

of two or three generations, the descendants of those Ironsides had lapsed into the faith against which their forefathers had fought so bitterly and so strenuously. Thus neither name nor religion will prove that a man is a Celt, and there is consequently no historical and no ethnological base for these unchristian, and I will say, unnational hatreds that I have seen advocated and expressed in various quarters. Therefore, on sentimental grounds, although that is the ground I find some people put it on, there is no reason whatever for granting a local Government or Home Rule to Ireland. Is there on practical grounds? Yes, Sir, on practical grounds it would be useful. I will give an instance to the House. There is a railway from Cork to Bandon. It is a little one-horse railway, something like a railway would be from Ottawa to Pembroke. I was assured by one of the promoters of that railway that it cost as much to get that railway Bill through the committees in London as it cost to build the line. That is a thing that ought to be got rid of. Can there be any objection to having an Assembly to deal with a matter like that in Ireland? Besides, I think that, although the Imperial Parliament is taking many measures for the development of the material resources of that country, a local Assembly would have more time to devote to those matters. What a local Assembly could do was shown in the eighteenth century, when they had a Parliament, emasculated indeed, but still a local Parliament. In the middle of the eighteenth century Ireland was a country of all but limitless pasture. At the time of Arthur Young's visit, about a century ago:

"A change had set in. Yet he found one grass farm of ten thousand acres, and not a few sheep walks of five or six thousand acres. It is important to note that it was not natural adaptability which brought about this state of things. One cause was the scarcity of labor, consequent on the incessant wars of the seventeenth century. But there followed on the Treaty of Limerick three-quarters of a century of repose. Population increased, but still cattle farming was continued. The penal laws prohibited Catholics from buying or leasing lands. Competition between tenants was kept down. Thus the breaking up of farms was prevented. The markets of England and the Colonies were closed against the Irish farmer, and he had no motive for increasing production. Besides, the disqualification of Catholics lulled the Protestants into a lethargic confidence. Complaints at last arose that there was not enough food grown for the population which had greatly increased. The Irish Parliament offered a bounty for all corn imported from the inland rural districts into Dublin. The effect was immediate. Arthur Young noticed in 1776 that the richest pasturages of Tipperary and Limerick were being broken up. The outbreak of the American war gave a new impulse to this movement."

So that we have an historical fact to show us what might be done by a local Assembly. Not only that, but there is a certain impulse of life given by contact, close contact, with a Government, and to-day, if you go through Dublin, you will find that it wears a widowed appearance; there is a venerable dinge over everything, and the people are entirely without that sense of being able to deal directly and rapidly with their local affairs that you find, for instance, here. Take Ontario. Suppose you were to take the local Assembly away from Ontario, there would at once be a great diminution of life in that great Province, and so in all our Provinces; and what I desire to see is such a local Assembly as would do for Ireland what the local Assemblies do for our various Provinces; and, if there were a local Assembly to do the same thing for England, and a local Assembly to do the same thing for Scotland, I do not think it would be a bad thing, because the weary Titan of the Imperial Parliament already staggers under the load she has to carry, "the too vast orb of her fate." From 1782 to 1798 the Irish Parliament had been relieved of those shackles which were placed upon her by one Act after another, and by one usurpation after another, from the Poyning's Act down; and what do we find as the truth about the state of things between 1782 and 1798? Lord Clare, who was the leader of the ascendancy party, says, in a pamphlet published in 1798,—and his testimony, remember, was the

testimony of a man opposed to the existence of an Irish Parliament:

"There is no nation on the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation and commerce, in agriculture and manufactures, with the same rapidity in the same period."

Mr. Plunket, afterwards Lord Plunket, in January, 1800, said:

"Her revenues, her trade, her manufactures, thriving beyond the hope or the example of any other country of her extent; within these few years advancing with a rapidity astonishing even to herself; not complaining of deficiency in any of these respects, but enjoying and acknowledging her prosperity."

In December, 1798, the bankers of Dublin had a meeting at which they resolved:

"That since the renunciation of the power of Great Britain, in 1782, to legislate for Ireland, the commerce and prosperity of the country have eminently increased."

And, Sir, it stands to reason that if there is an Assembly whose sole business would be to deal with the material development of a country, on the very principle of division of labor, the work would be better done. Now, in regard to the union itself, two objects rose before the minds of the men who were engaged in bringing that union about. George III declared, when the union was brought about, that he consented to it because it "finished him with the Catholics." He thought he would never again be bothered with any Catholic claim. Well, that, of course, failed, because in 1829 Catholic Emancipation was passed in order to avoid a civil war. Mr. Pitt said, when the union was brought about, that he looked at it as a great means for tranquillising and pacifying Ireland. Well, that, of course, has failed. We keep there at present an armed police force such as is kept in no other part of the Empire, and that police force is supplemented by an army which, on the authority of an English Cabinet Minister, I can say is as large as the army with which we fought Napoleon. Now, Sir, that is a state of things that must be faced by English statesmen, and it must be faced by those among us who take an interest in Imperial questions—and it is palpable that we take a deep interest in Imperial questions, because we are turning from our legitimate business here to discuss this great question. It is very properly said that there should be some anxiety on the score of the minority. It is said that the minority would suffer. I have heard people talk about arming. Why, Sir, there would be no necessity of arming. Of course, no Imperial Act would be passed that would not make provision for the protection of the minority; and I suppose the Catholics of Ireland would no more be able to act together than the Catholics of Quebec, or the Protestants of Ontario. I suppose the same laws which divide the Catholics of Quebec and the Protestants in Ontario, would divide the Catholics in Ireland. The same ambitions, the differences of view, all those mental and moral causes which divide the Protestants in Ontario and the Catholics in Quebec, would divide the large Catholic population in Ireland; and what should we see then? Why, we should see a Protestant vote in Ireland; and from what we see of the Catholic vote in Ontario, I suppose the Protestant vote in Ireland would be able to make itself felt. So, Sir, I do not think there is a danger of the minority suffering. As I said before, I doubt very much if there would be any danger of separation, although we read certain wild statements from the more ebullient spirits. There are many reasons why there would be no danger, in my opinion, of an agitation for separation. In the first place, the rebellion of 1793 was not caused by the fact that they had a separate Parliament. That rebellion was an echo of the French revolution—the French revolution was in the air everywhere; the Irish mind took fire at the French revolution, and that was the main cause of the rebellion. Any man who reads the history of the rebellion of