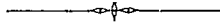


Then, further, the figure of the Christ is substantially the same. There is no denial of the fact of the rejection by the Jews, of the crucifixion, the actual death, the burial, the resurrection, the ascension. The particular conception of some of these is heretically varied, but the historic fact behind the heresy is plain enough. To support some modern views of the end of our Lord's life, we ought to have read of the two men supporting the One, because He was too weak to walk alone, crawling out of a sepulchre in which He had been interred when only half dead. Not so the legend. The head of the Third overpassed the heavens. He is the Lord throughout, and in the resurrection strong, while on the Cross He is called by one of the malefactors, "the Saviour of men." Pilate, too, is made to say: "I am pure from the blood of the Son of God." So that knowing, as we probably now do, the worst that heresy could devise to explain differently certain parts of the Passion narrative that did not harmonize with preconceived ideas, we know also that it embedded the fundamental facts and conclusions substantially as we have them, and the "Evangelium Secundum Petrum" is all unconsciously, and therefore the more powerfully, a "Gospel of the Son of God."

FREDERIC RELTON.



ART. VI. — THE UNREASONABLENESS OF HOME  
RULE; OR, WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR IRELAND?

PART I.

SHORT as it is, hardly a more interesting or suggestive voyage could be made than a row on a fine day between Tor Head, in the county of Antrim, and the Mull of Cantire, in the county of Argyll. It is but twelve miles across, and the huge headlands which face each other are of the same formation and have the same look. Or it is not very different if you take the steamer which plies every day of the year between Larne and Stranraer. The nearest points there are but twenty-two miles apart, though the necessity of going into good harbourage on either side makes the way a few miles longer. As you look out from the middle of that passage, the hills of England, Scotland, Ireland and Man surround you; the basalt cliffs of Antrim, the peaks of Cantire and Arran and Ayr, the beautiful points of the Stewartry, and the towering heights of Man. You feel that such a group of islands, spreading from that point north, south, east and west, must have a common history, a common past, a common future, and common interests. And when you inquire further, you remember that they have a common race and a common language. In Ireland, as well as in Scotland and in England, the vast majority of the inhabitants are of English stock and of

English tongue. In Scotland and in England there are Celts as well as in Ireland, of the very same race. In Scotland and in Wales there are communities who know no English, as well as in Ireland; even Cornwall and Cumberland but a few generations ago had Gaelic dialects of their own. There is no sort of shadow of a reason for speaking of an Irish nation rather than of a Highland nation, or a Welsh nation, or a Cumbrian nation, or a Cornish nation. All are mixed up together, in different proportions, from Cape Clear to Dunnet Head, and from Dungeness to the farthest points of Donegal and Galway. All have common duties to perform to the whole group of lands and seas where Providence has planted them.

When you sail between Dover and Calais, you have no such thoughts. The chalk is white on Cape Grisnez as well as on Shakespeare's Cliff; but the one is the vanguard of a closely-set series of hundreds of islands, large and small; the other the outpost of the vast continents of Europe and Asia. The Celts of France have been separated for two thousand years from the Celts of Wales and Scotland and Ireland. They have received vast admixtures of blood from east and from south. With the exception of a few villages in Brittany, they speak one tongue, which, except to the educated in the British Islands, is entirely unintelligible. The race which conquered England from Normandy were only accidentally settled on the southern coasts of the English Channel for a few generations; they were Northmen; the language which they had adopted was lost after their migration. The same processes of history which have made the British Islands a separate whole have made the provinces and races of France a separate whole; and though the Straits of Dover are not wider than the North Channel, the Straits of Dover separate two countries, two empires, two nations, two races; the North Channel unites two parts of the same land and the same people.

How, then, is it that we find a large number of the inhabitants living in one of the groups of the islands at feud with the rest? There are a great many reasons, and I must briefly touch upon them. In answering them I desire to recall attention by way of epitome to the well-known work of Mr. Albert Dicey. *First*, it is by far the largest area of land not joined to the main body. Until steam was invented, communication was slow and tedious, and there was little free interchange of population of their own accord. This induced a feeling of separateness. This view is borne out by the fact that the parts of Ireland and Great Britain which are in sight of each other, and where communication has always been easiest, have the best mutual understanding, and are likeliest in all characteristics. *Secondly*, it is a conquered country, which

