

Britain than between parts of England and Wales, or between the Highlands of Scotland and the Lowlands. Indeed if any doctrinaire is going to preach the reconstitution of the United Kingdom on the basis of anthropology, he will never be content with the simple plan of Home Rule all round. He would among other small changes have to transfer the southern frontier of Scotland from the Tweed at least as far north as the Forth,—I think much further : a proceeding to which I for one would most strongly object. If race and blood be the essential root of Nationalist theories as applied to the United Kingdom, the Scotland of history must perish, and Ulster must be divided from the rest of Ireland.

If then neither Irish institutions, nor Irish culture, nor Irish descent be a sufficient ground for the claim of Home Rule, can we find that ground in its geographical isolation? It is a perilous argument ; for geographical isolation is at the mercy of mechanical knowledge ; and it changes with the progress of invention under our very eyes. If anything is certain in hypothetical history it is that there never would have been a separate Parliament on College Green had Dublin always been within ten hours of London. I quite understand that a system of subordinate provinces may be convenient in a country of vast area and scattered populations. But to acknowledge separate nationality, or even to create a separate administration, in a district which is neither remote nor difficult of access, for no other reason than that it is surrounded by water, seems to be a highly irrational use of geographical information.

Perhaps at this point in my argument my reader will be disposed to say to me, "You began by admitting that there was an Irish difficulty ; you have since been occupied in proving (or attempting to prove) that the difficulty was not due to certain causes often alleged in explanation of it. But of what importance is this if the difficulty exists? You cannot cure a disease merely by exposing an incorrect diagnosis. So far you have not even suggested a diagnosis of your own."