Irish post office expenditure, the deficiency shall be paid to the Exchequer of the United Kingdom out of the Irish Exchequer; but if it is more, the excess shall be paid as part of the expenses attending the execution of the Post Office Acts, and shall form part of the special revenue of Ireland.

There is enough in this one enactment to set the authorities of the two countries by the ears for all time.

496. As the real issue is often lost sight of in the strain of election speeches and party strife, it may

be well once again to point out in the simplest terms how unfounded and how fallacious is the argument common on Separatist platforms that the opponents of Home Rule necessarily are the opponents of self-government in Ireland. As a matter of fact, Unionism, and especially that side of it which is Conservative, always was and yet remains identified with self-government in its complete manhood. Separatism, if it abides by Mr Gladstone's schemes as defined and set out in his three Bills, upholds at best a self-government deprived of its highest prerogatives.

497. I have also shown that there is no analogy or precedent in any country or period which holds out any hopes that such a scheme could be successful, and would not imperil, and indeed destroy, Imperial unity.

498. I would only add that very special attention may well be given to the true colonial analogy. In Canada, local and independent legislatures—Home Rule, in fact—squabbled so amongst themselves that no hope whatever remained for Canada until Lord Durham was enabled to introduce the great policy of union; and since the passing of the Act of Union of 1867, the Canadian United Provinces have given the greatest possible historical proof of the advantages of the closest union supervening upon Home Rule in the neighbouring portions of one State. In Australia, the essentially practical and business-like statesmen of the six communities, through force of circumstances living under separate

Home Rule systems, are certainly and keenly plotting and planning a closer form of union which will, it is undeniable, be consummated at no very distant date. In South Africa it has long been held that union among the States of that State system, each of which now revolves in its own orbit of Home Rule, is the one salvation which all would welcome. In regard to the West Indies, the Royal Commission on Administration and Finance in 1882-84 argued and reported very strongly in favour of closer union among those distracted islands and settlements, each labouring under the burdens of separate legislative and administrative systems. It is true that the official neglect of these recommendations has permitted very evil days to fall upon our fine West Indian Colonies; but the remedy of each of the West Indian misfortunes might be found in some Act of Union which shall do away with the many evils incident to separate legislatures and administrations, and separate financial and fiscal systems, in adjacent States whose closer union is quite possible. The true lesson of the colonial analogy is all in favour of closer legislative and administrative union for all communities which are geographically contiguous or adjacent and remain under one flag.

499. Moreover, these great groups of colonies are moving actively and of their own proper motion in the direction of closer union one with another and with the mother-country. Without doubt the wise tendencies of the times are against segregation and in favour of combination, against the multiplication

of legislative and other authorities and in favour of their unification. This is the true and clear lesson taught if we appeal to our rich and significant colonial experience.

500. Thus, in the single desire to give to Ireland a fuller measure of and share in the administration of her local affairs, we can proceed with the greatest confidence of doing good if we thrust aside all policies of Home Rule or the creation of separate legislatures and separate fiscal entities, and all the paraphernalia and ambitions of the Separatists, and work on the lines so successfully adopted in the mother-country and in the colonies, which tend to create greater cohesion, closer ties, and a wider extension of absolutely equal laws, equal responsibilities, and equal opportunities.

CHAPTER XX.

THE TRUE REMEDY.

“ We are all, every man, every woman and child among us, convinced that it is the will of Providence that these islands should remain united together as one United Kingdom.”—Mr GLADSTONE, Edinburgh, Nov. 9, 1885.

501. MR JOHN MORLEY holds out the threat that “ whatever the present Government may do in the way of improved self-government in Ireland, there will still remain the necessity to satisfy the larger demand.” As I have shown, the larger Irish demand which looms in Mr Morley’s mind is the entirely reactionary and out-of-date movement towards segregation and separation. Others of us are so confident that the course of affairs is in precisely the opposite direction, that we shall be content to compel whatever Government is in office “ to improve local self-government in Ireland ” until it reach Mr Gladstone’s admirable definition, “ bind together the three nations by the indissoluble ties of liberal and equal laws.”

502. In Mr Morley’s words, how are we to

“improve local self-government in Ireland”? The old and popular division of the functions of government under the three heads, legislative, executive, and administrative, serves well the purpose of explanation. In colonies, whether it be, as I have myself seen, in the small Virgin Islands, in vigorous Victoria, or in the great Canadian Dominion, these three guiding divisions equally hold good, and they apply equally in the United Kingdom. Legislative and executive functions are the attributes of the supreme authority; the administrative are often best placed in the hands of local authorities. The administration of local affairs by the localities, under special statutory limits and with special statutory privileges, is not only compatible with the highest and best forms of union, but to my mind absolutely essential thereto. On the other hand, the very greatest circumspection is necessary, in any grant of administrative autonomy, not to part with or impair the central legislative or executive authority, because that would imply a dissolution of union.

