

THE REJECTION OF
HOME RULE

A REPLY TO

MRS JOSEPHINE BUTLER'S

"OUR CHRISTIANITY TESTED"

BY

AN IRISH CHRISTIAN

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CHEAP EDITION: 4/- 100, FOR DISTRIBUTION, OR 4/6 FREE BY POST

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Houses of the Oireachtas

MRS JOSEPHINE BUTLER ON HOME RULE

THIS is a pamphlet on the Irish Question by a lady well known for her gallant, unwearied, and successful labours for the Repeal of Laws that were bad in principle, and in practice oppressive. Laws that for the criminal gratification of the many and the strong, imposed humiliation and injustice on the few and the weak. She still labours against the Law. This time it is for the

REPEAL OF THE UNION

But probably quite unconsciously, she labours now to promote what before she worked to destroy, the gratification of the many, by the ruin of the few, and the extenuation of crime.

This is done, strange to see, in the name of Christ.

The appeal is to Christians, to "sincerely Christian people," to people who she alleges "have a sincere desire to be on the side of righteousness," and who yet maintain that good government involves the punishment of crimes of violence and persecution. Thus, while the existing coalition government labours night and day to give effect to such ancient precepts as "Thou shalt do no murder," "Thou shalt not steal," Mrs Butler uses all her historical

lore and readiness of pen, to raise Christian opinion against them.

It is a clever pamphlet. For while Irish Christians are appealing aloud for Justice to restrain the hand of lawless oppression, this writer interpreting Justice to mean liberty to the majority to have their way, invokes the same quality against that appeal.

Her reasoning seems to run thus:—Ireland has been misgoverned by England, the only reparation England can now make is to let her govern herself in future. Justice demands this reparation, and Christian people ought to throw the weight of their influence on the side of the Irish masses in this demand.

ANCIENT HISTORY

In reply to the argument I do not propose to follow the pamphlet through its dreary denunciations of England's ill-treatment of Ireland during centuries past, although in many cases it would be easy to show the transactions in a less prejudicial light. For, indeed, this method of argument is grossly unjust, inasmuch as its tendency, as well as its intention, is to saddle the present generation with the sins of its predecessors, with which it has in fact nothing to do. The question for practical fair-minded men and women is, What is the *present* attitude and aim of Great Britain towards Ireland? If the answer to this is—To treat her righteously, fairly, indulgently, as a stronger race ought to treat a weaker, what light is thrown upon the subject by raking up Queen Elizabeth's well-meant but misguided efforts to propagate the reformed faith, or Cromwell's severity, or the Penal Code, or the persecution of Irish industrial enterprise. These facts may explain the disloyalty of Irish "patriots," they offer

no aid towards its conciliation, they rather by their repetition fan the flame and keep up memories that had better be let die.

There are, however, in the pamphlet two or three references to the past which must be noticed briefly before entering on the practical, that is the present, view of the subject. First as to the

PENAL LAWS

We read:—"Of the moral guilt implied in them, the conscience of the people of England of to-day ought to be able to judge, in spite of the doggedly rooted opinion in certain easy-going classes that Ireland has suffered no wrong from her British Rulers." In another place, a paragraph is headed with the words "Our Rulers ignorant of History." But the writer is not ignorant of history, and yet in the above passage she directly suggests that the Penal Code was the work of the British Rulers of Ireland.

Is this quite fair and quite just?

The Penal Laws were all passed by the Native Irish Parliament in consequence of the refusal of England to grant their repeated demand for a Union, and are a direct argument of a most weighty character against that Home Rule which so many advocate, as showing the bitterness to which the religious bisection of the country leads, when uncontrolled by Union with Britain.

But what was their origin and provoking cause?

As to this the pamphlet gives us not a hint. Probably it is overlooked by the majority of us all, who so loudly condemn them.

Every member of both the Irish Houses who voted for this detestable code of laws had been a witness, if not a personal sufferer from the Catholic ascendancy that had

but just passed away, under which system no less than 70 members of the House of Lords and the greater part of the House of Commons had been condemned to death, by the great Act of Attainder. Macaulay informs us that the numbers attainted and doomed were 2 archbishops, 1 duke, 63 temporal lords, 22 *ladies*, 7 bishops, 85 knights and baronets, 83 clergymen, 2182 esquires.

The Protestants had been disarmed and excluded from the army, and the whole executive power placed in the hands of Catholics; Protestant owners had been deprived of their estates, and, quoting Macaulay again, "a persecution of Protestants as cruel as that of Languedoc" had raged in every part of Ireland which owned the authority of the Catholic Government. (See Ingram's "Legislative Union," pages 9, 10, 51.)

The Penal Laws were the self-protective effort of a persecuted class who foresaw their certain extermination and ruin. But they were not England's work, they were "Home Rule" work; and viewed in connection with their cause and origin, abundantly prove what the revival of the Irish Parliament would inevitably lead to. Is Rome less dominant in spirit, more scrupulous in the use of means, than of old? Or is Protestantism of the militant type at an end in Ireland? If the answer must be, in both cases, a melancholy negative, what a prospect of internal strife Home Rule opens to view. Let us compare the British Empire to a family with a dozen sons, three of whom are perpetually quarrelling, the parents in their exasperation at the constant strife, determine to send the three to reside in a neighbouring cottage, maintaining meantime their parental authority, in a general sense. In the cottage the three are to govern themselves. Home Rulers think this is bare justice. Most people will not need history to prove to them that it means Anarchy first, "the weakest

to the wall" next, ending with the survival of the bare majority.

