









# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER

- INTRODUCTION
- I. THE COLONIZATION OF IRELAND AND AMERICA
- II. REVOLUTION IN AMERICA AND IN IRELAND
- III. GRATTAN'S PARLIAMENT
- IV. THE UNION
- V. CANADA AND IRELAND
- VI. AUSTRALIA AND IRELAND
- VII. SOUTH AFRICA AND IRELAND
- VIII. THE ANALOGY
- IX. IRELAND TO-DAY
- X. THE FRAMEWORK OF HOME RULE
  - I. The Elements of the Problem
  - II. Federal or Colonial Home Rule
  - III. The Exclusion or Retention of Irish Members at Westminster
  - IV. Irish Powers and their Bearing on Exclusion



XI. UNION FINANCE

I. Before the Union

II. From the Union to the Financial Relations Commission of 1894-1896

III. The Financial Relations Commission of 1894-1896

XII. THE PRESENT FINANCIAL SITUATION

I. Anglo-Irish Finance To-day

II. Irish Expenditure

III. Irish Revenue

XIII. FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

I. The Essence of Home Rule

II. The Deficit

III. Further Contribution to Imperial Services

IV. Ireland's Share of the National Debt

V. Ireland's Share of Imperial Miscellaneous Revenue

VI. Irish Control of Customs and Excise

VII. Federal Finance

VIII. Alternative Schemes of Home Rule Finance



XIV. LAND PURCHASE FINANCE

I. Land Purchase Loans

II. Minor Loans to Ireland

XV. THE IRISH CONSTITUTION

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

INDEX



## INTRODUCTION

My purpose in this volume is to advocate a definite scheme of self-government for Ireland. That task necessarily involves an historical as well as a constructive argument. It would be truer, perhaps, to say that the greater part of the constructive case for Home Rule must necessarily be historical. To postulate a vague acceptance of the principle of Home Rule, and to proceed at once to the details of the Irish Constitution, would be a waste of time and labour. It is impossible even to attempt to plan the framework of a Home Rule Bill without a tolerably close knowledge not only of Anglo-Irish relations, but of the Imperial history of which they form a part. The Act will succeed exactly in so far as it gives effect to the lessons of experience. It will fail at every point where those lessons are neglected. Constitutions which do not faithfully reflect the experience of the sovereign power which accords them, and of the peoples which have to live under them, are at the best perilous experiments liable to defeat the end of their framers.

I shall enter into history only so far as it is relevant to the constitutional problem, using the comparative method, and confining myself almost exclusively to the British Empire past and present. For the purposes of the Irish controversy it is unnecessary to travel farther. In one degree or another every one of the vexed questions which make up the Irish problem has arisen again and again within the circle of the English-speaking races. As a nation we have a body of experience applicable to the case of Ireland incomparably greater than that possessed by any other race in the world. If, from timidity, prejudice, or sheer neglect, we fail to use it, we shall earn the heavy censure reserved for those who sin against the light.

For the comparative sketch I shall attempt, materials in the shape of facts established beyond all controversy are abundant. Colonial history, thanks to colonial freedom, is almost wholly free from the distorting influence of political passion. South African history alone will need revision in the light of recent events. When, under the alchemy of free national institutions, Ireland has undergone the same transformation as South Africa, her unhappy history will be chronicled afresh with a juster sense of perspective and a juster apportionment of responsibility for the calamities which have be-

fallen her. And yet, if we consider the field for partisan bias which Irish history presents, the amount of ground common to writers of all shades of political opinion is now astonishingly large. The result, I think, is due mainly to the good influence of that eminent historian and Unionist politician, the late Professor Lecky. Indeed, an advocate of Home Rule, nervously suspicious of tainted material, could afford to rely solely on his "History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century," "Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland," and "Clerical Influences," [1] which are Nationalist textbooks, and, for quite recent events, on "A Consideration of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century," by Mr. G. Locker-Lampson, the present Unionist Member for Salisbury. A strange circumstance; but Ireland, like all countries where political development has been forcibly arrested from without, is a land of unending paradox. It is only one of innumerable anomalies that Irish Nationalists should use Unionist histories as propaganda for Nationalism; that the majority of Irish Unionists should insist on ignoring all historical traditions save those which in any normal country would long ago have been consigned by general consent to oblivion and the institutions they embody overthrown; and that Unionist writers such as those I have mentioned should be able to reconcile their history and their politics only by a pessimism with regard to the tendencies of human nature in general, or of Irish nature in particular, with which their own historical teaching, founded on a true perception of cause and effect, appears to be in direct contradiction.