503. The only real basis of lasting and profitable union is to keep intact the legislative and executive prerogatives of the central authority. The mere delegation, partial though it be, is a danger in itself. But just consideration for each class or district or interest is not only a possibility but a duty, and the first duty of every supreme authority.

504. Lord Randolph Churchill, not long after

Mr Gladstone had so bitterly attacked him for aspiring to "an unholy alliance with the Parnellites," expressed in a letter to Mr William Young of Glasgow, dated the 7th May 1886, views that might be well held and respected in these days. He was writing on the subject of "Home Rule, as Repeal is called at the present day," and he said:—

The essence of legislative union is similarity of institutions and of laws for all three countries. Scotch habits and customs with regard to comparatively small matters have required in the past, and may require in the future, special treatment. . . . In like manner Irish habits and customs may from time to time call for exceptional legislative treatment.

If Lord Randolph Churchill had added to his last sentence, "In like manner English and Welsh habits and customs may from time to time call for exceptional legislative treatment," he would have made a complete statement of the case. What we must aim at is similarity of institutions and of laws for all the three kingdoms.

505. In legislative affairs such similarity can only be secured by the influence of a single legislature paramount over all three kingdoms. It is obvious that a single supreme executive is a necessary corollary. For this reason the existence of the Lord Lieutenant and the whole of the Castle organisation in Ireland has always seemed to me to be out of place, and a substantial obstacle to the consummation of perfect union. The Scotch

have combined with the English because no such phantasmic semblance of separate executives has been for ever present before their eyes. Nor may it be forgotten that there have been many provincial capitals in the history of these islands ever since, and indeed before, the Heptarchy. The Gaels of the West country have held to their social centres up to this century. York, Bristol, Liverpool, and other cities can tell of a time not long departed when London was no metropolis to them. The Duchy of Lancashire and the Duchy of Cornwall still claim much that is strictly local in administrative affairs; and there are other examples all combining to show that the tendency of all things nowadays is towards combination and not towards separation.

506. The Irish agitators base one cry for Home Rule on the specious statement that the only right the Irish members have in the Imperial Parliament is the right to be in a permanent minority. But even so they must perfectly well understand that if the Irish members were united, which they never have been, a body of 103 members speaking with one voice would on all important occasions and for all practical purposes be the controlling power over the two main opposing parties of the Outs and the Ins which always exist in any House of Commons. Apart from this, however, whenever a partnership is entered upon, each partner in a certain degree limits his own independence of action. This is the price he pays for the assistance and support of his

partner. Ireland may say, "But I do not wish for the partnership." She has not been fool enough to say so yet. Of her four and a half millions of population certainly more than two millions, and they the more prosperous and wealthy, have always been dead against any separation of partnership. Again, the chief plea put forward by Mr Gladstone is that we must work by the majority, as shown by the majority of the Irish members, and that if the majority of her constitutionally elected representatives are in favour of separation, separation should be granted. But the same logic holds good with the superior majority in the whole of the House of Commons, or even in its various sections. Mr Redmond, for instance, and his colleagues do not bow the head of allegiance to Mr Healy because he has 27 followers to their 11; nor does Mr Healy submit to Mr Dillon because the latter claims to have 42 followers. If majorities are to rule, *in primis* the majority of the whole House of Commons must rule all that House. Still more is it true that if majorities are to rule, the majority of the whole Parliament must rule in regard to all national affairs.

507. It is undeniable that Ireland has just as much power in the House of Commons as any like area of the United Kingdom—that is, just as much or more power in the making of her own laws. Dr Freeman once put it that "Ireland cannot expect justice from the Imperial Parliament because her members are in a minority." But on such reasoning, why should Lancashire, or Scotland, or London,

or Ulster, or any other portion of the United Kingdom, expect justice from Parliament? The mere statement of this issue illustrates the essential fallacy it contains. If you have representative government at all, any class or area that is less than one-half of the whole must be in a permanent minority. It is a primary condition of equal representation, and can only be advanced as an argument against the constitution of such a legislative or executive authority on the plea that separation is the only alternative.

508. It is difficult to make final categories for public affairs. It is possible always to divide off extra-national from national affairs. The former must be the business of the country as a whole. War and peace and diplomacy and treaties and all dealings with other independent States must be handled by some central Imperial authority. And in the United Kingdom of to-day we have in addition the duties and responsibilities of a world-wide empire which for similar reasons must be the care and charge of a central Imperial authority. Thus for all affairs outside the United Kingdom the Imperial Parliament, representative of all portions of the United Kingdom, and its strong arm, 'an Imperial Executive, are absolutely indispensable.

