

dearly beloved; we must be as brave as lions in encountering every enemy that stands between us and our God. We must be as brave as the bravest warriors and soldiers in fighting with our own passions, in restraining our own base inclinations, in asserting, openly and fearlessly, every principle of our holy religion, not only in the profession of our lips, but in the practice of our lives. But, on the other hand, when it is a question of crossing the path of God,—of meeting Him, and presenting ourselves and our lives before Him,—oh! we must be filled with salutary Christian fear, without which no man can be saved; for it is written: "Without fear it is impossible to be saved."

To inspire in us that necessary fear of God,—fear of His anger, fear of His judgment, and fear of offending Him,—Almighty God has revealed to us how He deals with His enemies. He expressly tells us that their fate and doom shall be, if they have the misfortune to fall into the hands of an angry God. St. Paul says:—"It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of God." A terrible thing! The sinner pushes forward in his career of sin recklessly, fearlessly, perhaps triumphantly, until he ceases to be ashamed of sin. He sins until sin becomes his very nature, every word falling from his lips profanity, blasphemy, obscenity; every glance of his eye shooting forth evidence of impurity; every grace neglected, and every truth of religion despised and scoffed at. And so he goes on, an enemy of God. Evil is in his heart. "There is no God," he says, "for me there is no God, but pleasure and enjoyment." Oh, but the Almighty God is a witness of his life and crimes, patiently, but with what terribly accumulating anger! Crossing that sinner's path, in a thousand ways, to try to turn him aside; speaking now words of sweetness and warning; now words of threat; beseeching him for the love of God's own Son, to turn to the Lord, to shake off his impurity, to rise from out that infamy in which he wallows, to rise as a child of the Lord, and walk forth a son of God. And to every word of God, whether a word of love or warning,—the sinner turns a deaf ear. He will not listen to the words of the preacher. He despises and ignores the sacraments of God. He passes Him by as if he knew Him not. By his own act he is sinking himself more and more deeply into sin, refusing every help and every favor of Almighty God; until at length the moment comes when the sinner's death awaits him. He dies in his sin. He is taken suddenly in the midst of his iniquity, cherishing, perhaps, the vain, foolish, groundless hope, that the mercy which he despised will be available. Now, we have seen his judgment—that terrible meeting between the soul and God. The sentence is passed:—"Oh, soul of man, thou art not fit for Heaven. I cannot receive thee into My kingdom. The language of Heaven thou couldst not understand. It is a language of purity and love. The joys of Heaven thou couldst not appreciate; they are spiritual: thou art altogether sensual." What remains, dearly beloved? This fearful truth which I am now to put before you. For him who is unfit for Heaven, nothing remains but a sentence of eternal torments in the flames of hell.

