

# Ireland and its Problem

## Considered as a Race Question.

THE forthcoming Rectorial Election will be of exceptional interest in that it will be fought chiefly on the question of a situation unique in the vicissitudes of the history of this country—the problem of Ireland.

Much has been written, and more debated concerning this vital question, but there are one or two points which it may be of interest to touch on very briefly, points too often overlooked.

First of all we must cease to look at Ireland in the light of party politics, for too long have people done this. We must regard Ireland purely in regard to its history, and not as a political but as a racial question. Even the most casual visitor to Ireland, if he spend even a few days in—say the West, and afterwards a few days in the North, is struck with the extraordinary difference between the people of the two districts. In the West, for example, one finds the true Celtic blood; an easy-going, good-natured population, not caring much about anything, but yet a people with all the fire of the Celtic imagination, with a true love of poetry and the haunting melodies of the old folk-songs, but a people utterly devoid of the spirit of progress. In the North, on the other hand, one finds a totally different type. Here one sees a keenly alert race, full of enterprise, quick to seize opportunity, ever on the qui vive. In Belfast stand the shipbuilding yards, the huge linen mills, and the largest tobacco factory in Great Britain are sufficient evidence of this. The reason of this is, of course, the fundamental question of race—in Ulster one finds not the Celtic but the Anglo-Saxon race, the race which has made our country what it is to-day.

And what is the present proposal of the Liberal government? It is the placing of the purely Celtic race over the purely Anglo-Saxon. You may conceivably govern well a Celtic race by an Anglo-Saxon, but very few who have looked into this subject will believe that you can produce contentment and prosperity in an Anglo-Saxon population through government by a Celtic majority. When people cite the hackneyed example of

Grattan's Parliament they forget, or do not know that whatever that Parliament may have been, it was in no sense a Parliament of the Irish people, *i.e.*, the Celts, but of the Anglo-Saxon element in the country. That condition of affairs can never be restored, even were it desirable, and what the present Home Rule scheme proposes to do is to place the less enterprising—Celtic—element in the country over the whole of the country. Such a step can have only a withering effect on the material condition, and political and national ideals of the leading element—Ulster. Ulster realises this and is ready to take the extreme step—as Anglo-Saxons will be when threatened with the attempt to place them under the thrall of an alien race.

All this means that there can be no compromise—it must be either Home Rule or no Home Rule. Home Rule means civil war—inevitably.

With Home Rule out of the way Ireland's future is most hopeful. Already the land is being gradually acquired by the farming population, and the conditions of life all over are improving steadily. The wretched system of Castle government—as if Ireland were still a conquered country—ought to cease.

Our course, then, as students of this University is clear. We have a choice of two men. Of Mr. Winston Churchill it is sufficient to say he is a politician no man can trust. Mr. F. E. Smith on the other hand comes to us with a clean record, and a thorough knowledge of the conditions of Ireland—and an unquenchable hostility to the Home Rule scheme—the evils of which he has so often brilliantly explained.

Let us see to it that we prove ourselves ready to see a policy inaugurated which will mean the bringing to Ireland of that peace and prosperity which she has longed for in vain through the centuries.

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The Liberal President he,  
Was as decent a chap as could be,  
But he got mixed with a lot,  
“Exclusive,”—or not!  
We appeal to the whole 'Varsity.