

brance of merely nominal professors. As it was, Christianity suffered only in common with paganism; the inroads of the Picts and Scots were in no sense crusades, nor their victims martyrs to the cause of truth. The religion of Christ would, therefore, to a superficial observer of that age, be reduced to a level with other forms of belief. As outwardly its professors fared no better than others, so an impression might be produced that its intrinsic merits were no greater; and thus the number of those who proved its superiority by their lives, would naturally diminish. The really faithful, who, in prosperous times, bear so small a proportion, so far as fruit may warrant an inference, to the nominal believers, would be firm to their allegiance still; whilst the larger class would insensibly lose the characteristics they may have formerly possessed of outward observance and morality, and thus practically relapse to paganism. Such, in the absence of more historical details respecting the Church in this age, may fairly be presumed to have been the effect upon it of the Pictish and Scottish invasions in those parts of Britain which were either subject to, or apprehensive of their ravages.

(3). And we have only to enlarge the area of this declension of vital Christianity, in order to gain a tolerably correct idea of the immediate effects produced by the arrival of the Anglo-Saxon invaders. These barbarians were only called over into Britain on the final withdrawal of the Romans, after the confessed inability or manifest unwillingness of the latter to waste their legions in ceaseless contests with the Picts and Scots, which were attended neither with gain nor glory to those who shed their blood in the cause. Reduced to extremities, the British, in despair, called in these foreign auxiliaries. On their arrival, the Picts were successfully repulsed; but the British found that they had put their necks under a heavier yoke, in the persons of their new allies, who had no idea of resigning all further interest in the land they had been summoned to defend. The natives discovered, too late, that they had only changed masters, with this difference: that their bondage was now permanent, instead of intermittent; of almost universal extent, instead of being confined to particular portions of the Island. The Germans, increasing in numbers, drove the natives gradually before them into the southern and western corners of Britain. They carried their religion with them, and thus it, too, was confined, and continued for some time within these narrow limits. Christian zeal may have been rekindled by these external calamities, or its warmth may have been more intense in proportion as it was less diffuse. At all events, the organization of the Church seems to have sustained no injury; its leavening and germinating powers lay within small compass, apparently dormant, but ready for