

were raised as to the authenticity of certain passages, and among them one of the most beautiful and pathetic in the Gospel narrative, to which, nevertheless, it has been suggested that not only a spurious but even a discreditable origin belongs. The affair of the revision, indeed, must appear to any unprejudiced person as quite conclusive in itself against the Protestant doctrine of the Rule of Faith. It is a monstrous belief that every man's salvation depends upon the right interpretation of a book abounding in errors, and by which even the learned must have been deceived from the days of the Reformation when the doctrine of private interpretation was invented. For the greater part of the corrections made were based on old manuscripts, to study which with effect a very considerable degree of erudition and special knowledge was necessary, and to which access was obtainable only by a chosen few. It has always been hard to believe that God gave as the Rule of Faith to men a book whose various parts were not brought together for some three or four hundred years after the institution of Christianity, and which, then, for more than a thousand years, until the invention of printing, could not have been placed in the hands of the people generally, even had they been able to read, and so to exercise the right of private interpretation on which their salvation depended. To believe all this, we say, requires a degree of credulity that seems decidedly high, but when it is added, as it now must be, that, for English speaking countries at least, which, nevertheless, are regarded commonly as those in which the Rule of Faith has been best followed and most honoured, three or four hundred years more have passed away during which, except perhaps for a profound but silent scholar here and there, the Rule of Faith itself has been corrupt, and in many instances grossly misleading, the degree of credulity necessary for the acceptance of this particular part of the great Protestant tradition becomes magnified indeed. What now becomes of the sentence that man lives by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, and by that alone? Men in England have been living by the words that came out of the brains of bad translators, or from under the fingers of careless transcribers, or else they have not truly lived at all, and have walked in the valley of the shadow of death instead. What becomes of the threat we have heard so frequently denounced by the devotees of the English Bible as to the curses that must fall on any one who added to, or took away from the prophecies of the Book? Those prophecies themselves, it seems were either incomplete or redundant, and those who leant upon them were supported by a broken reed. The whole Protestant tradition of the Bible, in fact receives its *coup de grace* by the revision, and it is impossible that henceforward any man of common sense, who divests himself of prejudice, who renounces superstition and considers the matter thoughtfully, and with a free mind can honestly receive it. As to the effect, nevertheless, which the revision will produce upon English Protestantism generally, we may believe that it will prove very trifling. English speaking Protestants have not so lightly exercised their right of private interpretation as that they should fail to be prepared for any emergency. What is there that their interpretation cannot explain away; what can it not accomplish? The *Saturday Review*, for example, gives us an instance of a certain theologian who opposed the alteration of the pews in his parish church into open seats, because, said he, Scripture had told him that a man must enter into his closet, and shut the door before he said his prayers, and what, he demanded, does that mean except that the pew should have a door to it. Here, again, is an example taken from an evangelical publication called the *Christian Leader*. "In South Norwood the Plymouth brethren met in love and unity, and, as their manner is, one of them expounded the Word. The preacher was a deeply spiritual man, and he recognised the Church in Rebecca and the Lord in Isaac, and further, in the camel Rebecca rode upon he discerned the Holy Spirit. But unto this last some of the brethren would not follow him, and so grievous did the controversy wax that it led at last to a disruption. And there are now two congregations in South Norwood, both of them still brethren, we hope, but the name given by one to the other is the pretty name of 'Camelites.'" The narrative is edifying and suggestive, and most clearly makes manifest to us the ingenuity begotten by three or four hundred years of private interpretation. This useful habit will now step in, therefore, and provide our Protestant friends with ample means of smoothing away all the difficulties arising from the revealed fact that their "open Word" has until this time in the history of reformed mankind been the bad translation of a corrupt text. The Protestant mind, in the pride that is one of its chief characteristics, rejects with horror the idea that God should have appointed a medium in the person of a man by whom to teach them His doctrines and commandments, but they will find it easy to explain how He should have given them, as such a medium, a book capable of suffering from the carelessness or ignorance of men, and which is proved on the authority of some of their most eminent divines and scholars to have suffered gravely in such a way. We may, then, congratulate them on having received their Bible at last with the full conviction that they will be able to dispose of all its difficulties without any inconvenience worth speaking of,

STUPID CRITICISM.