Consider what that doom of the sinner is, as revealed by divine faith. It inflicts, dearly beloved, three distinct features of sorrow:—the sorrow of the soul for the privation of God; the active pains superadded to this, in the torments of the soul; and, finally, after the last day and the general resurrection, the pain of sense that shall feature the reprobate body. First of all, the soul of the sinner that dies in his sins, shall never behold, never enjoy the presence of the Almighty God, but will be forever separated from the Lord God. What does this mean? The soul is created in Saint and sinner like unto the image and likeness of God. Saint and sinner, alike, possess one element of this spiritual nature, one particular thing, and it is this:—God is a necessity of the soul, the natural necessity, the absolute necessity. God created that soul for Himself, and He gave to that soul three powers, all tending necessarily towards God. He gave the power of knowledge, the power of love, and the power of enjoyment. The power of knowledge, for every intelligence which is in the soul necessarily seeks the light. That intellect was created for knowledge, and knowledge it must seek. Blot out that light from it and you will blight it for ever. The first passion of that soul seeks naturally and necessarily some fair object of its love. Deprive it of the power of loving and you blight it. The will naturally and necessarily seeks for enjoyment. Deprive it of its enjoyment and you blight it for ever. Now, God is light, the object of the intelligence; God is love, the object of the heart; God is infinite happiness and blessedness. Thus we behold him the object and desire of the soul of man. And this is true of saint and sinner alike. Nay, more, in order that this truth may come home to each and every one amongst us, the Almighty God has passed this sentence on the soul of man: "Thou shalt never be satisfied except in Me," says the Lord. Seek what light you may of knowledge, you never can satisfy your intellect. You might study for a hundred years, master all the sciences, and analyze all the elements of this body; you might have, says St. Paul, all knowledge; and when you have acquired all this, the end would be a greater craving than ever. You would feel the unsatisfied intelligence seeking to know something more, and that something more is Almighty God. The thirst for eternal knowledge shall be satisfied only when the soul appears before God. Even the Pagan philosophers, miracles of knowledge, cried out, "Ars longa, vita brevis est."—"Art is long, life is short." To the heart of man Almighty God has said: "Go, seek for love; go, seek for every form of conceivable enjoyment; deny thyself nothing; and, in the end of all, the famished heart will break into despair because God alone can satisfy it." Where is there a man who has ever been able to say, "I have sinned until I found myself perfectly happy?" No, for in the midst of the enjoyment comes forth the anguished cry of despair. The soul, created for God, if it seeks enjoyment outside of God, never can be satisfied. The doom of that soul, separated in situ from the body, will be darkness and eternal separation from that object for which it was created, and unavailable and interminable regret for which it can never possess, yet which it was created to enjoy. This is the greatest pain of hell, and if Almighty God had never enlightened those torments that sprung up under the breath of His anger;—if hell never resounded to the cry of the agonized soul or tortured body; if there was nothing there but the mere absence of God,—that eternal silence, darkness and unavailing longing for that God would constitute a hell inconceivable in its torments.

Reflect! The moment the soul is separated from the body—the moment the body lies there dead, and the soul has gone into the regions of eternity, the soul resumes all the privileges of its spirituality; and amongst these is that it can think with the energy of an angel on one fixed object without the slightest distraction; that it can concentrate all its power of love on one object, so that not the slightest affection or thought for any other will interfere with that absorbing passion. Separate it from the body, and restore it to the privileges of a pure spirit, and out of the very necessity of its spiritual nature, the emancipated soul, springing to God from the moment of the sinner's death, for all eternity will be fixed on God. Here we cannot think of God for five consecutive minutes. If we kneel down to pray, we find our poor souls distracted by a thousand other thoughts. We cannot concentrate our thoughts on God with undivided attention. But the moment of death puts an end to all that. The soul fastens on the idea of God, whether in heaven or hell, and contemplates for all eternity His wisdom, His grandeur, and the perfections of His divine nature; and conceives such an idea of God that

every effective power of the soul is wrapt in contemplation, until absorbed in one desire to possess God. In Heaven the contemplation of God is the natural delight and happiness of the soul, evolved out of the omnipotence of His own divine perfections—a beauty ever ancient but always new. In Heaven they admire Him with all the ardor of their spirit, and all that He is He communicates to them to feast on. The damned in hell brood on God, and think on Him just as much as the blessed, and they contemplate a beauty that they can never enjoy; they are thinking of a light which can never shed one ray of its brightness on them, longing for a love that they never can feast on. And this one thought of God, ever present, becomes the terrible torture of the damned.

