

it is a too wide sphere to be encompassed by any one House, the fixing of international law, and the deciding of whether a northern town council shall be permitted to build a new street. Another element in this phase of the question is the total ignorance and indifference that must characterise so many of those who take part in the decision of such local questions, ignorant of the necessities and indifferent as to the results, they either absent themselves altogether, or take a part that can be little other than a useless hindrance. On the other hand, were Home Rule granted to Scotland and Ireland they would derive the advantage of having their opinions acted upon with promptitude, and certainty, and of this they can never be assured while they cannot command a majority, or even claim a right of primary attention when cognisance is taken of the great amount of Imperial and English business that must be disposed of. It seems strange that all proposals of so reasonable a nature should have met only with determined opposition. They are looked upon as premonitions of a process of disintegration by which the existing union between the countries would finally be destroyed. The question, however, might very well be asked whether such a disunion is not more likely to be caused by the injustice that arises from the inadequacy of the present administrative machinery. The union would be kept unbroken by the fact that each country would still continue to send its representatives to the Imperial Parliament, and continue to contribute its share to all Imperial expenditure. Nor is it by any means probable that small weak countries would seek to cast away the protection of a wealthy and powerful neighbour, and place themselves under the ban of its displeasure, if they were being treated justly, and their distinct nationality was not being improperly ignored. The necessity for some such provision being made for Scotland is being rapidly recognised, and already demands have been made for the appointment of a special Secretary of State for Scotland. From such an office, however, there could be but little gained so long as it was subservient to the higher authority of the existing Home Office, and this, under present circumstances, it would no doubt be. Yet the very fact that such a desire has been expressed evidences the feeling of dissatisfaction that there is with the present arrangements. When such is the case, and when it is found that the dissatisfaction is amply justified, the course that ought to be pursued is quite clear. The result of allowing such a state of matters to continue without anything being done to meet the evil complained of, is well evidenced in the present deplorable condition of Ireland. However much parties may differ as to the precise way in which that unhappy country ought to have been dealt with, few indeed will venture to affirm that in entirely ignoring its claims, and in compelling it to submit to a form of Government with which it is dissatisfied it has received justice. Had even a modified form of Home Government been granted, the rash revolutionary spirit, fraught with all manner of excesses would, in all probability never have been known, and now scarce a corner of the country is free from its influence. It would be going too far to say that even the semblance of such a spirit exists in Scotland, but Scotchmen, although quiet, are determined, and if they see the interests of their country injuriously affected by the negligence of an over-burdened Parliament, they will not shrink from doing anything to secure its rights. TACITUS.