

—Our diagnosis of the situation in England received speedy confirmation. Mr. Gladstone was to have declared his Irish policy at Southport, but he did not. Why? Because the Brighton election, which he hoped to win, was at hand and he knew that he would spoil his chance by raising the issue of the Union. Home Rule for the present is laid aside. No plan is before the country. Mr. Gladstone's original scheme is so dead that his doubting followers are beginning to take advantage of its decease as a door of escape from their quandary, declaring that to it and to it alone their adhesion was given, and that their Home Rule affections are buried in its grave. The dilemma is fatal: the Irish members must either be excluded from the Parliament at Westminster or not. If they are, Home Rule, in the present mood of the Irish at all events, means separation. If they are not, how determine the special subjects on which they are to be allowed to vote? To draw a line between Imperial and British questions would be found impracticable. The policy of every government or governing assembly is an organic whole, the parts of which have constant reference to each other. If in a debate on a question of peace or war something was said about British finance, could the Speaker bid the Irish members withdraw? A proposal to federalize one member of the United Kingdom while the rest is left on the national footing is like a proposal to federalize one of a man's arms or legs. If Federation is your aim, restore the Heptarchy. Retrace the boundaries of the old Saxon Kingdoms, make London again, as it probably was in Saxon times, a State of itself, revive the division of Northumbria into Bernicia and Deira, that of Wales into its Principalities, that of Scotland into Lowlands and Highlands, that of Ireland into the four Provinces. Then you will have a group of States nearly equal among themselves or at least free from any obnoxious superiority, and thus suitable for Federation, whereas a Federation of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales would be a perpetual domination of England over the smaller countries and a perpetual cabal of the smaller countries against England.