Even in this world, dearly beloved, distracted as we are with a thousand cares, sorrow is one of the master passions of the soul, and that sorrow is increased in proportion to the excellence of the object for which we sigh in vain. We lose a friend, a father or mother; a young husband loses his wife, or the widow is left to lament over a faithful husband; at first, whilst the memory of that grief is fresh, for the first few days after that terrible loss, the soul cannot think of anything but its own misery, the vision of the departed lost one is ever before its eyes, and if that grief continues—the grief which the young mother feels when laying her first-born in the grave—if that grief continued in all its intensity, why it would turn that life into misery.—During the first burst of sorrow the afflicted one cannot sleep, or rest, or turn the attention to anything; it is absorbed, wrapped up in grief; and why? Because the mind is fixed on one thing—the object lost. Now, if that thought were fixed, not for a day, but for the rest of the life, why that thought would grow into the mind as to become a mania. It would turn the creature mad. The damned souls in hell contemplate for all eternity the one thought of their God lost to them; and then comes the agonizing thought that their God is lost to them through their own fault. And the soul contemplates the ineffable joy of those possessing the Kingdom of God.—"Some one who lived with me in this world, who had the same passions and temptations, but conquered them; the man who was my friend, who sought in vain to turn me aside from the ways of sin, who counselled me, whom I used to laugh at, is now in Heaven with God, amidst the choirs of His angels and saints, filled with every joy and happiness. Here I am; and oh! I cannot for one moment separate my thoughts from that God whom I can never behold."

Out of this contemplation of Heaven, and the thousand reflections of the mind on that thought, will be excited the most ardent desire and love of God. It is impossible for any one in Heaven, earth, or hell, to be constantly thinking of God without loving Him. Why, it is this that enables the poor nun to shut herself out from life, to give up home and friends for a penitential life. Because she can think of God and love Him. Yes, the desire for God is the master passion of the heart. It is the master passion even in hell. The blessed in Heaven do not desire Him, because they enjoy Him. The damned, by the very condition of their damnation, would not be able to tell Almighty God that they hate God, in the self-same way, so terribly, that they were sorry for their sins, even if promised redemption. They cannot help it; it is their doom. There is nothing more terrible amongst the passions of man than when love and hatred clash together—when a man feels he cannot help loving some one, and yet there is something to hate him for; he would feel glad to see him destroyed, and yet if anything happened, his own heart would break. Whenever such a passion exists it is a foretaste of hell!

Add to this, that Almighty God has enkindled in that place of his wrath the flame which will never expire. The fire (ignis eternum) will burn unto the last days of hell. A fire so wonderful that it will have power to torment not merely the bodies of the damned, but even their souls, which, according to nature, ought to be independent of flame or fire. It will bring to that creature every torture of which the heart or mind of man is capable. Hope is not only deferred, but extinguished; the rage of despair remains that never shall die, the awful rage of jealousy against those who are enjoying Heaven.—After the day of general resurrection, when, at the summons of the angel's trumpet, hell will yield forth its souls of reprobation from their house of flame, and, entering into the grave, they will again inhabit the bodies in which they sinned and worked out their own destruction. Raging in despair, the souls will enter into those bodies which brought them to hell. Body and soul alike will be swallowed up in the devouring flame, boiling the very blood in the veins and the marrow in the bones. This agony shall never cease, nor the cry of despair. How long is this to last? Perhaps once in a thousand years the pain of hell would be suspended for a moment's breathing time? No, no. If one moment of rest were given in a million of years, hell would be heaven, for they would live for a million of years in the hope of a moment's rest. But their despair knows no intermission.

The question may suggest itself, dearly beloved, is it possible Almighty God can be the author of so much torture as this? Does He not tell us He is a God of mercy and love? Is it possible that Almighty God so far forgets His mercy as to enkindle the flame of hell? If we made God only the rewarder of the good we would be robbing Him of the attribute of His justice. It is fashionable nowadays to dispute hell's torments. Men say it is incompatible with the goodness of God to punish in hell; but they don't say it is incompatible with His justice to give the joys of heaven. St. Augustine says:—"If Almighty God rewards the just with eternal joy, He would neither be wise, knowing how to discriminate between friend and foe, nor would He be just, if He did not sentence His enemies to eternal torments." "Thy perdition is from thyself, oh Israel." God will not that any sinner should go down to hell, and He sent down His own Divine Son from heaven, in order that souls might not go down to hell. In view of all this, is there a man here to-night in mortal sin who will refuse to be converted? If you do, then do not throw the blame on God. Be wise in time, and come to your God in Christian sorrow. "The Lord cries out, "I am come, not for the just, but to bring sinners to repentance." Do not rob your God of the privilege of His mercy, which He offers to all who turn to Him with true and sincere repentance.