Another point is

"HOW THE UNION WAS BROUGHT ABOUT"

Now, however, it was brought about, if it is good in its operation, it has no need of further defence; yet Mrs Butler's account is so wide of the facts it seems necessary to refer to it shortly. Her sub-heading on page 22 gives her view in a single line—"Corruption of Irish Parliament by the English Government." Then follows an enumeration of the acts of corruption complained of. (1.) That public money was spent on the writing and publication of pamphlets favouring the Union. But surely this was an appeal to reason, intelligence and thought. There is no corruption in that. (2.) "That all officials under Government were expelled" if they would not support the Union. Well, there were some seven persons expelled. But this is strictly in accordance with precedent at all great political crises. It extended to the ladies of the bedchamber in Peel's day. And in America, that "land of liberty," it extends to every official great and small. (3.) "Unprincipled men were promoted at the Bar." This probably means that all Unionists were "unprincipled men." It is easy to bandy words like these. But they will stand for false charges till proofs are offered. (4.) "Out of 162 members who voted for the Union 116 were placemen." But that was the system of the day in England as well as in Ireland. "In England (says Ingram) 371 members out of 513 were nominated by the Government, by Peers and Commoners. In Scotland there was not a single free seat, the whole of the Scotch members, 45 in number, being nominated by Peers and

influential Commoners." (5.) "Bribery had its full share in obtaining the majority for the Union." Nothing is given for this statement except the payment of authors mentioned above. But an impartial searcher for truth might have stated that bribery was, in several instances, used to oppose the Union, and that if Unionist owners of seats were paid for the loss of them, so were anti-Unionists; seats being at the time, sad to say, a recognised form of property in all three kingdoms. It is satisfactory to be able to give credit for what is *not* said, when condemning so much that is. Mrs Butler does not reproduce the exploded charge that the Union was carried by the conferring of Peerages. Peerages are the usual reward of political party services in our British system; and they were not discarded in the hour of this great victory. If it is bribery and corruption to confer them, every Prime Minister for centuries back has been guilty of these offences.

It is impossible in this brief space to go at length into the story of the Union, but if Christians will take the trouble to read it, these charges will be found to be largely based upon "Nationalist" fiction. But I will quote the words of one whose opinion is supported by reference to authentic public records in each detail of his able and laborious treatise. "The whole enquiry has left a strong conviction on the author's mind that the Union was undertaken from the purest motives; that it was carried by fair and constitutional means; and that its final accomplishment was accompanied with the hearty assent and concurrence of the vast majority of the two peoples that dwelt in Ireland.*

* Dr Ingram's *History of the Irish Union*, (Macmillan)—the most exact, authentic and statistical account that has yet appeared.

It is melancholy to find a serious writer reproducing the younger Grattan's ridiculous statement that there were only 7,000 signatures given to petitions in favour of the Union, the fact being that out of "seventy-four declarations and petitions in favour of the Union, four alone, those sent forward by the Catholics of Wexford City, of County Leitrim, and of County Roscommon, and the mixed declaration of County Tyrone were signed by 9,330 persons." (Ingram.) The above extract will enable the reader to judge of the falsehoods and calumnies by which the opponents of the Union have sought to fortify their case. It is greatly to be feared that in credulously adopting and circulating afresh these inventions, Mrs Butler will do a work against truth and justice very far from her intention.

The fact is that the Union was carried by a clear majority of Catholic votes in the counties ; for while as to nominees and placemen the Irish Commons were no worse than the English, in one respect Ireland enjoyed a measure of emancipation which was not conceded to England till 1829. By the Act of 1793, seven years, that is, before the Union, all Catholics and Dissenters obtained the Parliamentary Franchise, and the electorate was at a stroke tripled in number.

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION

Such being the state of the Irish Electorate it may be wondered at that while Catholics in Ireland voted for the Union in 1800, many of them should now so vehemently oppose it as they seem to do.

But when it is remembered that the Roman Catholic Church had laboured in vain for full emancipation, (that is for the right for Catholics *to sit* in Parliament,) as a

concession from the Irish Parliament, and that Pitt had promised to grant it, wonder ceases, and the Union is explained.

We have referred to the Catholic persecution of Protestants under James II., and the Protestant persecution of Catholics under Queen Anne as its consequence. Coming down to 1798 the rebellion and massacre of Protestants add another link to the chain of religious strife, and are mainly explained by the refusal of that full emancipation which the Protestant Parliament of Ireland dared not grant under pain of their own annihilation.

It may be truly said that but for the Union, Emancipation, in the full sense, including the right to sit in Parliament, would not now be the law in Ireland. But the Church of Rome having employed England's love for liberty of conscience to gain this right, would use it now to mount the throne of ascendancy once more and in an independent native Parliament re-impose the broken chains of religious servitude on all who question her claims and authority, and therefore, though far from unanimously, Catholics now labour for Repeal.

THE FAMINE

Again the authoress in dealing with the famine expenditure of 1846 and 1847 at pages 42-44, either through carelessness or want of knowledge entirely mis-represents the facts.

She mentions two sums of fifty thousand pounds each of public money, as spent in relief, leaving the reader under the impression that this sum of £100,000, supplemented by the contributions of the "Quakers from England," represented the whole amount which came from Great Britain for the relief of the starving Irish. She concludes

with the fear that the English may be called *une nation sans entrailles*. But she and those who have read her words may be relieved.

Sir C. E. Trevelyan, in his authoritative work the "Irish Crisis," (Macmillan) has tabulated the expenditure of England in the relief of the Famine. From which it appears that £3,554,901 were spent as a free gift to Ireland in her hour of distress, and £3,968,239 in addition were advanced as loans, making a sum total of £7,523,140 spent in charity in two years, as against Mrs Butler's acknowledgment of only £100,000.

Sir C. E. Trevelyan well says "This enterprise was in truth the grandest attempt ever made to grapple with famine over a whole country. Organized armies, amounting altogether to some hundreds of thousands, had been rationed before; but neither ancient nor modern history can furnish a parallel to the fact that upwards of three millions of persons were fed every day in the neighbourhood of their own homes, by administrative arrangements, emanating from and controlled by one central office."

While upon this subject it is perhaps well that I should add the testimony of one who will not be accused of over-much tenderness to landlords as to the action of that much abused class during the famine years. I refer to the late A. M. Sullivan, and quote from his "New Ireland," eighth edition, page 63.

