The British Government are actuated by an earnest desire to end the unhappy divisions between Great Britain and Ireland which have produced so many conflicts in the past and which have once more shattered the peace and well-being of Ireland at the present time. They long with His Majesty the King, in the words of His Gracious Speech in Ireland last month, for a satisfactory solution of "those age-long Irish problems which for generations embarrassed our forefathers, as they now weigh heavily upon us"; and they wish to do their utmost to secure that "every man of Irish birth, whatever be his creed and wherever be his home, should work in loyal co-operation with the free communities on which the British Empire is based". They are convinced that the Irish people may find as worthy and as complete an expression of their political and spiritual ideals within the Empire as any of the numerous and varied nations united in allegiance to His Majesty's Throne; and they desire such a consummation, not only for the welfare of Great Britain, Ireland and the Empire as a whole, but also for the cause of peace and harmony throughout the world. There is no part of the world where Irishmen have made their home but suffers from our ancient feuds; no part of it but looks to this meeting between the British Government and the Irish leaders to resolve these feuds in a new understanding.
honourable and satisfactory to all the peoples involved.

The free nations which compose the British Empire are drawn from many races, with different histories, traditions, and ideals. In the Dominion of Canada, British and French have long forgotten the bitter conflicts which divided their ancestors. In South Africa, the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State have joined with two British colonies to make a great self-governing union under His Majesty’s sway. The British people cannot believe that where Canada and South Africa, with equal or even greater difficulties have so signally succeeded, Ireland will fail; and they are determined that so far as they themselves can assure it, nothing shall hinder Irish statesmen from joining together to build up an Irish State in free and willing co-operation with the other peoples of the Empire.

Moved by these considerations, the British Government invite Ireland to take her place in the great association of free nations over which His Majesty reigns. As earnest of their desire to obliterare old quarrels and to enable Ireland to face the future with her own strength and hope they propose that Ireland shall assume forthwith the status of a Dominion with all the powers and privileges set forth in this document. By the adoption of Dominion status, it is understood that Ireland shall enjoy complete autonomy in taxation and finance; that she shall maintain her own courts of Law and Judges; that she shall maintain her own military forces for Home Defence, her own Constabulary and her own Police; that she shall take over the Irish postal services and all matters relating thereto, education, land, agriculture, mines and minerals, forestry, housing,
labour, unemployment, transport, trade, public health, health insurance and the liquor traffic; and, in sum, that she shall exercise all those powers and privileges upon which the autonomy of the self-governing Dominions is based, subject only to the considerations set out in the ensuing paragraphs. Guaranteed in theseo liberties, which no foreign people can challenge without challenging the Empire as a whole, the Dominions hold each and severally by virtue of their British fellowship a standing amongst the nations equivalent, not merely to their individual strength, but to the combined power and influence of all the nations of the Commonwealth. That guarantee, that fellowship, that freedom the whole Empire looks to Ireland to accept.

To this settlement the British Government are prepared to give immediate effect upon the following conditions, which are, in their opinion, vital to the welfare and safety of both Great Britain and Ireland, forming as they do the heart of the Commonwealth.

I. The common concern of Great Britain and Ireland in the defence of their interests by land and sea shall be mutually recognised. Great Britain lives by sea-borne food; her communications depend upon the freedom of the great sea routes. Ireland lies at Britain's side across the sea-ways north and south that link her with the sister nations of the Empire, the markets of the world and the vital sources of her food supply. In recognition of this fact, which nature has imposed and no statesmanship can change, it is essential that the Royal Navy alone should control the seas around Ireland and Great Britain,
and that such rights and liberties should be accorded to it by the Irish State as are essential for naval purposes in the Irish harbours and on the Irish coast.

II. In order that the movement towards the limitation of armaments which is now making progress in the world should in no way be hampered, it is stipulated that the Irish Territorial Force shall within reasonable limits conform in respect of numbers to the military establishments of the other part of these islands.

III. The position of Ireland is also of great importance for the air services both military and civil. The Royal Air Force will need facilities for all purposes that it serves; and Ireland will form an essential link in the development of air routes between the British Isles and the North American Continent. It is therefore stipulated that Great Britain shall have all necessary facilities for the development of defence and of communications by air.

IV. Great Britain hopes that Ireland, will in due course and of her own free will contribute in proportion to her wealth to the Regular Naval Military and Air Forces of the Empire. It is further assumed that voluntary recruitment for these forces will be permitted throughout Ireland, particularly for those famous Irish Regiments which have so long and so gallantly served His Majesty in all parts of the world.
V. While the Irish people shall enjoy complete autonomy in taxation and finance, it is essential to prevent a recurrence of ancient differences between the two islands, and in particular to avert the possibility of ruinous trade wars. With this object in view, the British and Irish Governments shall agree to impose no protective duties or other restrictions upon the flow of transport, trade and commerce between all parts of these islands.

VI. The Irish people shall agree to assume responsibility for a share of the present debt of the United Kingdom and of the liability for pensions arising out of the Great War, the share, in default of agreement between the Governments concerned, to be determined by an independent arbitrator appointed from within His Majesty's Dominions.

In accordance with these principles, the British Government propose that the conditions of settlement between Great Britain and Ireland shall be embodied in the form of a Treaty, to which effect shall in due course be given by the British and Irish Parliaments. They look to such an instrument to obliterate old conflicts forthwith, to clear the way for a detailed settlement in full accordance with Irish conditions and needs, and thus to establish a new and happier relation between Irish patriotism and that wider community of aims and interests by which the unity of the whole Empire is freely sustained.

The form in which the settlement is to take effect will depend upon Ireland herself. It must allow for full recognition of the existing powers and privileges...
of the parliament and government of Northern Ireland, which cannot be abrogated except by their own consent.
For their part the British Government entertain an earnest hope that the necessity of harmonious co-operation amongst Irishmen of all classes and creeds will be recognised throughout Ireland, and they will welcome the day when by these means unity is achieved. But no such common action can be secured by force. Union came in Canada by the free consent of the Provinces. So in Australia; so in South Africa. It will come in Ireland by no other way than consent. There can, in fact, be no settlement on terms involving, on the one side or the other, that bitter appeal to bloodshed and violence which all men of good will are longing to terminate. The British Government will undertake to give effect, so far as that depends on them, to any terms in this respect on which all Ireland unites. But in no conditions can they consent to any proposals which would kindle civil war in Ireland. Such a war would not touch Ireland alone, for partisans would flock to either side from Great Britain, the Empire, and elsewhere with consequences more devastating to the welfare both of Ireland and the Empire than the conflict to which a truce has been called this month. Throughout the Empire there is a deep desire that the day of violence should pass and that a solution should be found, consonant with the highest ideals and interests of all parts of Ireland, which will enable her to co-operate as a willing partner in the British Commonwealth.

The British Government will therefore leave Irishmen themselves to determine by negotiation between them whether the new powers which the pact defines shall be taken over by Ireland as a whole and administered
by a single Irish body, or taken over separately by Southern and Northern Ireland, with or without a joint authority to harmonise their common interests. They will willingly assist in the negotiation of such a settlement, if Irishmen should so desire.

By these proposals the British Government sincerely believe that they will have shattered the foundations of that ancient hatred and distrust which have disfigured our common history for centuries past. The future of Ireland within the Commonwealth is for the Irish people to shape.

In the foregoing proposals the British Government have attempted no more than the broad outline of a settlement. The details they leave for discussion when the Irish people have signified their acceptance of the principle of this pact.

(sgd) D. LLOYD GEORGE.

10, Downing Street, S. W. I.,
July 20th, 1921,