

dia. Home Rule in Ireland would free England and the Imperial parliament from the thorniest problem they have had to cope with.

What are then the objections? Ulster, of course. But why should the objections of Ulster — or rather, of hardly one-half of Ulster — stand as an insuperable obstacle against giving effect to the will of the vast majority of the people of Ireland, including close on one-half, if not an actual majority, of Ulster itself? Why does the rule of majority, which rightly or wrongly prevails in every other civilised portion of the British Empire, remain inoperative in Ireland alone?

Is it for economical reasons? Is it because Ireland is not capable of supporting herself? Apart from the fact that this objection would come rather strangely from the mouth of Englishmen, it should not be forgotten that from 1817 to 1870 the British government drew close on £300,000,000 from Ireland, and spent therein somewhat less than £100,000,000, leaving or rather *keeping* a difference of £195,000,000, extracted by "wealthy" England from "poor" Ireland (1). The results already achieved from the revival of agriculture and home industries are ample warrant for the anticipation that Ireland, under proper management, will be self-sustaining in the near future as she was for centuries, before she was depopulated and famished by a policy always stupid when it was not cruel.

Is the objection political? For years it was the common talk that Catholic or rather Home Rule Ireland was disloyal at heart; that Orange or Unionist Ulster alone was true to the Crown and to the Empire; and therefore that the King, Parliament and people of England had no right to abandon the "loyal" Ulstermen to the tender mercy of the "rebels" to the south.

What the "loyalty" of Ulster is, the world knows now. Ulster was loyal as long as King, Parliament and people of England obeyed Ulster. But the moment the Parliament and people of England decide to do justice to the vast majority of the people of Ireland, while giving ample security for the liberties of Ulster, — the moment the King of England prepares to sanction that measure of justice, — then Ulster rebels, foment civil war, her leaders violate all laws of public order, her sympathisers in the army give the example of insubordination and treachery. In a word, Ulster, her leaders and her friends become disloyal to the extreme and refuse to submit to the laws of Parliament and to the will of the King. (2)

No! when the whole range of arguments pro and con has been viewed and reviewed, when all objections have been formulated and refuted, when all facts have been proved and disproved, the whole

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(1) These figures are taken from an article on "Mr. Balfour and Home Rule", by Mr Redmond, in the *University Magazine*, of Montreal, February, 1914.

(2) Just as this is going to print, I have the wired report of Mr F. E. Smith's wild ejaculation: "Whatever consequences, civil war or other cataclysm that might dismember the whole Empire, the Unionist party will support Ulster, whatever the consequences might be". It is to be hoped that no more will be heard of Ulster's "loyalty".