

mercial stagnation are but one side of the picture. The terrible social misery and unhappiness, so prevalent in Ireland during the last hundred years, undeniably flow from the same fatal source. To what must we ascribe the rising of 1803, the insurrection of 1847-48, the Fenian organisation? Were they not the outbursts of hearts which were breaking with grief at the heartrending state of their beloved Erin? Read the draconic enactments known as Coercion Acts, which, to the incredible number of fifty two, have been put in force in Ireland during the century which has just rolled away, and say, if possible, that Ireland has been happy. Consider the standing army of policemen and soldiers which, even to-day, England's enlightened rulers feel bound to maintain in the land of St. Patrick, to overawe and keep down a race, far superior in morals and in intelligence to the people of England, and say that Ireland can be happy. Why is Ireland not heeded when she clamors for a Catholic University? Such are the facts. To what conclusion do they point? Are they not evident proof that the Act of Union has been the ruin of Ireland.

Now opens a question still more momentous than either of the two just solved. Who is responsible for all the harm that the Act of 1801 bequeathed to Ireland? Is Ireland herself responsible? Is the Parliament of Ireland responsible? Or is Pitt responsible?

To become law, the Act of Union had *first* to be carried through the Irish legislature; it had *secondly*, to get the sanction of the British Parliament, and *lastly*, it had to receive the royal assent. This being the order to be followed, it stands to reason that the final issue depended more on the Irish Parliament than on the British or on the king. For, if the measure were lost in the Irish Houses it could never become law, whereas, if it were successful there, its final triumph might be more confidently awaited. Moreover, the almost unanimity with which the measure passed through the English legislature, as well as the readiness with which George III gave it his consent, warrant the conclusion that this great transaction depended entirely upon the action of the Irish Parliament.

The Irish Parliament of those days contained two elements—the House of Lords composed of the Peers of the kingdom—the House of Commons professing to represent the people of the