

specious fallacies by which they are urged on. The recent admirable Charge of the Archbishop of Dublin (Dr. Plunket), has dealt very forcibly and faithfully with these matters. His figures and arguments deserve the careful attention of all who would favour the dissolution of the Union or the establishment of a separate Parliament in Dublin.

In discussing the question "Who are the Irish People?" he has evidently struck the key-note of the whole controversy. He says with only too much truth that not merely the so-called Nationalist Press, but leading English journals, have used the term 'Irish People' as if it were applicable exclusively to one section of the population. Such writers would divide the country into three sections, 'the home of the Scotch Presbyterians in the north, of the English Churchmen in the east, and of the Irish Roman Catholics in the west and south.' This he shows to be decidedly unfair and untrue. What are the facts of the case? Not one of those sections can arrogate to itself the title of the Irish People. The population of Ireland, like that of England, has been formed of a fusion of races. The blood of many nations, Celtic, Saxon, Danish, Norman, Spanish, French, and Scotch, is inseparably intermingled in their veins. 'No section, whether geographical, political, or religious, has a right to claim that designation for itself.' Representatives of all the most ancient families of Ireland are to be found amongst the leading members of the Irish Church. So far from that Church having title or no standing-ground outside the Province of Ulster, more than a quarter of a million of its sons reside in the other provinces. In the Diocese of Dublin alone there are at least 100,000 Churchmen. To this we may add that, according to the returns of the last census, Protestants of all denominations number 1,173,600, or one-third of the population, and that of these 639,500 are members of the Church of Ireland. Moreover, it should be remembered that a large proportion of Roman Catholics of the higher classes—landed proprietors, merchants and traders—are decided Unionists. Are the vital interests and cherished convictions of all these to be treated as of no moment, and a mere numerical majority of an illiterate and ignorant peasantry, who have no substantial stake in the country, to ride rough-shod over their superiors? This discussion, however, would lead us too far. We would simply now draw attention to the bearing of the whole matter upon the Church. There seems no reason to doubt that, if the schemes of Parnell and his confederates should succeed, they would adopt measures which must drive Protestant landlords from the country, and that with them would be withdrawn the principal sources of support from the Reformed Church and the other Protestant bodies to which they belong. The clergy, with incomes already in many cases reduced to a bare pittance, would be unable to maintain themselves, much less their churches. We cannot, indeed, believe that a church which has done so much good work, and has been such a faithful witness for the truth, would be altogether extinguished. Man's extremity would be God's opportunity. Still, the prospect would be very dark.

One question remains: What is the attitude of the Roman hierarchy in this crisis? They must be well aware of the tendency of such revolutionary schemes, nor can they regard them with unconcern. Surely, with the immense power that they wield over the consciences of their flocks, they could, if they would, turn the scales against these disturbers of order and peace. Have they any desire to do so? or can it be that they see too plainly that all this agitation is secretly doing their own work by sapping the foundations of the Reformed Church, and that, if it be successful, the hated Protestants will be banished, and the ascendancy of Rome will be complete?

The Archbishop, with the caution and charity befitting his high position, gives them credit for better intentions. He traces the Home Rule movement to a great unseen power on the other side of the Atlantic; and then asks, 'Have they (the Roman priests) no reason to fear the effect of this agitation, if the end should be to make Ireland the prey of Continental Secularists and Communists men whom the Church of Rome numbers amongst her most deadly foes? It may be so, and they would do well to heed the warning. But the recent action of Archbishop Croke, in raising the cry, 'No taxes' does not give much assurance of their doing so. Alliance with such godless and inhuman enemies of society and all religion must eventually recoil in well-merited judgment on the heads of all who are drawn into it; and into the pit they have digged for others they will at last fall themselves.

