

we have above laid down—as it is, in fact, argued by 'Civis' in the *Otago Daily Times*—that other religious bodies do not acknowledge our claim to catholicity, the answer is that as regards the right to use the title Catholic we are the party in possession. It is ours by immemorial prescription. If the Protestant bodies wished to share in the title they should have adopted it, in some shape or form, in their official designation, as was done, for example, by the now moribund body known as 'Old Catholics.' They might, if they had chosen, have called themselves 'Reformed Catholics,' or some such name; but in the earlier years of their history they would have none of any such title. And now that the world is swinging back to Catholic views and principles, to attempt to filch the title from the party in possession and even to prevent Catholics themselves from employing it, is a piece of manifest injustice. In any case, the question of ecclesiastical names is a matter in which laws and governments—except in so far as may be absolutely necessary for statistical purposes—have no call to interfere. Let the churches—within limits, as above indicated—take their own titles; and in the struggle for existence it may be safely left to the fittest to survive.

As a pendant to his remarks on the subject, 'Civis' recounts an incident related by 'Farmer's Wife'—a sort of literary Mrs. Harris, per medium of whom 'Civis' from time to time introduces some pointed and well-written observations on current topics. The story has little to do with the title 'Catholic,' but it has a very real connection with the religion connoted by the term. We give it as we find it in 'Passing Notes.' 'If I, "Civis," would see the works of St. Francis of Assisi done to-day, she bids me take a trip (in my motor car) to Anderson's Bay. "I went last time I was in Dunedin and noticed one nun, I would say in her prime. I asked some one when I went out why she, Sister M., was shaking so. She had been nursing a cancer case; the patient had died a short time before and it had been a great strain on her. Anyone can mind babies (as at Karitane?) but to nurse old people without any earthly reward takes the true love of God." Even so,' adds 'Civis.' 'I sit admonished, and will lay to heart the lesson.'

## THE HOME RULE BILL

READ A THIRD TIME IN THE COMMONS.

### A MAGNIFICENT MAJORITY.

The third Home Rule Bill has been carried by the magnificent majority of 110 (says the *Irish Press Agency*). That is a much better majority than its supporters anticipated or than its opponents reckoned upon. A few minutes after the Bill passed its Third Reading in the House of Commons, it was taken to the House of Lords, and given a formal First Reading by the Peers. The debate in the Commons was memorable for the speeches delivered by the Premier (Mr. Asquith), Mr. John Redmond, and Mr. Birrell (the Chief Secretary for Ireland). These speeches were worthy of the theme, and of the highest traditions of Parliamentary eloquence. If there was nothing remarkable about the other speeches, few or none of which rose above the normal, and some of which, notably F. E. Smith's, were beneath mediocrity, the setting and surroundings of the debate were in keeping with the dignity, the solemnity, and the importance which characterise the Mother of Parliaments on a great and epoch-making occasion.

#### Public Interest.

The public interest in the debate was keen, even intense. For weeks previously, members of all parties had been besieged by applications for tickets of admission to the galleries, and those fortunate enough to obtain admission remained in their seats as long as possible. Irishmen and Irishwomen from all parts of the world

were represented, and high Church dignitaries and priests from America, Australia, and New Zealand, with others from Ireland and Great Britain, sat beside Nationalist and democratic leaders from near and far, who had borne a share in the great struggle of which they were witnessing the triumph and the consummation. In the ladies' gallery, the wives and friends of Irish members sat side by side with blue-blooded Tory peeresses and fair daughters of the aristocracy. Outside, in the Strangers' Lobby, a crowd, growing larger as the debate proceeded, waited patiently, hour after hour, and day after day, to catch fragments of news as to how the fight went on, and when, eventually, an Irish member rushed out and announced the result of the final division, the crowd demonstrated its sympathies by loud and prolonged cheers for Home Rule. Long after the last member had left the House, and the last taxicab had rolled away from Palace Yard, little knots of Irishmen and Irishwomen of the working-classes, many of them who had never seen Ireland, remained about the precincts of Westminster, discussing the great event, cheering for Ireland and Home Rule, or singing snatches of Irish songs. Home Rule is essentially a workers' cause, and no section of Irish workers have done more to speed its triumph than 'the Irish garrison in Great Britain,' the men who gave Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, and Michael Davitt to the cause of Irish liberty.

#### MR. ASQUITH'S SPEECH.

It is a pity that the Premier's speech could not be put into the hands of every friend, and, indeed, of every opponent of Home Rule. It was a masterpiece of eloquence and argument, but what Irishman will like best in it is its outspoken and uncompromising justification of Ireland's claim to nationhood, and its firm and emphatic refusal to consent to what Mr. Redmond has aptly described as 'the mutilation of our country' by the exclusion of Ulster from the Bill. The Unionists were all wrong, the Premier said, in regarding the Anglo-Irish difficulty as beginning with the Act of Union. But, however that might be, the Irish Nationalist movement to-day was an organised, practical, inevitable reality:—

'We cannot ignore this: that, if you reject this Bill, you would find still standing in your path what is, and remains with undiminished vitality, the organised, articulate, and permanent expression of the political demand of the vast majority of the Irish people. That is the vital fact of the situation. That is the thing you have got to face.'

#### Ireland a Nation.

The common argument of Unionism is that Ireland's claim to nationality is not recognised or met under the Bill. Of course, the Irish people are the best judges of that, and they have everywhere and in the fullest sense accepted the Bill. But Mr. Asquith's argument on this important point is worth quoting and remembering:

'I do not believe,' he said, 'it is possible for anybody, on paper or in a speech, to define what nationality is or means. Judged by any criterion that has ever been suggested by any authority on the subject, I conceive that Ireland well satisfies it. Mr. Parnell once used a phrase, often quoted, to show that the Irish members cannot accept this Bill in satisfaction of their national demands. The phrase he used was that it was impossible to set bounds to the nationhood of a people.' (Hon. Members: 'The march of a nation.') 'So it is. It does not follow, and that is why this dilemma becomes so unreal, when you bring it down to the level of experience and concrete fact—that the nation might not retain all that makes it such, but have complete autonomy in regard to all its own local affairs, and yet be a member of incorporation and have a voice, as such member, in the affairs of a larger political whole. If you are going to rule out, as not having attained the stature of a nation, or having fallen short of the stature of a nation, countries which do not comply with those conditions, you will have to begin by ruling out Scotland and Wales, and end by ruling out Canada, Australia, and all our great self-governing dominions. . . . We give the Irish Parliament powers which