The truth is that the question is one of the construction, not of the verification, of facts; of prophecy for the future, rather than of bare affirmation or negation. No one can presume to determine such a question without a knowledge of how human beings have been accustomed to act under similar circumstances. Illumination of that sort Irish history and the contemporary Irish problem incontestably need. The modern case for the Union rests mainly on the abnormality of Ireland, and that is precisely why it is such a formidable case to meet. For Ireland in many ways is painfully abnormal. The most cursory study of her institutions and social, economic, and political life demonstrate that fact. The Unionist, fixing his eyes on some of the secondary peculiarities, and ignoring their fundamental cause, demonstrates it with ease, and by a habit of mind which yields only

with infinite slowness to the growth of political enlightenment, passes instinctively to the deduction that Irish abnormalities render Ireland unfit for self-government. In other words, he prescribes for the disease a persistent application of the very treatment which has engendered it. Whatever the result, there is a plausible answer. If Ireland is disorderly and retrograde, how can she deserve freedom? If she is peaceful, and shows symptoms of economic recuperation, clearly she does not need or even want it. In other words, if all that is healthy in the patient battles desperately and not in vain, first against irritant poison, and then against soporific drugs, this healthy struggle for self-preservation is attributed not to native vitality, but to the bracing regimen of coercive government.

This train of argument, so far from being confined to Ireland, is as old as the human race itself. Of all human passions, that for political domination is the last to yield to reason. Men are naturally inclined to attribute admitted social evils to every cause—religion, climate, race, congenital defects of character, the inscrutable decrees of Divine Providence—rather than to the form of political institutions; in other words, to the organic structure of the community, and to rest the security of an Empire on any other foundation than that of the liberty of its component parts. If, in one case, their own experience proves them wrong, they will go to the strangest lengths of perversity in misreading their own experience, and they will seek every imaginable pretext for distinguishing the case from its predecessor. Underlying all is a nervous terror of the abuse of freedom founded on the assumption that men will continue to act when free exactly as they acted under the demoralizing influence of coercion. The British Empire has grown, and continues to grow, in spite of this deeply rooted political doctrine. Ireland is peculiar only in that her proximity to the seat of power has exposed her for centuries to an application of the doctrine in its most extreme form and without any hope of escape through the merciful accidents to which more fortunate communities owe their emancipation. Canada owes her position in the Empire, and the Empire itself exists in its present form to-day, owing to the accident that the transcendently important principle of responsible government advocated by Lord Durham as a remedy for the anarchy and stagnation in which he found both the British and the French Provinces of Canada in 1838,

did not require Imperial legislation, and was established without the Parliamentary or electoral sanction of Great Britain. Lord Durham was derided as a visionary, and abused as unpatriotic for the assertion of this simple principle. Far in advance of his time as he was, he himself shrank from the full application of his own lofty ideal, and consequently made one great, though under the circumstances not a capital, mistake in his diagnosis, and it was to that mistake only that Parliament gave legislative effect in 1840. By one of the most melancholy ironies in all history Ireland was the source of his error, so that the Union of the Canadas, dissolved as a failure by the Canadians themselves in 1867, was actually based on the success of the Anglo-Irish Union in repressing a dangerous nationality. Did the proof of the error in Canada induce Englishmen to question the soundness of the precedent on which the error was based? On the contrary, the lesson passed unnoticed, and the Irish precedent has survived to darken thought, to retard democratic progress, and to pervert domestic and Imperial policy to this very day. It even had the truly extraordinary retrospective effect of obliterating from the minds of many eminent statesmen the significance of the Canadian parallel; for it is only six years ago that a Secretary of State for the Colonies penned a despatch recommending for the Transvaal a form of government similar to that which actually produced the Canadian disorders of 1837, and supporting it by an argument whose effect was not merely to resuscitate what time had proved to be false in Durham's doctrine, but to discard what time had proved to be true. As for Ireland herself, I know no more curious illustration of the strong tendency, even on the part of the most fair-minded men, to place that country outside the pale of social or political science, and of the extreme reluctance to judge its inhabitants by the elementary standards of human conduct, than the book to which I referred above—Mr. Locker-Lampson's "A Consideration of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century." For what he admits to be the ruinous results of British Government in the past, the author in the last few pages of a lengthy volume has no better cure to suggest than a continuance of British government, and he defends this course by a terse enumeration of the very phenomena which in Durham's opinion rendered the grant of Home Rule to Canada imperative, concluding with a paragraph which, with the substitution of "Canada" for "Ireland," constitutes an admirably condensed epit-

