

the American Colonies before the War of Independence; nor would they ever be tolerated by any one of the self-governing Dominions. How then can they be permanently accepted by those whose policy is professedly based on the indefeasible claims of Irish Nationality? And if it be replied that the Nationalist members profess themselves content, we are compelled to ask by what right they attempt thus to set limits to the aspirations, in their opinion the just aspirations, of their fellow countrymen, either now or hereafter?

If again the subject be approached from the side of constitutional equity or administrative convenience, the Bill is utterly without defence. No doubt there are many persons who think that a large delegation of parliamentary power to subordinate assemblies would be a great constitutional reform. I am not disposed to agree with them; but the case is arguable. What is not arguable is the supposition that the Home Rule Bill is a serious contribution to this object. There is not in it from beginning to end the faintest indication that its authors ever supposed that its provisions could be applied to other parts of the United Kingdom; nor could they ever be so applied. In the meanwhile it leaves Ireland grossly over-represented in the Imperial Parliament so far as English and Scottish affairs are concerned, and grossly under-represented so far as Imperial affairs are concerned. It gives the Irish much more power than they ought to have in moulding legislation which applies only to Great Britain, and much less power than they ought to have in controlling national policy and national taxation. How can such a system last in Ireland? How can it be extended to England or Scotland? How can it be seriously regarded as the solution of any problem whatever,—national, constitutional, or administrative?

But if it solves no problem, it raises many, and of these the most urgent is Ulster. To the ordinary Radical voter in England or Scotland the evils of Home Rule may appear shadowy and remote. He regards the Irish question as a nuisance of long standing, and, if his leaders assure him that