"The conduct of the Irish landlords throughout the famine period has been variously described, and has been, I believe, generally condemned. I consider the censure visited on them as too sweeping. I hold it to be, in some respects, cruelly unjust. On many of them no blame too heavy could possibly fall. . . . But granting all that has to be entered on the dark debtor side the over-

whelming balance is the other way. The bulk of the resident Irish landlords manfully did their best in that dread hour. No adequate tribute has ever been paid to the memory of those Irish landlords—and they were men of every party and creed—who perished martyrs to duty in that awful time, who did not fly the plague reeking work-house or fever-tainted court. . . . If they did too little compared with what the landlord class in England would have done, in similar cases, it was because little was in their power. The famine found most of the resident landed gentry of Ireland on the brink of ruin. They were heritors of estates heavily overweighted with the debts of a bygone generation. . . . Yet cases might be named by the score in which such men scorned to avert by pressure on their suffering tenantry the fate they saw impending over them. They “went down with the ship”.

FIAT JUSTITIA

Where an author inscribes the word “Justice” in such bold type upon her banner one would at least expect to find that quality in her treatment of her theme. But the absence of Fair-play is the most conspicuous feature of the pamphlet.

Take one little sentence as a sample (p. 36)—“The story of Ireland since the Union is one of uninterrupted misgovernment, sorrow and suffering.”

The sentence is a short one but it is very comprehensive. If it is untrue the whole of the argument goes by the board. For Irish Unionists contend that although doubtless England did misgovern Ireland in the past, she has, since the Union, altered her whole attitude and mode of treatment, and has under rival administrations laboured steadily and courageously to remove every real grievance, and to do justice to Ireland, and that having pursued this course with signal success, this is no time to ask her to throw up the reins of government on the ground of her former misdeeds.

I shall, therefore, seek to investigate these contradictory statements and find out which is true.

ENGLAND MAKES REPARATION

Since the Union England has conferred upon Ireland the full measure of Catholic Emancipation, while every vestige of the Penal Laws has long since disappeared.

The Franchise has been extended downwards by successive Acts, until every householder has the right to vote on a level with the best of Ireland's citizens.

By the National system of Education* every child can receive at the expense of the State as good an education as is given in any other part of the kingdom.

The College of Maynooth received an enormous annual grant from the State for the education and supply of Romish Priests for every parish in Ireland, until it was commuted in 1869 by a liberal lump sum in compensation.

It was alleged that as long as the Protestant Church received the endowments and the status of an Establishment, Roman Catholics suffered wrong and injustice, or at least were liable to a sentiment of jealousy on account of the lighter burdens of Protestants.

The Irish Church was promptly disestablished and disendowed.

Thirty-eight millions of money have been advanced out of the Imperial Exchequer for public works in Ireland, of which over seven millions have been forgiven.

I will not pause to point to Municipal Reform, to the provisions for intermediate and higher education, the Queen's Colleges, and the Royal University, and the admission of Catholics to all the prizes of Trinity College, Dublin, on equal terms with Protestants, but at once pass on to the Land.

THE THREE GREAT LAND LAWS

Mrs Butler draws lamentable pictures of suffering, famine and eviction, using all her information on these points to prove the inveterate oppression of the Irish by the English, and the need they display for the Repeal of the Union. But she omits to describe the steps that have

* The effect of this legislation is that while in 1837 there were in Ireland 1384 National Schools, with 169,548 pupils, and receiving £50,000 in grants; in 1885 the schools had risen in number to 7,936, the pupils to 1,075,604, and the grants to £814,003. The curse of British Rule is shown by the decline in the numbers of illiterate persons from 53 per cent. of the population in 1841 to 25 per cent. in 1881.

been taken during the past seventeen years to deprive landlords of the power to oppress, and to confer upon tenants just rents, security of tenure, and other privileges unknown in any other country in the world.

Possibly this omission was an oversight. But that in a pamphlet calling for Justice, exalting that virtue in so many "elegant extracts" and eloquent periods, this side of the subject should have been omitted, is truly unfortunate.

The following are some of the provisions of recent British Legislation for the protection of the Irish tenants, taken from a leaflet compiled by the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union:—

AN IRISH TENANT'S PRIVILEGES

The privileges of Irish Tenant Farmers are of gradual growth, and date from various Acts of Parliament. They have, however, in recent years, been largely extended by three great measures:—The Land Act of 1870; the Land Law Act, 1881, and the Land Purchase Act, 1885. It will, then, be convenient to consider these various privileges in chronological order.

I.—PRIVILEGES ACQUIRED PRIOR TO 1870

No Tenant can be evicted for non-payment of rent
UNLESS ONE YEAR'S RENT IS IN ARREAR.

Even when evicted for non-payment of rent—

A Tenant can RECOVER POSSESSION within 6 months
by payment of the amount due, and in that case

The Landlord MUST PAY to the Tenant the amount
of any profit he could have made out of the lands
while the tenant was out of possession.

The Landlord must pay HALF the Poor-Rate—If the
Government Valuation of a holding is £4 or upwards.

The Landlord must pay the ENTIRE Poor-Rate—If the
Government Valuation is under £4.

II.—PRIVILEGES UNDER THE ACT OF 1870

A Yearly Tenant who is disturbed in his holding by the act of the Landlord, for causes other than non-payment of rent, and the Government Valuation of whose holding does not exceed £100 per annum, must be paid by his Landlord not only—

Full compensation for all improvements made by himself or his predecessors, such as unexhausted manures, permanent buildings, and reclamation of waste lands; *but also as—*

Compensation for disturbance, a sum of money which may amount to seven years' rent.

NOTE.—Under the Act of 1881, the Landlord's power of disturbance is practically abolished.

A Yearly Tenant, *even when evicted for non-payment of rent*, must be paid by his Landlord—

Compensation for all improvements, such as unexhausted manures, permanent buildings, and reclamation of waste land.

And when his rent does not exceed £15 he must be paid in addition—

A sum of money which may amount to seven years' rent, if the Court decides that the rent is exorbitant.

NOTE.—Until the contrary is proved, the improvements are presumed to have been made by the tenants.

The tenant can make his claim for compensation immediately on notice to quit being served, and cannot be evicted until the compensation is paid.

A Yearly Tenant, even when VOLUNTARILY SURRENDERING his farm, must either be paid by Landlord—

Compensation for all his improvements; or be

Permitted to sell his improvements to an incoming tenant.

IN ALL NEW TENANCIES,—The Landlord must pay HALF the County or Grand Jury Cess, if the valuation is £4 or upwards.

The Landlord must pay the ENTIRE County or Grand Jury Cess, if the value does not exceed £4.