However this may be, the peril to the Irish Church, and to Scriptural religion in that land, is only too evident. We English Churchmen, who value our own privileges, are therefore bound to use all our influence to avert such a catastrophe from our brethren. Let Liberals and Conservatives rally loyally around the present Government, as the only possible break-water against the seething waves of anarchy and confusion. Their task is herculean, and will require their utmost wisdom and united strength. In the face of the most vexatious obstructions and opposition they have to restore loyalty and order in that distracted country, and then to devise such legislation as may tend to the best interests of all classes and creeds, and promote the peace and prosperity of all her Majesty's law-abiding subjects.—*B. W. in Church Bells.*

#### CLERICAL PUFFERY.

Human nature being what it is, we need hardly wonder that, even among the clergy, men should be found who will stoop to the arts of self-praise and puffery. But it is a surprising thing that any reputable clergyman should try to exalt himself—or some self-seeking parishioner do it for him—at the expense of his predecessors, *when he is himself reaping the fruits of their sowing.*

Mr. Blank has possibly hardly got settled in the rectory at Wady Petrea before we hear, not only of his great successes, but it is told in such a way as to convey, and designedly so, a sort of *censure* upon his predecessors in office. We are told that the "members of the Church of the Holy Twins, now, at last, begin to realise that they have a great work to do for Christ and His Church." You see they have only *begun* to realise it. It is all due to the *new* rector. The implication is that now, at last, the Church of the Holy Twins has found "the right man" in the person of "the present rector." Then, again, we are assured that, though Mr. Blank has been rector only for a year, new families have been enrolled, and then follows a long list of figures, including the number of "parochial calls" even, and many like items of equal moment. Everything written is meant to extol "the present rector," and, by implication at least, imply that the former rectors of the Church of the Holy Twins did not amount to anything, etc. Wait five years, and then see if Mr. Blank is so in love with Wady Petrea.

Young men who mean to be Bishops, if they can, might well remember how a wise and pious man once said:—"Extol not thyself for the height of thy stature, or the beauty of thy person, which may be disfigured or destroyed by a little sickness. Take not pleasure in thy natural gifts or wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever thou hast by nature. Esteem not thyself better than others, lest perhaps in God's

sight, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse than they. Be not proud of well-doing; for the judgment of God is far different from the judgment of men, and that often offendeth Him which pleases them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou mayst conserve humility within thee."—OBSERVER, in *Church Press.*

#### THE INCREDULITY OF THOMAS.

Dr. Hanna thus concludes a chapter in his "Life of Christ" in regard to the above. "The title given" (our Lord by St. Thomas, My Lord, my God) "conveying as it did so distinct and emphatic a testimony to that divinity, Jesus at once, as if it were by His birthright, accepts. But though He refuses not the tendered homage, He passes no such approving judgment on him who presents it, as He had formerly done upon Peter, when he had made a like confession of his faith, and Christ had called him blessed. Instead of this, Christ administers now a mild but effective rebuke:—"Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." Christ could not mean by saying so, to declare that he who believes without seeing is more blessed than he who upon sight believes; for that would exalt the weakest believer now above the strongest believer of Christ's own age. The idea that Jesus evidently intended to convey was this, that of two kinds of faith equally strong, that was to him a more acceptable, and to the possessor a more peace-giving one, which rested on reasonable testimony in absence of personal observation, than that which would not yield to such kind of evidence, and demanded that ocular demonstration should be given. It was, in fact, as addressed to Thomas, a distinct enough yet delicate intimation, that his faith had been all the more acceptable to his Master if it had not been delayed so long. But though this was the primary meaning of the saying, it is not without its bearings upon those who, like ourselves, have not seen, and yet are called to believe. The spirit of Thomas still lives among us. Have we not often detected ourselves, thinking at least, if not saying, that, had we lived in the days of Jesus Christ,—had we seen what those disciples saw,—we would not have doubted as they did; that, give us but the evidence that they had, and our doubts would disappear? We practice thus a strange deception upon ourselves. We transfer ourselves in fancy to those scenes of the Gospel history, carrying with us all the ideas of our age, forgetting that very different were the ideas of the men of that generation, who, though they had the advantage of the sight, had the disadvantage of the prejudices of their country and epoch. So equalised in point of advantage and of responsibility do we believe the two periods to have been, that we may safely affirm, that the men of this generation who will not believe in the testimony of the original eye-witnesses, had they been of that generation, would not have believed though they had been the eye-witnesses themselves. He who now says, 'I will not believe till I see,' would not, even seeing, have then believed.

Two closing reflections are offered. *First*, Take this case of Thomas, his throwing himself at once at his Master's feet, exclaiming, My Lord, my God, as a most instructive instance of the exercise and expression of a true loving, affectionate, appropriating faith. It is outgoing, self-forgetting, Christ-engrossed. No raising by Thomas of any question as to whether one who had been incredulous so long, would be unwelcome when at last he believed. No occupation of mind or heart with any personal considerations whatever. Christ is there before him; thought to be lost, more than recovered;