AN ENGLISH FREETHINKER ON THE GERMAN PERSECUTION.

(From the London Tablet.)
The Fortnightly Review contains a noteworthy article by Mr. Frederic Harrison on "Public Affairs," in the course of which he reviews the situation in Germany, and states his opinion as an "English Freethinker." As such, he says, he has only to consider how far the new Church legislation of Germany meets the conditions of a policy of wisdom. He states his principles as a Freethinker so far as they affect this nation; and the first is—No State Church; the second is, No State interference with opinion;—that opinion be it religious or anti-religious, wise or foolish, must be left to the influence of opinion and not to that of the police that before they act, opinion must have actively invaded their domain, and that it does not belong to them to invade the domain of opinion; that when opinion takes action within the domain of the laws ensuring public order, public morality or public decency, then and then only is it within the domain of the State; that is to say, the sole function of the State is to punish the illegal action, and not to amend the vicious opinion. His third principle is that the attempt by the State to control great organizations

within it by any other machinery except by punishing acts of the members contrary to law, is a policy which is futile and mischievous. Applying these principles to the German policy, he says that it is obvious at a glance that the new laws introduce as rigid a system of State intervention in religion as it is possible to conceive; and that this is not so much the creating of a new State Church, as it is rather the creating a new religious department of the State.

As to the objection which is sometimes urged that the Catholic Church in Prussia is a State Church and that, since it accepts State endowment, it cannot complain of State control, however stringent and obnoxious; he says that it is well to remember that the Catholic Church is not a State Church in any sense in which the Church of England is a State Church. It has no exclusive right, no precedence, no endowments. Its ancient possessions and endowments have been at different times surrendered to the State, which commuted them to a money payment. The Catholics in Prussia stand on the same footing as every other religious community. All communions, Jews included, receive payments from the State in the ratio of their numbers out of the general taxation, and what Catholics receive as a community, is simply what Catholics, as a body, pay to the religious tax. A certain portion of the general taxation is set aside for religious uses, and when each community receives its share, it is only getting back its contribution to the general burden. Hence, he says, if the common religious stipend were withheld from Catholics, justice would require that Catholics should be free from the proportionate part of the taxation; otherwise, whilst contributing their quota to the taxation for religious purposes, they would receive no part of it themselves; or, in other words, the Catholics in Prussia would be taxed for the direct support of every religion but their own. The Catholic Church there is in no other sense a State Church than that the State undertakes to collect the religious contributions of the Catholic community, and to pay them over to the Church.

Mr. Harrison says that there is ground for thinking that the Catholic Church itself would willingly surrender its entire State endowment, which he represents as nearly amounting to £260,000, but that this is the last thing which the Prussian Government desires. "Prince Bismarck before all things will not let the people go. He has no wish to disestablish and disendow the Catholic Church. He is bent on making it a State machine. He wants it a mere official body. He needs it to control the Catholic population in the interests of the State.—He wants to make that bargain with it which in some slight degree it was once suspected our Government wanted to make with Archbishop Colton. The most dreadful alternative of all to Prince Bismarck would be that the Church in Prussia should be as little of a State Church as the Catholic Church in Ireland. He will not suffer the Catholic population of Germany to pay their own priests, and to maintain their own schools. His grand idea is a plain official bureau (whether worked by renegade Catholics, Old-Catholics, or common tools, is unimportant) which shall use the name of the Catholic religion to control Catholic votes, to drill the Catholic population through an obsequious official priesthood. If this is not the quintessence of a State Church, State interference in religion, and State control of opinion, what do these things mean?"

