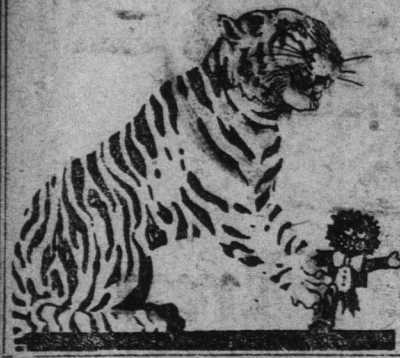


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TRY IT.

THE POSITION IN ULSTER—A WARNING

(By the Rt. Rev. C. F. D'Arcy, Bishop of Down.)

You ask me to give some impressions of the state of things here. I do so with some reluctance, as it has always been my rule to practise restraint in relation to political controversies. But, for us in Ulster, Home Rule is not an ordinary political question, and I feel that to decline such an invitation would be to shirk a very plain, and a very urgent, duty. The district throughout which my work extends includes the city of Belfast and the adjacent counties of Down and Antrim. This territory is the very focus of the life of Ulster. It contains a population of 783,000 persons, of whom three out of every four are Protestants, and includes the principal industrial areas of Ireland. These people form a true democracy. The vast majority of them are of the working classes. They are keenly intelligent and very practical, great workers, and very shrewd and "can-do." Their standard of education is the highest in Ireland, and their proportion of pauperism is the lowest. In this last respect the city of Belfast stands ahead of all other cities in the United Kingdom. Unlike the people of Southern Ireland, the Ulster folk are somewhat slow of speech, cautious, and sparing in emotion. They are not easily carried away, and generally say much less than they mean. But in character they are very strong, very dogged, very determined. My duties take me continually throughout the territory I have mentioned, and bring me constantly into close relationship with people of all classes. I may therefore venture to say that I have exceptional opportunities of forming an opinion as to the real mind of the community in which I live and work.

One Overmastering Idea.

Having said so much by way of explanation, let me hasten to add that the state of things here at the present time is such that it is impossible to convey any impression of it to the minds of people in England, where circumstances are so utterly different. What we have here at present is a people possessed by one overmastering idea, moved by one supreme determination. That determination is expressed in a simple phrase, uttered by the late Duke of Abercorn at the great Ulster Convention in 1893, and which has ever since been the watchword of Ulster: "We will not have Home Rule." Englishmen, accustomed to the continual efforts of politicians to create

together. There can be no doubt that the volunteer movement has proved a great blessing in Ulster. Some fifteen months ago we felt as if we were living in the neighbourhood of a powder magazine which might blow up at any moment. Unhappily events which I need not recall more explicitly produced terribly strained feelings in the public mind. Every effort was made by all who possessed any influence or authority to calm the popular excitement. But we all realized that only the utmost self-control could avert awful disasters. Then came the signing of the Covenant and the work of quiet, steady organization, which it involved. After the Covenant came the great volunteer movement. The whole constituted a long course of discipline. With discipline has come order and the sense of solidarity. In Ulster to-day there is the consciousness of union, and of the strength which union bestows. There is a growing appreciation of the mischief which would be wrought by riot or disorder of any kind. Hence the settled, quiet resolution which is restraining all extravagance in Ulster at the present moment.

No Slackening.

But let none imagine that this quietness means any slackening in determination. The many things said and done on the other side which are felt in Ulster to be bitter and provoking have all their full effect. But that effect is of quite another sort from what it would have been more than a year ago. Quite recently the Prime Minister made a speech which, rightly or wrongly, was regarded here as a challenge and a threat. Little was said, but thousands, who had before held aloof, rushed to enrol themselves as volunteers. Every unwise or unfair speech or action on the part of those who promote Home Rule is followed by a further development in the strength and efficiency of the Ulster forces. If ever a people were held together by a grim, unalterable determination, it is the people of Ulster at the present time.

Deepening Religious Conviction.