ome of the arguments used both by politicians at home, and the minorities in Canada, in favour of Durham's error and against the truth he established.

Mr. Lecky represents a somewhat different school of thought, and reached his Unionism by reasoning more profound and consistent, but, on the other hand, wholly destructive of the Imperial theory as held by the modern school of Imperialists. His fear and distrust of democracy in all its forms and in all lands [2] was such that he naturally dreaded Irish Nationalism, which is a form of democratic revolt suppressed so long and by such harsh methods as to exhibit features easily open to criticism. But the gist of his argument would have applied just as well to the political evolution of the self-governing Colonies. Indeed, if he had lived to see the last Imperial Conference, the pessimism of so clear a thinker would assuredly have given way before the astounding contrast between those countries in which his political philosophy had been abjured, and the only white country in the Empire where by sheer force it had been maintained intact.

If my only object in writing were to contribute something toward the dissipation of the fears and doubts which render it so hard to carry any measure, however small, of Home Rule for Ireland, I should hope for little success. Practical men, with a practical decision to make, rarely look outside the immediate facts before them. Extremists, in a case like that of Ireland, are reluctant to take account of what Lord Morley calls "the fundamental probabilities of civil society." Sir Edward Carson would be more than human if he were to be influenced by a demonstration that the case he makes against Home Rule is the same as that made by the minority leaders, not only in the French, but in the British Province of Canada. Most of the minority to which he appeals would now regard as an ill-timed paradox the view that the very vigour of their opposition to Home Rule is a better omen for the success of Home Rule than that kind of sapless Nationalism, astonishingly rare in Ireland under the circumstances, which is inclined to yield to the insidious temptation of setting the "eleemosynary benefits"—to use Mr. Walter Long's phrase [3]—derived from the British connection above the need for self-help and self-reliance. The real paradox is that any Irishmen, Unionist or Nationalist, should tolerate advisers who,

however sincere and patriotic, avowedly regard Ireland as the parasite of Great Britain; who appeal to the lower nature of her people; to the fears of one section and the cupidity of both; advising Unionists to rely on British power and all Irishmen on British alms. A day will come when the humiliation will be seen in its true light. Even now, I do venture to appeal to that small but powerful group of moderate Irish Unionists who, so far from fearing revenge or soliciting charity, spend their whole lives in the noble aim of uniting Irishmen of all creeds on a basis of common endeavour for their own economic and spiritual salvation; who find their work checked in a thousand ways by the perpetual maintenance of a seemingly barren and sentimental agitation; who distrust both the parties to this agitation; but who are reluctant to accept the view that, without the satisfaction of the national claim, and without the national responsibility thereby conferred, their own aims can never be fully attained. I should be happy indeed if I could do even a little towards persuading some of these men that they mistake cause and effect; misinterpret what they resent; misjudge where they distrust, and in standing aloof from the battle for legislative autonomy, unconsciously concede a point—disinterested, constructive optimists as they are—to the interested and destructive pessimism which, from Clare's savage insults to Mr. Walter Long's contemptuous patronage, has always lain at the root of British policy towards Ireland.