cannot be said of any other part of the group. When made a dominion of England, it was inhabited by wild tribes under different warlike kings, who were perpetually fighting each other. It did not learn unity, like England or like Scotland, by a community of interests, but by the stern law of the sword and the hard teaching of adversity. *Thirdly*, it has been governed until the present century with little intelligence or sympathy. No doubt both England and Scotland were in different ways governed as badly, but there the circumstances were favourable. In Ireland the sense of conquest prevented the government from being appreciated or improved from within. *Fourthly*, no pains were taken to spread the Reformation in Ireland when England and Scotland adopted the Reformed Faith. Queen Elizabeth, indeed, even forbade the Scriptures to be translated into the native Irish language. The difference of religion has in past times increased the sense of separateness, and is still working in that direction. It is not to the point to say that some Protestants are Home Rulers, and that some Unionists are Roman Catholics. The vast majority of Home Rulers are Catholics; the vast majority of Protestants are Unionists. The Roman Catholic hierarchy are for independence; the governing bodies of the Protestant Churches are for union. *Fifthly*, the feudal land system introduced into the Celtic parts of Ireland as an improvement by King Henry VII., as it was introduced into the Highlands of Scotland by King George II., was little suited to either region. The tribesmen remembered their former rights and privileges, and forgot the oppressive duties by which they had been accompanied. They forgot, also, that it was only by the old tribal wars that excessive numbers had been kept down. They recognised neither the advantages of the new system, nor the disadvantages of the old, nor the impossibilities of the increasing population. They fixed their eyes alone with poetic fondness on the one single fact that they had once, in whatever way, been in some sort connected with the soil. *Sixthly*, the landlords themselves, especially in the last century, isolated from the wiser and happier practices of England, pursued the unfortunate policy of vying with each other in reckless hospitality and in disproportionate display. It was the fashion to build huge houses, to plant great parks, and to keep open house. In England the more propitious climate and the better trade would have made such practices less disastrous; but in Ireland, where the climate is a permanent bar to any great prosperity, and the trade undeveloped, such extravagance became the curse and the ruin of all but the very largest proprietors. The result was in some cases absenteeism, which is the cruellest and most unreasonable of all territorial relation-

ships; in some cases the sale of the estates to land-jobbers, who cared for nothing but to extract the best rents which they could get; in other cases it led to the landlords living on in their impoverished properties, unable to improve or to care for the people whom Providence had entrusted to them. *Seventhly*, it is in vain to deny that the Celtic race as found in Ireland has the prevailing quality of imaginativeness and a poetic fancy which leads them to dwell on an ideal past which never existed, to conjure up an impossible future which never will be, and to refuse to look facts in the face. This tendency makes it a matter of common experience that it is very difficult to trust the Irish, or to pin them down to dry statements of fact. They do not understand the difference between the ideal and the real, and their all-pervading Celtic humour prevents them from serious argument. Every race has its own characteristics. It is not to the point to say that the Irish have no more original sin than other races. They have their own peculiar qualities, fascinating but perplexing; and these qualities form a very large item in the causes which I am enumerating of their disaffection. It is a fallacy to say that race can have little to do with the question, because so many of the families in the north and east of Ireland have English and Scotch names. These English and Scotch settlers have for centuries married in the freest manner with the Celtic and purely Irish tribes, and it is a well-known law of physiology that hereditary tendencies and characteristics are mainly derived from the mother's side.

You have, then, to begin with, territorial disconnection, which, before the days of steam, was a serious fact. You have the ancient sense of conquest, ingrained by centuries of unhappy reprisals. You have a marked absence of intelligence and sympathy in the Government up till the present century. Even now you have the miserable fact that this question of such overwhelming importance is still allowed to be the football of parties. You have the checking of the Reformation in Ireland, and long jealousies between the reformed and unreformed religions. You have an imaginative people undervaluing the introduction of an unaccustomed landed system, and yearning for a connection with the soil which could only have been possible under the condition of constant depopulation by war. You have the disaffection intensified in many different way by the extravagance of former generations of landlords. And, lastly, you have the fact that the Irish as a race are peculiarly difficult to approach on the side of reason.

The cry for Home Rule grew out of all these different causes. Its immediate origin was, perhaps, the fact that the

land system was out of joint, and that there were certain real grievances—such as the fact that the landlords did not make the improvements as they do in England and Scotland, and the fact that the tenant could be turned out without value given for his own improvements. But all the causes which I have mentioned contributed to the popularity of the movement. It derived force from several considerations :

I. The elasticity of the name Home Rule, which covers many different and contradictory meanings, all of which the advocates of Home Rule incorporate and defend in turn.

Such as (a) complete independence of Great Britain, which is what the American-Irish mean, and most of the sentimental politicians in Ireland ; and that out of pure hatred of England as a country.

(b) *A Federation* of equal and mutually independent states, as examples of which are quoted the United States and Switzerland.

(c) *Grattan's Parliament*, which was the exponent of Protestant ascendancy.

(d) *The Colonial Constitutions*, which can be overridden at any moment by the Privy Council, and by the Imperial Parliament, and which leave certain subjects entirely to England.

(e) *Mr. Gladstone's Constitution*.