III.—PRIVILEGES UNDER THE ACT OF 1881

The Act of 1870 mainly conferred two advantages on evicted Tenants—

Full payment for all improvements ;

Compensation for disturbance.

The Act of 1881 gave three additional privileges to those who avail themselves of them—

1. FIXITY OF TENURE.—By which the tenant remains in possession of his land FOR EVER, subject to periodical revision of his rent.

NOTE.—If a Tenant has not had a fair rent fixed, and his Landlord proceeds to evict him for non-payment of rent, he can apply to the Court to fix the fair rent ; and meantime the eviction proceedings will be restrained by the Court.

2. FAIR RENT.—By which any yearly tenant may apply to the Land Commission Court to fix the fair rent* of his holding. The application is referred to three persons, one of whom is a lawyer, and the other two inspect and value the farm. THIS RENT CAN NEVER AGAIN BE RAISED BY THE LANDLORD.

3. FREE SALE.—By which every yearly tenant may, whether he has had a fair rent fixed or not, SELL HIS TENANCY TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER whenever he desires to leave.

* The stock argument now used to prove that Irish Landlords are extortioners, is that the Land Courts have found it necessary to make large reductions in their Rents. Examine this argument a moment, and it collapses. The Land Court have reduced Rents on the average less than 20 per cent. Prices on which all rents depend, have certainly fallen in the like proportion. What the Land Courts have done is to register for 15 years the abatements freely given by the great majority of Landlords to meet the fall in prices. Exceptional cases prove nothing, except that there are black sheep among Irish Landlords ; and even Communists will admit that in their own ranks some such may be found.

NOTE.—There is no practical limit to the price he may sell for, and 20 times the amount of the annual rent has frequently been obtained in every province of Ireland.

Even if a Tenant be evicted, he has the right either to redeem at any time within six months, OR TO SELL HIS TENANCY WITHIN THE SAME PERIOD TO A PURCHASER WHO CAN LIKEWISE REDEEM, and thus acquire all the privileges of the Tenant.

IV.—PRIVILEGES UNDER THE LAND PURCHASE ACT OF 1885.

If a tenant wishes to buy his holding, and arranges with his landlord as to terms, he can change his position from that of a perpetual rent payer into that of the payer of an annuity terminable at the end of 49 years, *the Government supplying him with the entire purchase-money*, to be repaid during those 49 years at 4 per cent. This annual payment of £4 for every £100 borrowed covers both principal and interest. Thus if a tenant already paying a statutory rent of £50 agrees to buy from his landlord at 20 years' purchase, (or £1,000), the Government will lend him the money, his rent will at once cease, and he will pay, not £50, but £40 yearly, for 49 years, and then become the owner of his holding, free of rent. It is hardly necessary to point out that, as these 49 years of payment roll by, the interest of the tenant in his holding increases rapidly in value.

N.B.—The Act which has lately been passed by the present Government gives to Leaseholders all the advantages enumerated above as conferred by the Act 1881 on tenants from year to year.

It must also be remembered that the privileges cited in this summary, though the most important, are by no means the entire of the legal privileges of the Irish tenant.

Thus it will be seen (to use the words of Mr Chamberlain) that

“The Irish tenant is in a position which is more favourable than that of any agricultural tenant throughout the

whole of Europe, I will say in any civilized country on the face of the globe. . . . There are thousands and tens of thousands of tenants throughout Scotland and England who would receive as an inestimable boon those opportunities which the Irish tenant so scornfully rejects."—
 SPEECH AT HAWICK, *Scotsman*, January 24th, 1887.

In considering these privileges, it must be borne in mind that those conferred by the Act of 1881 [which broke down old contracts of tenancy, and even prohibited tenants of holdings valued under £150 yearly from contracting themselves out of the Act] COULD NOT HAVE BEEN GIVEN UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.*

But the great class for which these protective laws have been passed are those whom the authoress describes in large capitals as "*a people deprived of all legal means of redress.*"

And such are some of the constitutional provisions which England has made for the Irish people, yet this lady talks of England's "*denial to Ireland of constitutional weapons by which to defend herself from tyranny,*" and of England's "*long continued refusal to meet the troubles of Ireland with any other measures than those involving the suspension of every charter and every right,*" (page 48) and persists that "the story of Ireland since the Union is one of *uninterrupted* (mark the word) misgovernment," &c. The story of Ireland since the Union must be read in the light of the above enumeration of laws if we would read it aright, and the reader must say whether or not England has displayed a wish to rectify wrongs, to remove grievances, and secure the poor if not the rich in his property, to protect the weak and to deal out favours to the masses with a generous hand.

But not only "uninterrupted misgovernment," but "sorrow and suffering" also have, in Mrs Butler's view, followed the Union. Mr Gladstone differs from her.

* By the Act of 1887, *Judicial Rents* are to be reduced for the recent fall in prices, and ejectment may be stayed, and payment of arrears postponed, if the tenant's necessities seem so to require.

And this is what he says in his speech at Hull in 1881:—
 “Amongst the scenes that are now unhappily being enacted there by certain persons, we may lose sight of the great and unquestionable progress that has been achieved by that country. It has achieved material progress in a degree most remarkable for a country with little variety of pursuit. I do not believe that there is a labouring population in all Europe—although the condition of the Irish labourer still leaves much to desire—which, in the course of the last twenty years, has made a progress equal to that of the labouring population of Ireland. Let me look at the farming class, which, as you know, may be said almost to constitute the body of the nation, understood as the term is understood in Ireland. Let me look at the indication of their surplus wealth. Forty years ago the deposits in the Irish Banks, which are the indication of the amount of their freedom, were about five millions. Some fifteen years later than that I think they had risen to some eleven or twelve millions. There are now of deposits in the Irish Banks, which represent almost wholly the honest earnings and savings of Irish farmers, a sum of nearly thirty millions of money. Of course I don't mean to say that the whole of these are agricultural savings, and at any rate you cannot mistake the meaning and the force of the comparison between the thirty millions in round numbers of the present day, and the five millions which were in the Irish Banks forty years ago.”

How such tremendous accumulation of wealth is to be reconciled with a state of “uninterrupted misgovernment, sorrow, and suffering,” I leave the reader to judge.