He mentions another argument which is sometimes urged that—however oppressive such a system of law would be against other communities—the pernicious action of the Catholic Church makes it a justifiable mode of defence. This, he says, "in the flabby commonplace which passes for 'principle' in so many fluid brains is called 'resisting Ultramontane aggression.'" But, he asks, "if we press and test these phrases, what do we find? If these laws are exceptionally aimed at a peculiar and dangerous religious organization, why are they not confined to that object? And if the Catholic Church is fermenting rebellion, sedition, or treason, try the guilty Catholics, Churchmen, or laymen, under the laws of rebellion, sedition, or treason."

Mr. Harrison compares Queen Elizabeth's intervention in religion with that of the German Emperor; and here, he says, was a measure of policy, not of religious interference. "Durlough and Elizabeth would have smiled at a scheme for making her the head of the Catholic as well as the head of the Protestant Church."

Mr. Harrison concludes this portion of his article with some words which express our own ideas.—"This new legislation, so laughable, but that it is backed by huge material force, will utterly collapse, and that ere long. The veil so artfully thrown over our eyes by 'inspired' correspondents, who told us that the measure was popular is now being torn away. We know now that it is arousing fierce hostility in the Catholic population of Prussia (more than one-third of the whole). . . . If Bismarck continues in his present path, it must ruin him and his new Empire."

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION.—The political thermometer is steadily rising in favour of the Conservatives, hour by hour, and the chances are that in a short time from now they will possess a working majority of 40. Before going further, I think it may be well to clear away, for the benefit of our readers, some of the misapprehensions which appear to have arisen with respect to the course of procedure at this juncture. It has been stated, with a certain amount of positiveness, that Mr. Gladstone had actually resigned as far back as Friday; but a little reflection (apart from the information I have sent you to the contrary) should show the extreme improbability of such a circumstance. All that could be gained by an immediate resignation by Mr. Gladstone would be a few days in which Mr. Disraeli might arrange his cabinet; but inasmuch as that right hon. gentleman already knows what he is to expect, he can do all that is necessary in that direction even before he is summoned by the Queen. Moreover, he himself is not yet elected, and it would be morally impossible for Mr. Gladstone to put the Queen in so awkward a situation as she would be placed in if on the resignation of one Minister the only other to whom she could wisely turn were not a member of Parliament, and therefore ineligible for the summons. Therefore there is not the slightest ground to suppose that the recent rumour was well-founded.

As an illustration of the way in which the Liberals have courted defeat by internal dissension and by dividing their forces, it is observed that in the metropolitan constituency of Marylebone, in which the Conservatives won one of their greatest victories the number of Liberals who voted for Liberal candidates exceeded by about 50 per cent. the total of Conservative votes, and yet the Tories won. Similar blunders have occurred in other places, but it is small satisfaction to note this in the face of a powerful Tory majority. The only hope is that the realisation of this will bring the Liberal party to their senses.

That Mr. Disraeli anticipates an early summons is evident from his increased activity during the last few days. Quite recently the right hon. gentleman, has acquired possession of a new town residence in Whitehall-gardens, close to the House of Parliament. Yesterday afternoon he arrived in town from Hughenden, and although his promised appearance in Buckingham to-day took him away from town, he made the most use of his opportunity. I understand

that he had interviews with Lord Derby, M. G. Hardy, Sir S. Northcote, and one or two others of the leading members of his party, with the probabilities of being able to construct an effective cabinet. After his interviews with Mr. Disraeli, Lord Derby was closeted for some time on Monday with the Marquis of Salisbury. The post for which the latter is apparently best qualified, and which he prefers to take, is that which he held in 1867, viz.—The Secretaryship of India, and, therefore, if he enters the new Government, at all it will be in that capacity. Failing him, the probability is that the office will be given to Sir S. Northcote, who undertook it when Lord Salisbury parted with Mr. Disraeli in 1867. Lord Derby will return to the Foreign Office, and, as far as can be ascertained now, the principal members of the new Cabinet will be those who constituted the last Conservative administration. In the minor departments it is probable that several hitherto untried members of the party will be placed in office, and among those mentioned in this way is Mr. Lewis, the London solicitor, who now represents the city of Londonderry.

