

common justice. Sometimes it may seem that this is why they receive so little attention. It almost looks as if British governments will yield only to violence, or at least to non-violent disobedience to the law: Ireland and Ulster and the suffragettes and Cyprus and India are cases in point. Amid all the Scottish discontents there have been extraordinarily few outbreaks of this kind – the defacing of some pillar boxes, the ‘lifting’ of a Scottish stone from Westminster Abbey, a couple of misguided Scottish students imprisoned, not because they did anything destructive, but because they were found in possession of explosives alleged to have been supplied by the police. The bogey of a Scottish Republican Army comparable to the I.R.A. never had any basis in fact. Intemperate language may have been used by some agitators, but the Scots are a law-abiding race and could not even under great provocation take to the shooting which won Ireland her freedom. They still retain a pathetic belief that the voice of reason may be listened to even in the United Kingdom. Is it too much to ask that our English brothers should be wise and generous enough to understand?

Perhaps I may be allowed to end by adopting as my own the words of a private letter sent to me by one of the wisest men in Scotland – Sir Thomas Taylor, Principal of Aberdeen University – shortly before his untimely death.

‘Personally I am so sick of the mess that is being made of my native country that I should be glad of anything that would arouse contention and even passion, rather than that things should be allowed to slide.’

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