What of other indications of prosperity since the Union? In 1852 the Revenue of Ireland was scarcely $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions, in 1885 it had risen to little short of 8 millions.

The tonnage of shipping entering Irish Ports had increased in the same period from 5 millions to 13 millions.

The value of live stock has doubled.

Deposits in the Banks and Savings Banks have more than doubled.

Excise duties have grown from $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions to $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions.

And all this took place while the population declined from $6\frac{1}{2}$ millions to 5 millions. But the best proof of growing wealth and prosperity yet remains to be told.

Between 1841 and 1881, the poorest class of cabins has

diminished from 491,278 to 40,665, while the better classes of houses have increased in number from 304,264 to 488,968. Perhaps Mrs Butler will be able to show that "uninterrupted sorrow and suffering" is indicated by these figures, but to most people they will prove something far different. Perhaps she may be able to reconcile them with "the increasing miseries of the people, their chronic state of famine and pinching poverty, their *increasing* conflicts for bare life, and the bitter sense of the injustice of it all," (page 48). But it is rather to be feared that such language, instead of serving the cause she advocates, will cast grave discredit upon her profession of true religion, which, in an old-fashioned way, people still believe to be inconsistent with gross misrepresentation.

WHEREIN THOU JUDGEST ANOTHER, THOU CONDEMNEST THYSELF

The writer appeals to true Christians to "be just and fear not." She quotes, more than once, the Latin proverb, "Fiat Justitia ruat cœlum." I take her at her word, and charge her with misleading public, or if she prefers it, Christian opinion, by omitting any reference to the many measures of concession and generous treatment of the last half-century made by Britain to Ireland. And I charge her with a grievously false (however unintentionally so) accusation against her country, when she made the statements which I have quoted from her pamphlet.

Upon these the whole question turns. Let me repeat that if it is true that Great Britain has shown a genuine desire to repair the injuries of the past, to govern righteously, and to make Ireland in all things an equal and a partner with herself, this whole argument breaks down, for then not Home Rule is what we want, but the continuance of the same course of righteous evenhanded Justice.

VOX POPULI

But the Home Ruler has another string to his bow. It is the popular demand. What the people demand it is justice to yield. In this argument we are not invited to examine the demand, but to count heads. The syllogism runs thus:—

The Irish demand Home Rule.

What a people demand it is justice to grant.

Therefore the Irish ought to be given Home Rule.

Now, many will join me in wholly dissenting from the second of these premisses.

For do what we will to fall into line with the maxim "Vox populi, vox Dei," we cannot forget that there never was a more unanimous popular demand than that Christ should be crucified and Barabbas released, and this grand test case has governed and will ever govern the minds of that class of Christians to whom the pamphlet appeals.

So much for premiss the second.

I proceed to disprove the first, and thus doubly demolish this structure.

The Irish demand Home Rule by an overwhelming majority of their representatives. That seems at first sight to be a very evident proposition; and no doubt if the 86 Parnellites in Parliament truly represent Irish opinion there is no more to be said. But do they?

There are 103 members for Ireland, 86 of them are for Repeal, 17 for the Union. There are some 4,800,000 of inhabitants, and if their opinions be truly represented by the present members, we should be bound to hold that of them about 4 millions are for Home Rule and only the odd 800,000 for the Union.

But are these the true proportions of Irish opinion on this subject? Most people know they are not.

The author's sense of justice does not induce her to give any sign that she is aware of the true state of facts.

It is computed* by accurate and well-informed public men that out of the 4,800,000 of our people nearly 2,000,000 are for the Union. But this is not all. The 2,000,000 include almost all the education, the industrial activity, and the capital of the country. They include not only the whole Protestant population, (for a Protestant Home Ruler is a *rara avis* in Ireland) but all that is substantial for education, intelligence and wealth of Roman Catholic opinion.

If opinion therefore were fairly represented, we should have probably 62 M.P.'s for Repeal and 41 for the Union.

In the face of such a true representation of opinion could the common language be used that the Irish demand Home Rule? Which Irish? would be the prompt

* Practical difficulties prevent a poll or plebiscite being taken on the question. In Kerry one clergyman was fired at, another was boycotted, and several farmers were threatened, for having signed a petition to Parliament against Home Rule. Thousands of known Unionists would refuse to give their true opinion from fear of the League.

response. That part that are most subject to the influence of stump orators ; who believe most in the big promises of the village demagogue ; whose minds most easily take fire from incendiary declamations against all things that are.

THE MINORITY VOTE

It is an article in the creed of the advanced Reformer, that Proportional Representation is necessary to perfect our Parliamentary system. I heartily join in the general proposition that at present immense masses of our people are totally unrepresented because they happen to be in a minority in the constituencies as at present defined.

The last Reform Act made a step in the wrong direction. What is needed is not "single member constituencies," but large consolidations, returning six to twelve members each. So that in each great circle every substantial section of opinion should be able to elect its representative. But "Proportional Representation" having not yet been accepted by either of the great Parties, Ireland stands to-day egregiously and absolutely mis-represented.

WHY SHOULD IRELAND VOTE SEPARATELY ?

But another answer is available to the Irish majority argument. We are constantly assured that Ireland does not demand Separation ; she wishes to be considered and to consider herself a part of the British Empire. Why then, it may be asked, should she demand to have her opinion taken upon the question of Home Rule separately from that of England and Scotland ? In this view, the view of the unity of the three kingdoms, what a miserable minority (until reinforced for party purposes by Mr Gladstone and his followers) demanded Home Rule. And even now, thus reinforced, how weak they are, and how poorly equipped, with two or three exceptions, deserted by every statesman of character or weight in the country. On such a tremendous issue Ireland cannot claim and must not be allowed to vote alone, and voting as part and parcel of the United Kingdom, she is found in a hopeless minority.

BLOOD-STAINED HANDS HELD UP FOR HOME RULE

There is a feature of the situation which, to Irish ob-

servers, overtops all others in its importance ; to omit it is to perform the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out,—I mean Agrarian and Political Crime. The pamphlet passes it over with a cursory sentence or two, and these not of condemnation, but of excuse, and even approval. But it is the furnace of the Home Rule engine, the prime agent on which the whole machinery depends. Is it just or right to ignore it ?