509. When we turn to national affairs, we face a highly complex problem if we endeavour to separate local or municipal from general or common affairs. Any legislative, executive, or administrative acts which affect more than one locality, or

individuals in more than one locality, at once rise above purely municipal or local affairs.

510. Thus the upholding of the law, the maintenance of the Queen's peace, the whole ramifications of raising revenue and arranging for local expenditure, seem at the first to belong to the category of national as opposed to municipal affairs, inasmuch as they affect intimately the affairs and interests of residents in different areas.

511. If we turn for a last review to financial relations, we have an excellent case in point. Mr Gladstone's acknowledged financial genius very speedily discovered that any scheme of Home Rule necessarily involved financial separation. He therefore appointed a Commission, three-quarters of which were ardent supporters of Home Rule, for the express purpose of determining what were the principles on which such necessary fiscal separation could be carried out. The evidence and arguments well serve to recall public opinion to the central points. So far as the legal position is concerned, fiscal separation is only possible if you repeal the Act of Union and the consequential Acts, such as that of 1816. Nothing could be plainer or more distinct than the third of the Resolutions which formed the basis of this latter Act:—

Legislation is needed to carry into further effect the purposes of the said Act of Union by consolidating the public revenue of Great Britain and Ireland into one fund, and applying the same to the general purposes of the United Kingdom.

This was the guiding principle with Mr Gladstone when he extended the income-tax to Ireland in 1851, and assimilated the spirit dues of the two kingdoms in 1853 and 1860.

512. The grave problem of contributions from respective areas to the Imperial expenditure was happily solved for the United Kingdom by these several Acts of Parliament early in this century. Lord Beaconsfield did indeed foresee in the wider field of an extending empire that the same difficulty would arise when in the true course of history the Colonies and the mother-country came to make efforts in common, and thus to develop the necessity of making contributions in common; and this difficult problem is one that is now being actively debated and considered in all our great self-governing Colonies. The Australians already contribute towards the support of a squadron of the Imperial Fleet; the Cape Colony has expressed its wish and intention to pay for a battleship (much as Barbadoes in the olden times of prosperity presented George III. with a frigate); Canada now wishes to take further steps in the maintenance of her very efficient militia defence forces. Thus the question of contribution to the general service of the empire becomes the first of the questions for the Colonies when they seek closer union. Contributions to Imperial expenditure is the first step upwards and towards ultimate closer union, just as with Irish Separationists this question of avoiding Imperial contribution becomes the first

step downwards and away from union towards separation.

513. This question is and must be kept quite distinct from the practically administrative problem of the allocation of State revenues for State purposes. For the United Kingdom there are Imperial expenses to meet demands affecting either our trade or our interests or our position or our relation with foreign States outside the United Kingdom. Such are the army and navy and diplomatic establishments.

514. In addition there are national expenses equally serving all residents within the United Kingdom, such as the maintenance of the Crown, of Parliament, and of courts of Justice, of law and order, of education; and including such comparatively minor matters as land legislation, mintage, marriage, and other national concerns and interests. There are also national expenses for localities, such as aids to local burdens, the relief of exceptional distress, and other matters which, although directly affecting some one locality, are rightly the care of the whole kingdom. Lastly, there are the actual local expenses for strictly local affairs.

515. It is, of course, well to recognise that the classes or categories above set out must needs overlap one another on occasion. Thus the army and navy are often utilised even directly for strictly local purposes, as in quelling riots or in relieving distress. Again, localities, when for any reason large bodies of soldiers or sailors are congregated

in them, benefit very greatly by the large expenditure of the Imperial resources incident to the presence of those forces. In endless other ways these demarcations overlap. But it is well to bear in mind their general characteristics, and to acknowledge that in arranging for local revenues and local expenses special circumstances must be fully considered, and that no hard-and-fast lines can be drawn which will suffice absolutely for each individual case.

516. As an instance, in Ireland there are a variety of sources of purely local revenue in active operation at the present time. Rates and dues are levied under a variety of systems; and there are even certain towns, like Carrickfergus, Cashel, Drogheda, Kells, Belturbet, Calland, Trim, and Kilkenny, where the municipal revenues are largely, and in some cases wholly, derived from landed property; while the Corporations of Waterford and Wicklow possess so much corporate property that ordinary municipal rates are unnecessary. I give these instances to indicate that in Ireland, as elsewhere, local revenues other than rates may often be made to suffice for local expenditure, and that in all such cases, as I have said, special circumstances need special treatment.

517. In instituting Local Government, much may be accomplished by means of the devolution of duties and responsibilities to lighten the load placed upon any central authority. The ordinary functions of administration can be readily and fully

conceded to localities, and the cost of them made to depend entirely upon local resources. In the long-run the residents in the district of all classes will come to terms as to what scale of expenditure is best, and they must be left with no excuse for appeals outside, and compelled, in homely phrase, to "cut their coat according to their cloth."