A rumour which will doubtless have special interest for your readers states that the Duke of Abercorn will resume his former Viceregal sway in the Phoenix Park. Several prominent Tories of well-tried abilities are named for the Chief Secretaryship of Ireland; but the extent of choice renders a decision on this point impracticable at this early date. One more rumour which I may give you is to the effect that Colonel Taylor, the right hon. member for Dublin county, is to receive a peerage from Mr. Disraeli as soon as his valuable services as Whip can be dispensed with.—London Corr. of Freeman.

THE HOME RULE PARTY.—It must now be evident to every one who has watched the progress of the elections, more especially in Ireland, that the Home Rule party have suffered most by the suddenness of the dissolution. No doubt a very large number of National candidates have been elected, many more than some people reckoned upon, but it is, manifest that at least four or five seats were uncontested by the Home Rulers which, if contested by respectable candidates, would have been won. Taking everything into account, however, the National party has very substantial reason to congratulate itself on the result of the election. The return of such men as Lord Robert Montagu, Lord Francis Conyngham, Mr. John George MacCarthy, and others, pledged to adopt the Home Rule programme, cannot fail to add dignity and weight to the movement and give it an impetus. The many friends of Lord Conyngham in Donegal will hear of his election with satisfaction. Already he has endeared himself to many of the inhabitants of that county by his genial disposition and affable manners, his large and expansive sympathies with the grievances of the Irish people, and his tenacious clinging to the principles he advocates. Lord Robert Montagu, ousted from an English constituency because he would not sacrifice his conscientious convictions to please an intolerant faction of religious partisans, has been elected colleague to Mr. P. J. Smyth in Westmeath. In his new capacity we have no doubt he will prove a useful member and an undoubted accession to the Home Rule party. Although entering Parliament for the first time, Mr. John George MacCarthy is no tyro in politics or in electoral contests, having conducted many for others and stood the brunt of a severe struggle himself some very short time ago. The newly-elected member for Mallow has already done much by his writings to place the question of Home Rule in a clear and intelligible light before the public. Perhaps the most powerful and exhaustive treatise yet published on the subject in his "Plea for Home Rule," which essentially marks him as a man of moderate opinions, cultured understanding, and conspicuous ability. We gladly welcome his entrance to the House of Commons, and feel persuaded that a short time will elapse before he makes his mark in the most critical assembly in the world.—Londonderry Journal.

THE NEXT STEP.—The Irish elections have well nigh run their course, and their results, if disappointing to both Whig and Tory, are by no means so to the Nationalists of Ireland—in other words, to the great mass of the Irish people. No doubt many seats that should have been filled by Home Rulers were lost in the hurry and confusion excited by the latest Gladstonian surprise. No doubt, also, that men of sterner mould than some of those who ran up the National flag at the last moment would have been selected, if the constitutional appeal to the country had not been turned into a scramble for seats by the Government artifice. Nevertheless, the broad fact remains, that, in spite of surprise and unreckoned, a working majority of the Irish representation is pledged to fight under the banner of Home Rule. So far all has gone well. Most of the constituencies from which a patriotic effort was expected have done their duty nobly. The National phalanx will be the strongest ever sent into the London Parliament to really represent the will of the Irish people. In its ranks are the picked men—the most honest and most earnest—of the Irish representation. Of the new blood there is a splendid contingent of men whose devotion to Irish Nationality is commensurate with the years they have numbered from boyhood upwards. Again, of the yet untried—of those who have been selected for fair promise rather than for yielded fruit—there is not one upon whose budding a speck of canker is discernible. From a party composed of such materials great deeds may fairly be expected. It has a great work to do, and it has great elements of success in its favour. Glorious and memorable as ever will be the results of its action, if that action be guided by wise counsel and marked by coherent union. A people disenthralled—taken out of the degrading rags of provincialism to don the ennobling attire of nationhood—the fetters that clog its heavenward progress in the educational domain—the bonds burst through that cramp its material activity—coercion obliterated from the statute book with the aggravating laws that have given it a nominal cause for existence—the angry comets of sectarian hate and party feud shut out by the sunshine of national well-being—in a word, a free and happy land, self-governed, self-sufficing, and self-respecting—this is the vision which the Home Rule party in Parliament can change into a superb reality if only its members as a whole are true to Ireland, to their pledges, and to their own honour. Let there be no mistake about this. There is not a member elected in the Three Kingdoms who does not know that the National party in Parliament holds the destiny of Ireland in its hands. There is not one so dull as to fail in comprehending the political situation, and the exact position which the Home Rulers can—may, must—occupy. Mr. Gladstone's term of office is now at an end; Mr. Disraeli steps into power instead. The men now pledged to the Home Rule cause can be absolute masters of the situation. The Tories must cease to govern whenever the Home Rulers will it. The Whigs in turn can hold the reins of government only by sufferance of the Home Rulers. In the nice poise of the two great British parties no Ministry could live six months with sixty members ready at any moment to incline the scale to either side. Legislation must become a sheer impossibility under such circumstances, until the necessary arrangement between the two countries sanctioned by the National Conference at the Rotundo is completed. It rests, therefore, with the men who have pledged themselves to that arrangement to make its completion an accomplished fact. How are they to proceed? What steps shall they take? What line of action would it be most prudent and most practicable to pursue? These are the questions which first present themselves, demanding an immediate answer.—Nation.