In the meantime, for those who like or dislike it, Home Rule is imminent. We are face to face no longer with a highly speculative, but with a vividly practical problem, raising legislative and administrative questions of enormous practical importance, and next year we shall be dealing with this problem in an atmosphere of genuine reality totally unlike that of 1886, when Home Rule was a startling novelty to the British electorate, or of 1893, when the shadow of impending defeat clouded debate and weakened counsel. It would be pleasant to think that the time which has elapsed, besides greatly mitigating anti-Irish prejudice, had been used for scientific study and dispassionate discussion of the problem of Home Rule. Unfortunately, after eighteen years the problem remains almost exactly where it was. There are no detailed proposals of an authoritative character in existence. No concrete scheme was submitted to the

country in the recent elections. None is before the country now. The reason, of course, is that the Irish question is still an acute party question, not merely in Ireland, but in Great Britain. Party passion invariably discourages patient constructive thought, and all legislation associated with it suffers in consequence. Tactical considerations, sometimes altogether irrelevant to the special issue, have to be considered. In the case of Home Rule, when the balance of parties is positively determined by the Irish vote, the difficulty reaches its climax. It is idle to blame individuals. We should blame the Union. So long as one island democracy claims to determine the destinies of another island democracy, of whose special needs and circumstances it is admittedly ignorant, so long will both islands suffer.

This ignorance is not disputed. No Irish Unionist claims that Great Britain should govern Ireland on the ground that the British electorate, or even British statesmen, understand Irish questions. On the contrary, in Ireland, at any rate, their ignorance is a matter for satirical comment with all parties. What he complains of is, that the British electorate is beginning to carry its ignorance to the point of believing that the Irish electorate is competent to decide Irish questions, and in educating the British electorate he has hitherto devoted himself exclusively to the eradication of this error. The financial results of the Union are such that he is now being cajoled into adding, "It is your money, not your wisdom, that we want." Once more, an odd state of affairs, and some day we shall all marvel in retrospect that the Union was so long sustained by a separatist argument, reinforced in latter days by such an inconsistent and unconscionable claim.

In the meantime, if only the present situation can be turned to advantage, this crowning paradox is the most hopeful element in the whole of a tangled question. It is not only that the British elector is likely to revolt at once against the slur upon his intelligence and the drain upon his purse, but that Irish Unionism, once convinced of the tenacity and sincerity of that revolt, is likely to undergo a dramatic and beneficent transformation. If they are to have Home Rule, Irish Unionists—even those who now most heartily detest it—will want the best possible scheme of Home Rule, and the best possible scheme is not likely to be the half measure which, from no fault of the statesman responsible for it, tactical difficulties may

make inevitable. If the vital energy now poured into sheer uncompromising opposition to the principles of Home Rule could be transmuted into intellectual and moral effort after the best form of Home Rule, I believe that the result would be a drastic scheme.

Compromise enters more or less into the settlement of all burning political questions. That is inevitable under the party system; but of all questions under the sun, Home Rule questions are the least susceptible of compromise so engendered. The subject, in reality, is not suitable for settlement at Westminster. This is a matter of experience, not of assertion. Within the present bounds of the Empire no lasting Constitution has ever been framed for a subordinate State to the moulding of which Parliament, in the character of a party assembly, contributed an active share. Constitutions which promote prosperity and loyalty have actually or virtually been framed by those who were to live under them. If circumstances make it impossible to adopt this course for Ireland, let us nevertheless remember that all the friction and enmity between the Mother Country and subordinate States have arisen, not from the absence, but from the inadequacy of self-governing powers. Checks and restrictions, so far from benefiting Great Britain or the Colonies, have damaged both in different degrees, the Colonies suffering most because these checks and restrictions produce in the country submitted to them peculiar mischiefs which exist neither under a despotic régime nor an unnatural Legislative Union, fruitful of evil as both those systems are. The damage is not evanescent, but is apt to bite deep into national character and to survive the abolition of the institutions which caused it. The Anglo-Irish Union was created and has ever since been justified by a systematic defamation of Irish character. If it is at length resolved to bury the slander and trust Ireland, in the name of justice and reason let the trust be complete and the institutions given her such as to permit full play to her best instincts and tendencies, not such as to deflect them into wrong paths. Let us be scrupulously careful to avoid mistakes which might lead to a fresh campaign of defamation like that waged against Canada, as well as Ireland, between 1830 and 1840.