518. As much as possible is it desirable to group the various administrative functions under one local council in one given locality, and to prevent the multiplication of authorities within that area. The preservation of law and order is a duty I would cast entirely on the localities, with of course the ultimate sanction of Imperial forces. I am confident that in Ireland the innate sense of responsibility, and the acknowledged liability of the district to make good all losses due to breaches of law and order and failures to protect property or person, would do more to firmly establish law and order than any other course which can be recommended or has ever been tried. Treat lads as men, and they at once accept the responsibilities; treat lads as schoolboys, and they resent and rebel. The ultimate Imperial responsibility is not in the least impaired by the delegation of this duty, in the first instance, to the localities. The beadle and the constable have long sufficed for all ordinary occasions in England and in Scotland. They are known to be the official representatives of all the strength and power of the State. I have the most implicit confidence in throwing all

possible responsibility on localities in administrative affairs.

519. But, as we have seen, this local political life can only exist in an atmosphere of freedom and liberty, and this alone is assured by a paramount and single Imperial Legislature and Executive. Extend to Ireland by all means every possible form of local administration analogous to those prevailing in England and Scotland and Wales, but do nothing to impair or limit or interfere with the central sovereign authority of these realms in all matters of legislative and executive duties by which, as an ultimate result, the Queen's peace is maintained and the laws of the land upheld.

520. In conclusion, I recall the quotation on the title-page of this book, *Ἱερνὴ καὶ Ἀλβίων Βριττανικαὶ λεγόμενα*. The Lord Chief-Justice and many other equally competent advisers of the State often insist on speaking of Irish and British interests as being something opposed to and distinct from each other. The question may be asked, Why apply the term Great Britain habitually to Scotland and England and Wales, and habitually ignore the necessary counterpart—a Lesser Britain? Both islands are and always have been the British Isles. The Scotch are properly and perseveringly jealous of their claim to a share in the national title. To deny to Ireland her share in this historic national title is to endeavour to separate her from her larger sister island. If history can be read without the intervention of Home Rule spectacles, the distinction between Irish

and British will be found to be without warranty of any kind. Through all history of which we have any record, there have been two main islands, a lesser and a greater, always known as the British Isles. In recent, in modern, in medieval, and in ancient history these twin islands have been associated together as the British Isles—*Βριττανικαὶ λεγόμενα*. The distinction between Irish and British has been erroneously and heedlessly substituted for the original and proper distinction between Ireland and England. If we look to the titles of our sovereigns, we see true history correctly illustrated. Henry VIII. was crowned “*Angliæ Franciæ et Hiberniæ Rex.*” Spenser dedicated his ‘*Fairy Queen*’ to Elizabeth, “*Empress of England, of Ireland, and of Virginia.*” James I. was “*King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland.*” In 1702 Queen Anne was styled, after the Union with Scotland, “*Queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland.*” Under the Act of Union in 1801 George III. becomes “*Britanniarum Rex,*” or “*of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, king.*” The Sovereign of these realms remains “*Britanniarum Regina*”—“*Queen of the British Realms*”—with no specific mention of Greater or Lesser Britain, or of Wales, Scotland, Ireland, or England. All are and remain *British*.

521. In summary, then, we find that at last the opportunity has come for Ireland to enter upon a course of peaceful and prosperous progress, prom-

ising greater content, greater happiness, greater wellbeing to every individual resident.

In 1798 twenty years of legislative independence—of Home Rule—in Ireland had culminated in disastrous rebellion.

In 1898, one hundred years of fitful and often experimental treatment on a variety of bases, ranging from coercion to paternal charity, have, by process of elimination, brought us to see clearly the dawn of a new era. Many of those who are correctly informed in history as well as in affairs are led to hope that peace and prosperity may at length be permanently established in Western Britain, in Ireland, on the basis of a genuine and honest administration of localities by localities for localities, as closely as possible analogous to the systems which have proved so successful in Eastern Britain—in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Let us thus assure to Ireland that true liberty and equality and fraternity which produce the best *Economic* conditions for all forms of industry and enterprise. Let us have no false issues in so-called *Financial* relations, but set up a fiscal system just and equal to all residents in all parts of the United Kingdom. Let us in *Politics* endow Ireland with as full and free local administration as is enjoyed by the sister kingdoms.

But, in all things and before all things, let us preserve inviolate the one supreme legislative and executive authority of a United Nation—the only guarantee of true liberty for Ireland as

for all other component portions of the United Kingdom.

Loyalty to these great principles, activity in these measures, will save Ireland from herself, save her from her enemies, and save her from a future of disaster.

GOD SAVE IRELAND!

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