

to those who are primarily responsible for his moral upkeep, and individual liberty.

The same instinct and tendency which make for the extinction of independent economic forces and the levelling of mental individualities, operate with equal force in the sphere of national construction. The new doctrine of imperialism is nothing but a combination of the old Roman spirit of conquest and sword rule, and the modern greediness for land and wealth, popularised by the teaching in public schools of a false, vulgar and noisy patriotism.

Of all nations in our days there is none to whom that doctrine is more alluring than to the British. There is none either to whom the triumph of that same doctrine would be more fatal.

The Anglo-Saxon possesses a "vaster Empire than has been". Deprived of every principle of unity — geographical, economical, racial or even political, — that Empire has grown and maintained itself on the principle of local home rule and self-government. Naturally, if the Anglo-Saxons, who figure for less than one-tenth of the total population of that Empire, could succeed in inducing all their co-British subjects, white, brown or yellow, Celtic, French, Dutch, Hindu or Malay, in worshipping the one god of Anglo-Saxondom, of which they, the Anglo-Saxons, would be the earthly incarnation, it would be their supreme triumph. But this will never be. And the British Empire will cease to be, the moment the British people cease to realise that it cannot exist but by the principle of decentralisation and local rule, — whatever risks of future disintegration may be run thereby. If, in order to avoid those risks, the Anglo-Saxons endeavour to centralise and to unite, for peace or for war, they will simply hasten the day when the various communities, who prize their national entity more than any share of imperial plunder and glory, will secede abruptly and decide their future in their own way.

In resisting with unabating vigour, at times even with violence, the appeals of imperialism, the Irish at home and abroad have rendered to Great-Britain, and to the British Empire at large, a service which the broadest measure of Home Rule could never repay.

What is the Objection to Irish Home Rule ? (1)

Now, it may be asked, why should there be such opposition, so persistent and so violent, to Home Rule for Ireland?

The vast majority of the people of Ireland demand Home Rule, and have demanded it for years. Its principle is in complete accordance with the principles and the practise of British government. It has prevailed in every important dependency of England, peopled with white inhabitants. It is making rapid progress in In-

(1) The following observations have not in view the Bill now under discussion, or any particular form of local government. All I desired to emphasise was the right of Ireland to be considered as a national entity, and to rule herself, just as Canada, or Australia does.