(f) *Local Government*.

All these forms are included under the generic name Home Rule, and almost all its votaries borrow some of their arguments from other forms than the one which they really intend.

II. Another reason of the force given to the cry for Home Rule is the fact that the British Parliament is tired of the presence of eighty-one disaffected Irish members, who are constantly obstructing.

III. The fact is overlooked that much of the seeming preponderance of Irish opinion in favour of Home Rule is owing to intimidation, and the half-heartedness of the protection of the law.

IV. Another fallacy giving force to the cry is the notion that because we have governed Ireland badly in the past, therefore we must continue to govern it badly in the present and in the future.

V. Again, there is the fallacy that if you give the Irish the right to govern themselves, therefore all the blessings will accrue to Ireland which Great Britain has derived from self-government. It is forgotten that in Ireland there are two broad divisions of the people, by race, religion, and politics, and that these will be less likely to coalesce than they would under the protection of England, without a bloody struggle which England could never permit.

VI. Again, the Home Rule cry derives force from the fallacy connected with the word coercion. In one sense it means that all subjects of the Queen must be protected from violence and intimidation, and that it may be necessary to take special measures to prevent such lawlessness; in the other sense it means forcing laws on an unwilling people. In the first sense, no reasonable man on reflection could oppose it. He might stipulate, however, that such measures should be applicable to the whole empire. Where they were unneeded they would be simply unemployed.

VII. Again, the Home Rule movement derives force from the party system of British government. Mr. Bright spoke plain, simple, downright truth when he said that, apart from the duty of following Mr. Gladstone as a political leader, not twenty British members of the House of Commons would have voted for his Bill.

VIII. There is the general benevolent notion of kind-hearted people who are too busy to analyze, who repeat to each other that something must be done for Ireland. Home Rule is the thing which is most talked about at the moment, so they say that they must give Home Rule. They do not trouble to think what it either means or involves.

IX. Lastly, there is the fallacy which is very common in minds which have allowed themselves to be swathed in Benthamism, that what a large body of people wish for they should have, without regard for what is best for the great whole of which that body of people forms only a part.

I have hitherto traced the causes of Irish disaffection, and the reasons why the cry for Home Rule has gathered strength. I have now to show that in none of its many forms would it be the panacea which its supporters allege, and that it would work more harm than good to the British Empire.

1. Complete independence of Great Britain is what is meant by the Irish Americans and by the Parnellite party. They have said so over and over again. It is the very height of simplicity to point to their present moderation. They are sufficiently clever tacticians, when so vast and unexpected an offer is made them by an historic British party and a fluent and popular British politician to suit their demands to the gaining of so great a step. To blink the fact that they would not be content with that step, is to trifle with facts and truth. But to grant independence would be to double our army and navy, to give a fatal blow to British honour all over the world, to give up in despair the accumulated responsibilities of six centuries, and to abandon the loyal and prosperous population of Ireland to oppression, to plunder, and possibly to extinction. To remain loyal to such a nation as Great

Britain would then have shown herself to be would be a task beyond the goodwill of the great colonies; and the independence of Ireland would be the signal for the dissolution of that beneficent empire of Britain, which is the strongest bond of the peace of the world. Already the simple and the unsettled amongst the Scotch and Welsh have been taught to talk about Home Rule for themselves.

2. *A federation* between Great Britain and Ireland would be even worse. In every instance federation has been adopted between independent units towards cohesion; never has it been suggested when cohesion has once become complete, for it would be a retrograde step towards disunion. The parallels adduced are strikingly inappropriate. The kingdoms of the German Empire are held together by a strong, pathetic, historic yearning for the unity of the Fatherland, and by the preponderating strength of the great military monarchy of Prussia. Ireland, on the contrary, yearns to be away from England, and England has no thought of making herself a military autocracy. Austria and Hungary are only held together by the strength of the crown of the Hapsburgs, and by the same military force. Cavour did for Italy what Pitt and Castlereagh did for Great Britain and Ireland. Bulgaria was allowed Home Rule, and she is now practically separated from Turkey. Neither the United States nor the Swiss Republic have preserved their unity without bloody and devastating wars, which we ought to do everything to avoid. Norway and Sweden are perpetually on the eve of a disruption. Denmark allows Iceland to govern herself because there is nothing to govern, and because Iceland is too far, in any case, to be inconvenient.

3. *Grattan's Parliament* was possible only because it solely represented the Protestants. It had no constituents except those who were favourable to the English connection. But even thus it was a source of disunion and weakness to England, and the great statesmen who brought about its incorporation into the British Parliament felt compelled, in the interests of the empire, to override its separate political existence. Whether they took the best means to effect their object is a point which cannot affect our general view of the whole question.

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.

(To be continued.)

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