

House of Commons. He had no brother, no nephew, no one nearer than a first cousin residing away in Westmeath—Mr. James Arthur Dease, of Turbotstown, who had been rejected by his own constituency quite recently when he offered himself as a Catholic Whig Imperialist. It was decided by the Kerry territorialists that the spirit of the Hebert-Kenmare compact entitled Lord Kenmare to give away his family-seat to any relative or nominee; and so Mr. Dease was announced as the new member on the Kenmare family side, for Kerry county. Popular indignation was, of course, intense; but it was as little regarded by "the high contracting parties" in Kenmare House and Mucross as would be the murmurs of a human cargo in a slave dhow. Suddenly, however, there appeared upon the scene an opposition candidate with the banner of Home Rule unfurled. He was hailed with a cry of rapture from the Shannon to the Roughy. How deep and passionate was the love of the national cause in the hearts of the priests and people of Kerry was soon seen by the welcome given to the youthful champion of Home Rule. And who was he? Scarcely more than a boy in years, though truly a man in brain and heart, and in brilliant intellect; a "ward of Chancery" indeed, barely a few months past his majority; a young Kerryman, born and cradled on the wild shores of Cahirciveen, now a student in Oxford University, where, by his gentle and amiable character as much as by his attainments as a scholar, he had won the warm friendship of his fellows, and the marked esteem of his superiors. Such was Roland Ponsonby-Blennerhassett, the young Protestant Home Ruler, who, with a quiet modesty and dignity, yet a resolute fearlessness, came forward to tear to pieces the "family compact" that yoked his country in mean thralldom, and to proclaim to the world that in Kerry the might of the people—the people alone, unfriended, nay, deserted, or betrayed by those who should have helped and fed them, but who only confederated to assail them—would win a victory for national freedom worthy to live in Irish history.

For a long time the confederated territorialists only laughed at this "mad" attempt. But it began to be clear that not only the people but the Catholic clergy were dead against the "family compact" and in favour of Home Rule. Then was cast into the scale against the people an influence which it was cruel so to use. The Catholic Bishop of Kerry, Most Rev. Dr. Moriarty, rushed into the political arena with an elu-

tioning address in favour of the Kenmare-family-nominee, and against the Home Ruler; and his lordship soon made it plain that he meant to fight along with his confederated territorialist allies a *l'outrance*. The people were not for a moment disheartened; no doubt being sustained by the knowledge that at least four-fifths of the clergy were at direct issue with Dr. Moriarty as to his Whig-Imperialism.

The Kerry struggle now began to attract the attention of the Three Kingdoms. Here was a great Catholic county called to choose between, on the one hand, Mr. Dease, a devout Catholic, backed by the Catholic bishop and some priests, and by all, or nearly all the landlords of the county, both Catholic and Protestant; and by Dublin Castle with all the power and influence of the Government through magistrates and placemen and officials, great and small—with all its power to terrorise by bayonets and jails, and fines and arrests and prosecutions; and all its power to corrupt by places and gifts and situations. And, on the other hand, Mr. Blennerhassett, a young Protestant, unknown to fame, backed by no territorial magnates, but relying solely on the people's devotion to the national cause.

"Now," said all men, friends and foes, "here is a real trial of the hold which Home Rule has on the Irish mind;" and, accordingly, the Kerry contest grew to be the event of the day.

In this critical juncture of affairs the Home Government Association decided to throw its strength into the struggle; and a deputation, consisting of Rev. J. A. Galbraith, F.T.C.D., Mr. A. M. Sullivan, and Mr. John Overington Blunden, B.L., were sent down from Dublin to aid Mr. Blennerhassett's candidature. Before the day of the election arrived Kerry county was in a state only to be paralleled by that of Clare on the eve of O'Connell's election. The shout of "Blennerhassett and Home Rule!" became the watchword on the highway, the salutation at fair and market, the greeting of friend to friend; in the silent watches of the night, in the wildest and most remote glens and valleys of that wild region, it might be heard like the distant signal of the chamois hunter on the Alps. It was then, too, that the personal character of Mr. Blennerhassett turned out to be, young as he was, a familiar story. Everyone loved him for his pure, gentle, kindly nature. "God bless you, Mr. Hassett," said a peasant woman who rushed out of her wayside cottage, holding up her little child to see him, "God bless you; sir! I have no vote to give you,