CAPITAL EXPELLED

There was always the great difficulty in the way of those agitators who sought to impoverish the landlords that, whenever a tenant was evicted for non-payment of rent, there were several candidates to hand ready to pay up the arrears and to take the vacant farm. Notwithstanding the present depression affecting all agriculture, there are still these applicants to be found in every part of Ireland, consisting of thrifty younger sons of farmers, cattle-dealers who have saved money, neighbouring farmers who want more land, and others. It is the main, if not the only investment available for their money. There are probably some thousands of farms on which tenants have broken down, (like their fellows in England and Scotland) now lying vacant and ready to be let at low rents. But the lands remain unlet, and the applicants take ship for a land of freedom, where they can invest their savings as they please. Will anyone who knows anything of the land hunger of a country which, speaking broadly, has no other industry, endeavour to explain this anomaly ?

VOX DIABOLI

In Ireland nobody would hesitate an instant as to the true answer. Crimes of violence and outrage are the explanation. The Land League laid it down as a crime of the deepest dye to take evicted land. The tenant of it was dubbed a "Land Grabber," a species of vermin to be exterminated, a monster of iniquity. This was and is the law of the League, and hundreds have paid the penalty of rashly violating it by loss of life or limb. These penalties were so rigourously and promptly enforced during the earlier years of the sway of the League that now they are

less frequently necessary,* for nobody ventures to approach a vacant farm, and the applicants speak only in whispers, when the coast is clear, bemoaning the tyranny of their actual rulers.

No power but that of bodily terror could have produced this absolute submission. It is enough now, after years of more terrible punishments, to name the offender in the local Branch of the League, and the land is surrendered, (often after large money had been paid for it) and an abject apology is offered—or, in stubborn cases, the order to boycott is issued with like results.

It is not too much to say that as the result of these severe measures the greater part of the farming class of Ireland lies to-day helplessly at the mercy of this tyranny, deprived of their liberty, compelled to subscribe to the League, and compelled to refuse payment of rent in many cases, and to submit to eviction with the money in their pockets for non-payment of which they are evicted, sometimes compelled to see their little homes desolated and destroyed, which if free they might have continued to enjoy.

CHRISTIAN HOMES ATTACKED

The authoress appeals to Christians to uphold the National League, for that is the plain English of her appeal, but she has no sympathy for its victims, even when these are her sisters in Christ. Within a circle of four miles radius from where the writer lives here is the way they have been treated :—

IN PERILS OF ROBBERS

A Christian farmer and his wife, returning from evening service, were met on the road by a gang of some fifteen disguised and armed men, and their arms demanded under pain of death. They had none, and were let go after their threats had brought this poor woman to the expectation of instant death. They found, on reaching home, that their little invalid daughter, the only person left in the house, had been forced by the same gang to give up her father's pistol. A shot had been fired through the kitchen ceiling,

* Since the first Edition of this pamphlet appeared, the moonlighting attack on Sexton's the Land Grabber's house was made, after he had been frequently denounced by the local Leaguers, and Constable Whelehan's murder took place when the intended victim was protected by this man's vigilance. Mc Elligott was shot for hiring his threshing machine to a boycotted widow, and narrowly escaped with his life. Old Quirke was brutally murdered for holding a farm in trust for his evicted son-in-law's children; and James Fitzmaurice was sent to his account for taking his bankrupt brother's land, after being vigorously denounced by the National League as a Land Grabber.

and other injuries committed. The poor girl trusted in God, and escaped the bodily terror that has left lasting effects on others.

BLOODSHED

A Protestant man and his godly wife, returning home last winter, find their house in possession of an armed body of moonlighters; they turn their horse and drive full gallop for their lives, the bullets fly thick around their heads. They return with the police; a short battle ensues, and one of the police falls wounded, his leg broken by a bullet, and the Parnellite gang make good their escape.

HOUSEBREAKING

A third case. A Christian farmer went one Sunday last September, to a funeral, at noon his daughter of twelve ran in to the house to her mother to say that strange men were coming, the mother hastily bars the back and front doors, and only just in time. Arms are demanded. She refuses to give them. The door is being forced. She cries "God is greater than men, and you will get no arms." She rushes upstairs and calls for the police, who are a mile away and cannot hear. Her little children are all this time out of doors, and she is racked with dread that they may be killed. At last the band turns and decamps. God has answered His servant's faith and prayer. Nothing else will account for the sudden collapse of the assault.

The above instances are given as but samples indicating the general condition of the country. But Mrs Butler has no words of condemnation strong enough for a Crimes Act, intended to liberate her fellow-believers, as well as others, from this persecution. She advocates Justice. Let us have it by all means. We think the new measure is well adapted to that end.

No doubt there have been one or two evictions in each quarter, very few, all told, where the family is permanently put out, for generally they pay their rents and return after a week or so, it is doubtful if any evictions are taking place, except where the ability to pay has been ascertained, or where recovery is absolutely hopeless.

But for every family who suffers thus it is calculated that from five to ten have suffered from the National League assaults. Almost every house in some districts has been attacked. In one small circle a Protestant Clergyman was fired at through his own door, and a magistrate's horse was stabbed in the body, and barely escaped a cruel death; a farmer was shot in the leg with a bullet by night in the middle of his family; and a labourer was murdered for offering to work for some shopkeepers on a

farm they had seized for debt. The whole farming population live in nightly terror of the dreaded banditti, and the ordinary law is helpless for their protection. But Home Rulers from Mr Gladstone downwards would paralyse the hand of government reached forth in mercy to shield the poor and defenceless from their ruthless enemies.

They do it in the name of Justice. Will such transparent art deceive their fellow-countrymen?

PARNELLISM AND CRIME

The world knows now that the springs of action governing the Irish parliamentary party are located in the United States, that the means advocated by the leaders there are violence, outrage, and crime; that however for temporary purposes these methods may have been held in abeyance or concealed, they are not by any means given up; that Michael Davitt, the second in command, and founder of the League, has publicly expressed his regret for having discountenanced crime; that crime is rampant over certain large areas of Ireland; and that where crime is less prevalent the reason is that it has already gained its object, viz., the complete subjugation of the whole farming class to its tyrannical and inhuman rule.

