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Crisis and Decline: The Fate of the Southern Unionists

Von R.B. McDowell

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Von R.B. McDowell : Crisis and Decline: The Fate of the Southern Unionists before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Crisis and Decline: The Fate of the Southern Unionists:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Great read for those interested in Irish history/society/pol Von Ein Kunde Crisis and Decline is an engrossing and much-needed study of the Unionist (largely Protestant) community in the south of Ireland from the 1880s through Irish

independence and the civil war to the 1930s. The author, a fellow at Trinity College Dublin, draws heavily from first-person sources as well as government and economic statistical abstracts to paint a thorough, if not quite complete picture of a once-powerful minority. Beginning with the Unionist convention in Dublin in 1885, it follows the political and economic trajectory of the Southern Unionists from the birth of the Unionist Party through the Home Rule bill debates, their abandonment by the Ulster Unionists in 1918 and the British withdrawal from the 26 counties in 1922. More interesting, however, are dozens of first hand accounts and testimonies of the southern minority's experiences during the Irish War of Independence and Civil War. Collected from all walks of life and all regions of the 26 counties, the book paints a vivid picture of a once-vibrant community in disarray. The author has also included an autobiographical sketch of his days at Trinity in the 1930s and 40s, an interesting account of the Trinity and Dublin of the Emergency period, of special interest to those familiar with or seeking historical/social background to the Dublin and Trinity College of Donleavy's *The Ginger Man*. This book may be a disappointment to those seeking a deeper analysis of the effects of the decline of the Protestant community in the 26 counties on the economic, political, and cultural life of the Irish Republic and its implications for current developments in Ireland as a whole. While good use is made of empirical/statistical evidence, it is nevertheless intended to be a largely anecdotal history, at which it succeeds. *Crisis and Decline* is a worthwhile read for all those interested in the history, politics, culture and society of Ireland in the decades immediately preceding and following independence.

Kurzbeschreibung Receding imperialism usually leaves behind those who have for generations staunchly upheld its authority and flourished under its aegis-Germans in Bohemia, Swedes in Finland, Greeks in Asia Minor, Muslims in the Balkans. Among those abandoned adherents of a lost cause were the unionists in the south and west of Ireland'. So begins R.B. McDowell's preface to this lively, meticulously researched account of the fate of Irish unionists outside Ulster from the era of Parnell through the early years of the Irish Free State. McDowell details the efforts of a ruling minority to maintain the union between Britain and Ireland, and tells the story of what became of them during and after the Anglo-Irish war and the handing over of the twenty-six counties. The bastions of Southern unionism- Trinity College Dublin, *The Irish Times*- come under sympathetic scrutiny from a man who became intimately acquainted with the ex-unionist world while a student at Trinity in the 1930s, as chronicled in a colourful afterword. *Crisis and Decline* also records the testimony of ordinary unionists- farmers, shopkeepers, policemen, and others- who sought compensation for losses suffered during the 1920s. McDowell gives us a nuanced portrait of a distinctive social group, much mythologized in literature but hitherto neglected by historians, who clung steadfastly to a doomed vision of Ireland within the British Empire.

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Synopsis This is an account of the fate of Irish unionists outside of Ulster from the era of Parnell through the early years of the Irish Free State. The author details the efforts of a ruling minority to maintain the union between Britain and Ireland, and what happened to them during and after the Anglo-Irish war and the handing over of the 26 counties. He sympathetically scrutinizes such places of southern unionism as Trinity College, "*The Irish Times*", and the Dublin social clubs; as he became acquainted with the ex-unionist world while a student at Trinity College.