The Archbishop of Tuam refers in his Lenten pastoral to the ministerial crisis, and speaks of Mr. Gladstone as "a noble-minded minister who has written his name with a pencil of light, in the precious because rare record of Ireland's benefactors." His Grace, however, deprecates that the late Premier with all his keen insight into national character and comprehensive knowledge of Ireland's history should have attempted to force on the country an infidel Education Bill, and says the fate of the measure in shattering one of the strongest Governments on record should be a warning to future statesmen. Referring to the Home Rule movement his Grace says a native parliament has become indispensable since there is no hope of securing Denominational Education in all its branches from an English Parliament deeply infected with the exclusively secular spirit of the age.

OPENERS OF THE PRESS.—The position of the Home Rule party in the House of Commons, and the degree of influence which it will possess, are the questions now most actively discussed during the lull that has succeeded the political tempest. Very different views are expressed by the organs which represent the two sections of Irish Nationalists. On the one hand, there is great exultation at the splendid triumph achieved at the elections, and enthusiastic journals cling to the belief, or affect to do so, that the Home Rulers will be masters of the situation—that their organized forces will be a powerful leverage to turn the policy of the Government as they will. On the other hand, in such journals as the *Irishman* and *Flag of Ireland*, which have the reputation of being honest and straightforward, though it may be admitted that they are indiscreet, and which are certainly distinct and outspoken, it is frankly acknowledged that the Home Rule party will be impotent in the New Parliament, containing, as it does, a decided majority in favour of the Ministry. It is predicted that their voice will be stifled, and that the combination will be disintegrated or melt away. Those who profess to take a sanguine view, and to encourage popular belief in the power of the Irish party, are plainly denounced for attempting to perpetuate a delusion. These conflicting comments, from whatever motives they may spring, indicate disunion in the National rank. The sincerity of many of those who have been returned on the Home Rule card is openly impeached, and it is anticipated that they will file off in different directions when the time comes to test the reality of their professions. On the part of the League the utmost confidence is still expressed. They seem resolved to assume a bold front, and endeavour to impress the House with a sense of their importance as a compact, well-disciplined, and independent body, having but the one purpose to effect and determined to work it out by every possible means. In order to settle some plan of united action, another Conference is proposed. A circular appears to-day inviting the Home Rule members to meet in private in Dublin on Tuesday, the 3d of March. It bears the signatures of Messrs. Shaw, Bryan, Butt, The O'Conor Don, Mitchell Henry, Sir J. Gray, Ronayne, John Martin, Redmond, Digby, and Blennerhassett. The *Freeman* anticipates that the meeting of Irish members will "result in the formation of a Parliamentary party that will be strong enough to assert the claims of Ireland to self-government with success."