The following are the words of an advocate of Home Rule, to whom many will give an attentive ear.

"That breaking down (in the administration of Justice) means the destruction of peace and all that makes life worth having; it means the placing in abeyance of the most sacred duties and most cherished rights; it means the establishment of the servitude of good men and the supremacy and impunity of bad men."—January 28th 1881.

"Our contention is this that that (the verdict of juries being against the evidence) is an evil for which we ought to adopt a remedy if we can, and that a *special tribunal*, if it will do no more—we believe it will do much more—but if it will do no more than secure that in that number of cases, not apparently inconsiderable, verdicts shall be had, crimes shall be punished, right shall be done where hitherto verdicts have not been had, where crime has hitherto not been punished, and where justice has not been done—that is an object which we may legitimately pursue."—May 24th, 1882.

JUSTICE DEMANDS THE USE OF FORCE

"The article of justice satisfies me perfectly; but I must remind the hon. member that it means justice to all and to every one. Unfortunately this includes the use of force for the punishment of evildoers, and the praise of all who do well."—May 19th, 1882.

"We shall not cease to press our proposals on the British Parliament, and we feel confident that we shall have a truly national assent and support to this assurance that our effort is an honest effort to restore to Ireland the first condition of Christian and civilised existence."—January 28th, 1881.

PROTECTION FOR THE MASSES

"I declare for myself and my colleagues that in our view the main basis of this Bill, and the motives which influenced us to bring it forward and press it on with all the energy we can muster, were not special regard for persons of rank and station, who unhappily have become victims to the fury of criminals; it has much more the regard which we have for the misery which has been carried far and wide among the body of the population. Outrage has been committed in every form—in some quarters perhaps lighter—but in every form, even the most cruel and extreme. It is this which has so many victims within its grasp. It is this that has lain at the root of our conclusion that it was our absolute duty to legislate upon lines as constitutional as we could, but in effective substitution for the Life and Property Protection Act now in force, for the sake of the people of Ireland themselves."—May 19th, 1882.

[Quoted from *Hansard*.]

The voice is that of Mr Gladstone, when advocating a far more stringent measure of justice than the present, so-called "Coercion" Act, and at a time when he did not need as he does now, the help of the Irish vote, upon which to climb back to the Seat of Power.

But for the efforts of Parliament to cope with this tyranny and liberate the multitudes that are now like the Soudanese in the hands of Arabian traders Mrs Butler has no more appropriate terms than "this latest, fiercest and most merciless proposed Coercion Act."*

Truly as we read her paper the words of the prophet come to mind, (Isaiah lix.) "None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth, they weave the spider's web. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works," and, referring to the conspiracy of which this lady has become the apologist—"Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood, wasting and destruction are in their paths.

* Another important omission occurs in these pages. The lady inveighs against Coercion. She describes the period of Ireland's independence as her best. But she fails to tell how many Coercion Acts were passed during those eighteen years, or to show that any prosperity Ireland then enjoyed was due to this masterful determination in suppressing crime. She wants to represent Coercion as English tyranny, and the awkward truth in this respect is silently passed over.

Yea, truth faileth ; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter."

"BLACK'S WHITE"

The Home Rulers' main assault is directed against the new Act for the suppression of boycotting, conspiracy, burglary, bloodshed, and assassination. Perhaps they fear it may tend to defer Home Rule if Unionists can point to a peaceable Ireland, so crime must not be stayed, and the Crimes Act is iniquity, "a great Act of injustice," "far excelling" all previous Coercion Acts "in cruelty, unreasonableness, and injustice." If ever darkness was put for light, and light for darkness, this is a case. But in spite of all the hard names it is given, there are many thousands of persecuted people in Ireland who will hail the recent legislation as a real "proclamation of liberty," a worthy celebration of the Jubilee of the Queen, restoring to the best of her Irish subjects in every class and creed, leave to live in the land of their birth and to pursue their lawful callings without molestation.

Lord Hartington's words at Manchester, on the 24th of June, 1887, ought to weigh with those who incline to Mrs Butler's view, he said:—

"There may have been times long gone by when minorities, powerful minorities, possessed such undue and excessive power, and when the bulk, the masses of the people possessed such insufficient power in the Constitution, when the means of expressing their will and wishes in a constitutional manner were so imperfect—I say there may have been times when resistance to unjust laws may have been not only a right but a duty ; but I do not believe that we live in those times. I believe that now the extension of the Constitution is perfectly free and open in every class of the community, and I will be no party to any changes in our Constitution or in our laws—which are carried out and which are sought to be attained by any other means than those of constitutional agitation—after all fair Parliamentary discussion ; and therefore it appears to me that it is impossible that a reunited Liberal party in the future shall contain that section of the party—I hope it is a small section—which has on recent

occasions preached the duty and right and expediency of open resistance to laws which might be opposed to the will or the wishes of a certain section of the people."

"HAVE FAITH IN GOD"

But while two millions of Irish men and women, many of them in daily and nightly experience of the horrors of nationalist government protest against being handed over permanently to its tender mercies, many Christians plead that we ought not to anticipate the evils of to-morrow, but in Irish public affairs, as in business and private life, to act in the present, taking no thought or anxious alarm as to the future. Certainly this is the attitude of Faith. But when a certain course is proposed, a change of laws, a new charter, the principles of which seem to be unjust, as has been shown, it is certainly no want of faith to examine the probable consequences of this unrighteous legislation.

As to these we need no gift of prophecy. Fortunately, or unfortunately, we have had experience of what the transfer of power to Irish Nationalists as our rulers means. Ireland has had for the past six or seven years a taste of Home Rule in many and varied directions, and it has been shown what the Rule of the League can do even while the Rule of Great Britain nominally exists. If with all the machinery of an Imperial Government at work, Executive and Judicial, Home Rulers can achieve so absolute an authority as they now possess, controlling elections, dispensing public appointments, in public speech and print advocating their revolutionary opinions, and, with impunity inciting all men to the breach of law, if as the result, boycotting, assaulting, robbing, shedding the blood of man, maiming and mutilating cattle, refusing to pay debts or taxes, intimidating, persecuting and murdering prevail,—if, I say, all this can be "done in a green tree what shall be done in the dry?" For answer to this question Mrs Butler rather naively asks another, "Can you not trust God with the consequences?" (p. 60). No, we cannot. No more than we could do so if we had been asked to consent to let loose on the city a mob intoxicated with free drink and supplied with loaded arms. Faith has no operation in conduct of conscious wrong-doing.

