

Irish Home-Rule

Details of the two great debates in the British Parliament on the subject of Home-Rule, do not add a great deal to our previous knowledge of the subject. As a piece of justice to Ireland, the discussion of her affairs was allowed to occupy two entire evenings in the House of Commons—that is about the entire significance of debates of unusual length, studded with speeches of unusual eloquence. As to the practical details of the Home-Rule plan, we can glean little more than is indicated in the wording of Mr Butt's resolution, which declares that "it is expedient and just to restore to the Irish nation the right and power of managing all exclusively Irish affairs in an Irish Parliament; that provision should be made at the same time for maintaining the integrity of the empire, and the connection between the countries, by reserving to the Imperial Parliament full and exclusive control over all Imperial affairs."

But the fact is, that in all the discussions about Home Rule in Ireland, it is not the practical details of the question which present themselves to the minds of those on either side of the controversy. Mr Sullivan's way of describing the Home Rules, is a "middle party between the party of centralization, and the party of separation." But one is tempted to inquire how long after the setting up of an Irish Parliament on College Green, the Home Rulers would maintain a separate identity from the party of separation. The general impression is, that if Ireland were polled to-morrow, a majority of the people would be found voting for a repeal of the Union. It is understood on all sides, that Great Britain could do little to afford to have an independent and presumably hostile nation on the other side of St. George's Channel, as the United States could have an alien Republic commanding the lower half of the Mississippi. Hence the new school of Irish agitators ignore the repeal platform, and take their stand on the specious argument in favor of Home Rule. But on the other hand, it is seen to be inevitable that an unreconciled people, like the majority of Irishmen, could not be suddenly invested with the power of managing what they call their own affairs, without using their new found privileges to the detriment of the Empire at large. Most nations regard the prohibition of seditious tendencies as a very good argument in favor of the curtailment of local liberties. Ireland presents the first case in which smouldering rebellion has been pleaded, and to some extent accepted, as a reason for enlarging their liberties.

While in the present temper of Ireland, it is difficult to believe that Home Rule could be regarded as anything better than a stepping stone to complete separation, it is equally difficult to see how it could be conceded without deliberately sacrificing the civil rights of the Protestants of Ulster, and without giving the Roman Catholic hierarchy such an ascendancy in civil affairs, as could not be regarded with indifference by the rest of the United Kingdom. It can hardly be disputed that an assembly elected by Irish Roman Catholics, with powers of legislation for any Irish purpose, would proceed practically to endow the Roman Catholic Church, and to establish a vast and costly system of Roman Catholic education under priestly control. It is equally obvious that the Protestant minority would resist being taxed for any such purpose, and that the irreconcilable hate of the two great factions would not at present stop short at rioting, but would very quickly expand into civil war, and that the intervention of Imperial force would become more of a pressing necessity than ever. Arguments like these are not likely to lose their force with Scottish and English representatives, and whether openly expressed or not, may be trusted to defeat every successful demand for Home Rule. Yet, it is one feature of Irish agitation, that in spite of its outer hopelessness, it will continue to keep open the country's discontent, and to interfere with its material progress. There can be no question, moreover, that the strength of the Home Rulers in Parliament is likely to increase instead of to diminish. At present their number is fifty-nine, and, though not so small a phalanx to do anything of itself, presents a formidable element of strength to either of the great parties in search of a majority. So convinced are the so-called "Irish Patriots" of the growing impetus of the Home Rule movement that John Mitchell, one of the best known of the men of '48, left the United States lately to secure a vacant seat among the Home Rulers in the House of Commons. John Mitchell is still an unrepentant outlaw, though he probably tabernacled little risk of being sent back to serve out the sentence from which he escaped. A representative of the Protestant section of the Young Ireland party, Mitchell's special mission may be to help in demolishing the argument that members of his faith have nothing to fear from an Irish Parliament. In spite, however, of indications of strength that would be considered as pledges of ultimate triumph in any cause less adverse to all the prepossessions of 56's of the people of the United Kingdom, it is impossible to see in the Home Rule movement anything but a fresh obstacle to the pacification of Ireland, and a permanent element of both political and social danger.—Scottish American.

Harvesting has commenced in the neighborhood of Hamilton. Scotland has won the Elcho Challenge Shield this year at Wimbledon. There is quite a scramble among the local clubs for the appointment of a vacancy in the customs of Kingston.

It is denied that the young Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia, who stole his mother's diamonds, has been sentenced to banishment, but it is said his case is still pending before the Emperor.

The Ottoman Government has announced its adherence to its former prohibition of the sale of Bibles in Turkey—in answer to an appeal of the United States Government for a reversal of that decree.

It is stated that the ancient gates of Constantinople, which resisted the attacks of decay for more than eleven hundred years, were made of Cypress wood.

Fifteen foreign steamship lines, with an aggregate tonnage of upwards of 550,000, now regularly ply between the ports of New York and Europe.

A new life-saving invention has recently appeared in Paris, and is a double garment, which covers the entire body. It is made of rubber, and is provided with a flexible tube which has a mouthpiece. By blowing into the latter, the person in danger inflates the garment, which buoys him up in the water.

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