Further, it is a striking fact that this movement has been accompanied by a real deepening of religious conviction. The churches are thronged. Huge congregations, in which men frequently outnumber women, attend Sunday after Sunday. A great mission in all the churches of Belfast came to an end last week. The missionaries were most careful to preserve its spiritual character and to avoid all allusion to the political situation. Yet it was widely felt that the remarkable success of the mission, and the deep feelings which it evoked, were closely connected with the solemn sense of responsibility pervading a people who have pledged themselves to risk all that they possess in maintaining a heritage which is dearer than life itself. When the Covenant was signed last year, the Home Rule newspapers were filled with ridicule of a proceeding which they derided as a solemn farce. But that Covenant is to-day, in the mind of every Ulsterman who signed it, a bond of the most solemn obligation. The enrolling of the volunteers, and the continual drilling and organizing, are but the natural and necessary consequence of the signing of the Covenant. It is too little realized in England that half a million Ulstermen and Ulsterwomen are bound by the Covenant to stand by one another in resisting Home Rule by every necessary means, and in refusing to recognize the authority of a Home Rule Parliament if it be forced upon Ulster. From that solemn undertaking there will be no going back. The pledges have been given by each to the others, and it unites the whole body in a bond of the strongest kind. There was a legend current in some English newspapers that this device of the Covenant was artfully sprung upon an excited people after they had been intoxicated by the eloquence of fiery orators, and that when wisdom came with cooler judgment the Covenant would be quietly dropped. No representation could be farther from the facts. The Covenant was most carefully considered by some of the calmest and most judicial brains in the kingdom; it was signed by great numbers of the most cautious men of affairs and of business (among others, by the late Lord Macnaghten, Senior Judge of the highest court in the land), and it was adopted by the mass of Ulster men and women, without excitement and without wavering, because it expressed their deepest convictions and their most firm determination.

Reasons for Strong Feeling.

Why, it may be asked, do Ulster people feel so strongly on this subject? To answer that question fully it would be necessary to go back to 1690. It must suffice to point out that in 1836, and again in 1893, the battle against Home Rule was fought and won. The conviction that to be ruled by a Dublin Parliament would be an intolerable evil is no new thing. It was strong in 1836, it was stronger in 1893, it is strongest of all to-day. In England it often happens that a proposal which is rejected at first as most mischievous is



after a long spell of agitation and consideration, accepted as inevitable—generally with some degree of compromise or adaptation. English people are inclined to say: "The agitation for Home Rule has been going on a long time; something must be done. Compromise and make the best of it." That attitude is impossible to Ulster in relation to Home Rule. The longer the agitation for Home Rule continues, the more inflexible becomes the determination of Ulster never to submit to it. And the reason is quite obvious to us here, though Englishmen often fail to see it. Home Rule means the subjection of Ulster to a domination that Ulster people regard with the utmost antipathy. To anyone who knows the mind and character of the people here it is perfectly clear that, even if by some miracle Home Rule were established, and Ulster induced to profess submission, the arrangement could not possibly continue. The people of Ulster know this. By instinct and tradition, arising out of a long history, they know the impossibility of what is demanded of them. And they wonder at the blindness of their kinsmen in England and Scotland.

Danger of Civil War.

Is civil war within the bounds of possibility? Yes, most certainly, if an attempt is made to impose Home Rule on Ulster by force. And that is the only way in which it could be imposed. The danger of the present situation is that the Government may strain the patience of Ulster too far, and so precipitate a catastrophe. It is almost unthinkable that any modern Government should try to impose by force upon a population of a million industrious, law-abiding people a domination which they believe would be destructive of all that they hold dear. It cannot be possible that the present British Government have any such intention. But the strain may reach breaking-point before the people of England have been fully awakened to their danger. It is thus that civil wars always begin. Once begun, none can tell what the end may be. From every Ulster household, and in every Ulster church, heartfelt prayers are continually ascending that this most dreadful disaster may be averted. But it never occurs to any Ulsterman to sacrifice his principles and yield. That is unthinkable, impossible. The Church Family Newspaper.

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Mother! Your child isn't naturally cross and peevish. See if tongue is coated; this is a sure sign its little stomach, liver and bowels need a cleansing at once. When listless, pale, feverish, full of cold, breath bad, throat sore, doesn't eat, sleep or act naturally, has stomach-ache, diarrhoea, remember, a gentle figer and bowel cleansing should always be the first treatment given. Nothing equals "California Syrup of Figs" for children's ills; give a teaspoonful, and in a few hours all the foul waste, sour bile and fermenting food which is clogged in the bowels passes out of the system, and you have a well and playful child again. All children love this harmless, delicious "fruit laxative," and it never fails to effect a good "inside" cleansing. Directions for babies; children of all ages and grown-ups are plainly on the bottle.

Keep it handy in your home. A little given to-day saves a sick child to-morrow, but get the genuine. Ask your druggist for a 50-cent bottle of "California Syrup of Figs," then look and see that it is made by the "California Fig Syrup Company." Counterfeits are being sold here. Don't be fooled!

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Singers' Ways.

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before taking her cue and one famous singer known throughout Europe is in the habit of kissing her mother good-bye and receiving her blessing before going out to sing. A well known pianist used to carry a black cat about with her wherever she played. Doubtless there are many

who are similarly superstitious though they may not readily own to it.—Manchester Evening News.

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