A petition was lodged yesterday against the return for the County Leitrim on the ground that the Returning Officer improperly rejected votes which would have turned the scale in favour of Mr. O'Beirne.—From London Times.

THE KILKENNY COAL MINES.—UNPLEASANT PROCEEDINGS.—Our Kilkenny correspondent writes:—"When the new find of coal was reached at the Clough colliery, county Kilkenny, the miners who had been brought from England, by the company which leased the mines from Mr. Bryan, M. P., celebrated the event by hoisting the Union Jack at the works. Their doing so would not have excited notice, but for the fact that underneath the Union Jack was suspended a small stripe of green bunting. This circumstance created some comment and considerable annoyance among the people in consequence of the position in which the national colour was placed. The result was that, in the course of the night, both the colours were taken away by some person or persons unknown. When this was discovered the Union Jack was again hoisted in conjunction with an orange flag. Much indignation was felt by the people, and it is to be regretted that a letter threatening to "do away" with some of the managers of the works if the flags were not removed has been received at the office of the Mining Company. The Englishmen at the works profess to be ignorant of the cause of annoyance to the people, and rumour ascribes it to the presence of some North of Ireland men amongst the miners brought from England.—Irish Times.

TIPPERARY ELECTION.—It is stated that a serious informality has been discovered in the mode in which the poll was taken in Tipperary. According to the provisions of the Ballot Act, the returning officer is bound when issuing voting papers to inscribe upon the block or counterfoil, which he retains, the number standing before the voter's name on the register, in order to secure the means of tracing the vote afterwards, should the occasion arise, but he is expressly forbidden to place any mark upon the voting paper itself. During the counting of the votes it was ascertained that the provisions had been violated by some of the presiding officers, who placed the voter's number on the voting paper as well as on the counterfoil. This enabled the returning officers, and the candidates' agents present at the scrutiny to ascertain by whom the papers had been used, and frustrated the essential object of the Act. It is stated that a petition will be lodged immediately.

EFFECTS OF THE REDEMPTORISTS' MISSION AT KINGSTOWN.—If magistrates had the same rights and privileges as judges, Mr. Woodcock would on Saturday have been entitled to a pair of white gloves from the Acting-inspector of the F Division. The criminal business at Kingstown, which for the last fortnight (since the opening of the mission by the Redemptorist Fathers) has been gradually on the decline, yesterday altogether ceased. There was not so much as a single case of drunkenness to exercise the vigilance and activity of the police. The charge book was a blank, and the dock a vacuum. The Redemptorists may, indeed, congratulate themselves upon the result of their labours, which have certainly established the fact that prevention is better than cure, and for the suppression of minor offences religion is more effectual than legislation.—Freeman.

WHITE GLOVES.—At the first session opened now in Ireland a pair of white gloves was presented to Mr. Justice Lawson. This was in Drogheda, where the election contest was the hottest. There was not a single case to be tried—neither civil or criminal. Last year, we believe, there was more than one pair of white gloves presented to the judges, and for the last two years the state of Ireland is, beyond all comparison, more peaceful than any country in Europe. The fact refutes the assertions of Mr. Disraeli, who says that lawlessness, disaffection, and veiled rebellion are the permanent consequences of Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy. Only a few cases are on for trial at the assizes of Monaghan and Dundalk, and none of them of any importance.—Dublin Irishman.

Sir William Carroll has brought an action for libel against the proprietors of *Ireland's Eye*, the new illustrated weekly journal published in Dublin. One of the first numbers of the journal contained a portrait of Sir William, which, he alleges, brought him "scandalously and ridiculously before the public in the form and costume of a clown in a circus, with one arm extended as if in solicitation, and a handkerchief pendant from his pocket on which was printed the word 'knighthood.'"

THE KILKENNY AND QUEEN'S COUNTY COAL FIELDS.—Great excitement and rejoicings have been going