The position, I take it, is that most Irish Unionists still count, rightly or wrongly, on defeating Home Rule, not only in the first Parliamentary battle, but by exciting public opinion during the long

period of subsequent delay which the Parliament Bill permits. Not until Home Rule is a moral certainty, and perhaps not even then, do the extremists intend to consider the Irish Constitution in a practical spirit. Surely this is a perilous policy. Surely it must be so regarded by the moderate men—and there are many—who, if Home Rule comes, intend to throw their abilities into making it a success, and who will be indispensable to Ireland at a moment of supreme national importance. Irretrievable mistakes may be made by too long a gamble with the chances of political warfare. Whatever the scheme produced, the extremists will have to oppose it tooth and nail. If the measure is big, sound, and generous, it will be necessary to attack its best features with the greatest vigour; to rely on beating up vague, anti-separatist sentiment in Great Britain; to represent Irish Protestants as a timid race forced to shelter behind British bayonets; in short, to use all the arguments which, if Irish Unionists were compelled to frame a Constitution themselves, they would scorn to employ, and which, if grafted on the Act in the form of amendments, they themselves in after-years might bitterly regret. Conversely, if the measure is a limited one, it will be necessary to commend its worst features; to extol its eleemosynary side and all the infractions of liberty which in actual practice they would find intolerably irksome. Whatever happens, things will be said which are not meant, and passions aroused which will be difficult to allay on the eve of a crisis when Ireland will need the harmonious co-operation of all her ablest sons.

If, behind the calculation of a victory within the next two years, there lies the presentiment of an eventual defeat, let not the thought be encouraged that a better form of Home Rule is likely to come from a Tory than from a Liberal Government. Many Irish Unionists regard the prospect of continued submission to a Liberal, or what they consider a semi-Socialist, Government as the one consideration which would reconcile them to Home Rule. No one can complain of that. But they make a fatal mistake in denying Liberals credit for understanding questions of Home Rule better than Tories. That, again, is a matter of proved experience. Compare the abortive Transvaal Constitution of 1905 with the reality of 1906, and measure the probable consequences of the former by the actual results of the

latter. Let them remember, too, that every year which passes aggravates the financial difficulties which imperil the future of Ireland.

The best hope of securing a final settlement of the Irish question in the immediate future lies in promoting open discussion on the details of the Home Rule scheme, and of drawing into that discussion all Irishmen and Englishmen who realize the profound importance of the issue. This book is offered as a small contribution to the controversy.

For help in writing it I am deeply indebted to many friends on both sides of the Irish Channel, in Ireland to officials and private persons, who have generously placed their experience at my disposal; while in England I owe particular thanks to the Committee of which I had the honour to be a member, which sat during the summer of this year under the chairmanship of Mr. Basil Williams, and which published the series of essays called "Home Rule Problems."

E.C.

## ERRATA

Since this book went to press the Treasury has issued a revised version of Return No. 220, 1911 [Revenue and Expenditure (England, Scotland, and Ireland)], cancelling the Return issued in July, and correcting an error made in it. It now appears that the "true" Excise revenue attributable to Ireland from *spirits* in 1910-11 (with deductions made by the Treasury from the sum actually collected in Ireland) should be £3,575,000, instead of £3,734,000, and that the total "true" Irish revenue in that year was, therefore, £11,506,500, instead of £11,665,500. In other words, Irish revenue for 1910-11 was over-estimated in the Return now cancelled by £159,000.

The error does not affect the Author's argument as expounded in Chapters XII. and XIII.; but it necessitates the correction of a number of figures given by him, especially in Chapter XII., the principal change being that the deficit in Irish revenue, as calculated on the mean of the two years 1909-10 and 1910-11, should actually be £1,392,000, instead of £1,312,500.

The full list of corrections is as follows:

Page 259, line 9, *for* "£1,312,500," *read* "£1,392,000."