A DREADFUL circumstance has just turned up in connection with the Irish people, and one that plainly adds to their incapacities. They are found to have a taste for tumid declamation and to be wholly "un-English" in their appreciation of style. The matter is a serious one, as will be seen at a glance, and adds very much to the reason and strength of their opponents. The occasion on which this horrifying discovery was made was that on which the Nationalist leaders issued their manifesto to the country touching the reception to be accorded to the Prince of Wales, who, nevertheless, was received we are told, by telegram, with an enthusiasm that obliged him to telegraph at once to his Royal Mother, and would not permit of his getting one wink of sleep before he had performed that loyal as well as dutiful task. Mr. Sexton, it seems, wrote some resolutions that would have done honour to the very biggest dictionary that ever was printed, and having been signed by Mr. Parnell these resolutions were forwarded for general publication in Ireland. Mr. Sexton, however, is admitted by the English Press to be capable of doing something better than that. No newspaper denies that Mr. Sexton can speak quite well at times, indeed the *Spectator* goes so far as to confess that he sometimes utters sentences that Edmund Burke himself need not have been ashamed of. And as to Mr. Parnell, they say his natural style is altogether different from that of these objectionable publications; that nothing can be more cool, measured, or icy than his words when it suits his purpose to make them so, and, on the whole, they have been quite agitated by their endeavour to discover the reason for the quite voluntary, and even deeply-planned tumidity of these two leaders. The reason discovered is that the Irish people's taste differs from that of the English people. Paddy, it seems, has a leaning towards what is florid and ornamental whereas Hodge prefers a plain and sweet simplicity. And a simple creature we admit Hodge to be, especially in his chaw-bacon condition, when to the uninitiated it might appear difficult to discern what style of language would best suit his tastes, or whether any words used to convey ideas unassociated with the mere animal conditions of life could reach his understanding at all.—Let us recollect that the typical farmer of the North, as depicted by Tennyson, compares the preaching of his parson to the humming of some particular kind of beetle.—There is no saying what might be the especial judgment of Hodge as to Mr. Sexton, but we have at least the authority of the English Press for saying that the Irish Nationalist's style as exhibited in the document referred to, would not suit that simple individual at all.—But whatever may be the cavils of the English Press at the language employed in the manifesto of the Irish leaders, they do not succeed in showing that any of the statements made in that language, whether unwarrantably tumid or otherwise, are incorrect.—The reasons given as to why the Irish people were bound to refrain from according to the Prince of Wales a reception that would have been made use of to damage the natural cause, are valid.—The tale of oppression and injustice however told, is over true, and could not be exaggerated in any terms.—The corrupt law courts—the infamous Castle—the busy hang man, all are referred to, and were it necessary facts might be cited in proof of every statement made. But that was not necessary. All that was required was to recall to the minds of the people truths with which they were well acquainted, and on which an opportunity had arrived for them to act.—We do not seek to defend or explain the style of the document referred to.—From a literary point of view it may have been in execrable taste.—It may or may not have suited the simplicity of Hodge, according as that simple individual could understand it—or could not understand it as seems more probable, or it may have been the very thing to catch the fancy of Paddy and bring him up to the sticking point.—Indeed we consider there was no importance whatever in the matter, and the fact that the English Press have dealt so gravely with it, is a plain indication of how little they have to urge against the Irish cause.

A NOBLE ENGLISH CATHOLIC.

A REPORT was circulated a little time ago to the effect that the Marquis of Ripon was to replace Lord Spencer as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The report was groundless, and we were happy to believe at the time that it was so, for of all places in the world, under existing circumstances, we should be most unwilling to see a sincere, practical, and fervent Catholic, such as Lord Ripon has well proved himself to be, occupying the exalted but invidious position in question. Apart, however, from Lord Ripon's religion, which would in any case oppose a barrier to his appointment as Lord Lieutenant, we have reason to believe that he is one of the last men belonging to the Liberal party in England whom the leaders of that party would desire to see filling the Lord Lieutenancy. Lord Ripon's mind, we have little doubt, is with the Irish cause, and the advocates of Home Rule would find in him, not a bitter, and relentless, enemy like Lord Spencer, but a friend and supporter. And, what is more, we are strengthened in this opinion by the incidental, but pertinent and suggestive, remark made by a distinguished English Catholic writer, in addressing the Marquis lately in the introduction to a work