SUMMARY

In the above pages I claim to have shown:—(1.) That Great Britain has *not* uninterruptedly misgoverned Ireland since the Union. (2.) That, on the contrary, Britain has made righteous reparation of her past misgovernment. (3.) That she has secured all their rights and something more to Irish tenants. (4.) That Ireland's voice as a whole is misrepresented in the demand of 86 members for Home Rule. (5.) That about two-fifths of the people—and those the best of her people—demand the maintenance of the Union, and the continuance of Britain's just government, against three-fifths who would abolish both. (6.) That the Crimes Act is urgently required for the protection of the oppressed population, who are ground down or expatriated by the Land League tyranny. (7.) That its opponents have failed to show how in any respect it can injure the innocent. (8.) That Nationalism means murder, cruelty, tyranny, the expulsion of capital, and the denial of citizen's rights to the minority, and that (9.) Mrs Butler has not been fair in her presentation of the case.

In addition, it has been shown by the wretched but unimpeachable record of history, that to confer Home Rule would inevitably be followed by a renewal of that struggle between North and South, between Orangemen and Nationalist, which has ever marked the periods of England's withdrawal from active control; a struggle on the Protestant side for the right to live, to breathe, to worship, on the Nationalist for the right to rule, to riot, and to exterminate.

MRS BUTLER'S PATRIOTISM TESTED

But one point remains to be noticed,—

Mrs Butler holds strong views—perhaps not too strong—as to England's guilt in the matters of drink, opium, and “legalised vice,” and contemplates the judgment of the nation for this guilt as at hand. She sees in prophecy a general disruption of empires foretold, and thinks that England may not escape. But, unlike the prophet of old, who exclaimed as he foresaw his nation's calamities, “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” (Jer. ix. 1),—unlike the Blessed One, who wept as He thought of the coming desolation of

His native land—Mrs Butler seems to derive positive satisfaction from her gloomy forecast. She says our empire rests largely on conquest, and she questions the righteousness of the title. She charges her country with aggression, cruelty, bloodshed and massacre in many lands, and concludes her indignant indictment with the words—"let us not speak of the unbroken maintenance of our empire as a blessing." That is, I presume she hopes the empire may be broken. But in what sense? "As a judgment upon England for her crimes." And she adds, "it may be that God has *a severe lesson* to teach us . . . through our nearest neighbour Ireland;" and "if the *disruption of the empire* should begin so near home . . . shall we not bow before the decree of heaven, whatever it may be, *however humiliating* it may be in the future?" *

It is to be feared from this language that Mrs Butler has imbibed the spirit of the Irish agitation, and adds to her desire for an Irish democratic victory something very like ill-will towards England. For plainly enough she admits the injury that the Repeal of the Union would cause to England, and accepts it with satisfaction, as no less than her due.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

For many years back Christians of all denominations have been engaged in concerts of prayer for blessing on Queen Victoria in the unbroken preservation of the Union. They believe that the recent verdicts, of Parliament first, and then of the Country, have been proofs of God's attention to their prayer; and where the believers of any country are unanimous, as in Ireland it appears they are, surely there is reason to believe that their prayers will mightily prevail.†

This prayer is not altogether self-interested. It is so in respect of that security for life and property which hard facts have shown them they cannot expect to have under Nationalist rule. Not so in respect of the spiritual interests of the people. England performs two great functions at this time :—(1) She governs righteously, fulfilling the description of a divinely appointed government in Romans xiii. For this reason Christians stand by the Union.

* The italics are mine

† The corporate declarations of the three greater Protestant bodies, expressed in their representative assemblies, are on record, the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, and the Methodist, and all are at one for the Union. To these add the emphatic declarations of the Dublin

(2) And she disseminates God's word, maintains liberty of conscience and right of private judgment, and leads the van in missionary enterprise throughout the world. For this reason Irish Christians stand by the Union. Per contra, Irish Nationalism is the synonym for organised crime; therefore Irish Christians refuse Home Rule. And the large majority of Irish Nationalists are by their creed radically hostile to the spread of the Bible, to liberty of conscience, and to the free exercise of private judgment in the things of God. For this cause Irish Christians protest against Home Rule.

In the first pamphlet that has appeared addressed by a Christian to Christians on the subject of the Irish controversy, it does seem strange that the great fundamental, all dominating question of the spiritual emancipation of three and a half millions of souls, most of whom are at present held fast in ignorance of God's glad tidings, should have been all but wholly passed over as though unworthy of consideration.

But Christians in Ireland are unanimous. We want justice for all, and we want freedom for body and soul for the masses. Therefore we pray, and believe that our prayers will be heard. May God forbid that Christians in Great Britain should take a contrary view. We do not believe they will. And we appeal to them by their principles of justice and fair-play, by their love for an open Bible, by their faith in our common Christianity, by their detestation of crime, cruelty and internecine strife, by all that they reverence and by all that they abhor, not to lend a voice or hand to sever that link on which the lives and liberties of all loyal and law-abiding Irishmen depend.

Chamber of Commerce and Trinity College, of mixed Catholics and Protestants, all against Home Rule. Sir Thomas Sinclair said at Manchester—"Then, again, more than one-half of the Protestants of Ulster were Presbyterians, and had their own Church Assembly. Seven out of eight of the members of the Assembly were Liberals of the purest water. The Assembly had met several times to discuss this subject, and they were almost unanimous in their conviction that the adoption of the Home Rule scheme meant disaster to Ireland and to the Empire, and that the only way to secure the legislation which Ireland urgently needed was at the hands of the British Parliament."

Again, the editor of the *Irish World* states that he has heard that Irish Wesleyan Ministers, with six exceptions, (that is, 230 out of 236) have protested against Home Rule. (*Irish World*, April 2.)

