

The Press and General Review.

From the Nonconformist.

Secession to the Church of Rome appears just now to be the order of the day—a very natural result, we should say, of the doctrines propounded during the Gorham controversy, and of the legal decision by which that suit was ultimately closed. The Tractarians are already Romanists in principle, and, perhaps, it is as well that they should become so, as speedily as possible, in position. The Rev. Mr. Allies, rector of Launton, Oxon, and the Rev. Eyre Stuart Bathurst, of Kibworth, Leicester, have resigned their ecclesiastical preferments, and sought rest for their disturbed consciences in the Papal communion. It is reported that the Roman Catholic Church is gathering strength prodigiously in these realms; and, if by strength, wealth and pretension be meant, we have no doubt that the report is true. Romanism externally may be flourishing, but Romanism, considered as the symbol of priestly intervention for men's safety hereafter, and as the type of prelatical pride and power, neither is nor can be what it once was. The age is beyond it. Individualism is too strong for it. It fades in the light. It becomes rampant only when surrounded by ignorance. We have no fear of Romanism as such. The principles of that system which find a response in human nature, may, perhaps, be developed in some more insidious forms—but the sway of the papal power, we take it, is drawing to a close. It is no longer a living reality, and, in the course of a few years, will prove to be little better than a name. Romanism is the dead skin of a once formidable thing.

Not even in Ireland, we think, notwithstanding the Synod at Thurles, can the prospects of Romanism be justly held to be flattering—Shall we give a reason for our remark? We can in one short sentence, "*The Britannia Bridge is completed*." Ireland is now within a day's easy distance from the metropolis, and soon, there can be little doubt, the Sub-marine Telegraph will, for all the purposes of important intercommunication, link together London and Dublin. Who does not foresee changes of a cheering character, as the result of these triumphs of physical science? Through the Britannia Tube what new life and light will, in process of time, pass hence into the sister isle? Ireland will be as familiar known to our children, as it was obscured to our fathers—and when know will be proportionably cared for.—That stupendous work of Mr Stephenson, which has just been happily completed—what is it but the stretching out by Great Britain of her right hand to lift poor, degraded Ireland from the dust? And with such aid in store for her, no priesthood will be able for long to keep Ireland in spiritual slavery. Steam and electricity defy all attempts to return to the darkness of mediæval times. They are the harbingers of freedom, political and ecclesiastical, all the world over.

A propos of Ireland, it becomes us to notice Lord Clarendon's visit to Ulster. The qualities of that statesman are now beginning to attain for him the respect which he deserves.—His reception at Belfast was enthusiastic.—Royalty herself could hardly have been more cordially greeted. Lord Clarendon, in his speech at the banquet given in his honor, ran over some of the signs of improvement which the country he governs has lately exhibited.—They are most gratifying. A diminution of crime, and even of pauperism, a slow but steady development of the wealth of the soil, reviving industry and commerce, and an improvement in the tone of popular feeling, are now topics in a Lord-Lieutenant's speech. We think great credit is due to Lord Clarendon for maintaining in the worst of times, an even-handed impartiality, and gathering around him an atmosphere of popular respect. It is plain that he is governing Ireland—a new thing in modern days.

Coming back to our own kingdom, we naturally take the manufacturing districts in our way. Let us stop a moment at Manchester.—A conference has just been held there, for promoting what is termed "associative labor."—The following resolution will best explain the object of this synod. It is to the effect that "the reports received from the delegates present fully corroborate the evidence previously existing as to the rottenness of the present competitive system in trade, and prove that association for co-operative labor and the establishment of mutual exchanges would be the best means of improving the condition of the working classes." Strange information was disclosed to the public by some of these delegates, and wild and visionary may be the ideas entertained by some others—but these men are practically engaged in solving the most interesting of all the social questions of the day, and so far as they have truth and reason on their side, we most fervently wish them "God speed."

One word on another topic, and we will pass at once to foreign affairs. Lieutenant Gale, it reports be correct, has lost his life in achieving that greatest of absurdities, a balloon ascent on horseback. Safely he had got mounted to the skies and safely he had got back again to earth.—His horse was detached, and while he was preparing to disengage the imprisoned gas, the French peasants who held down the enormous machine, mistaking his gestures, let go the ropes. Instantly it shot upwards, and owing to some accident not yet explained, it is

said that the balloon was found at one place, and the lifeless body of Lieutenant Gale at another. Let us hope that this calamity will put an effectual stop to such insane and purposeless hardihood!

Our French neighbors seem to be scarcely so mercurial, or desirous of further political changes as our daily journals would fain make us out to be. The absence of enthusiasm for the person of Louis Napoleon, accompanied with due respect for the office he holds, is but a counterpart to the proceedings of the Councils General of the departments. These bodies, which were elected by universal suffrage, and may not unfrequently be regarded as expressing the opinion of the people, have generally required a revision of the constitution, without, however, pointing out the defects that need amendment; and, in the majority of cases, expressly urge that it be done in a legal manner. From this and other indications of public opinion it may be concluded, that the French people are averse to any new and sudden organic changes, and are disposed to wait until 1852 before such questions are again agitated. But whatever may be the course of events during the next two years, we fear that legislation will not run in that course best calculated to promote the welfare of the nation. While Bourbonist and Orleansist claims are moulded in the true catch penny style, the President seeks to bribe support by hints of what Government will do for the people, not in the shape of just legislation, but by means of public works and patronage. We tremble for the nation whose chief magistrates can openly, and without condemnation, avow such a principle of government. It is lamentable to find both rulers and ruled running round in the same vicious circle which has heretofore ended in the ruin of both.

The affairs of Germany have been further complicated anew by the revolution in Hesse-Cassel, which resulted in the flight of the worthless Sovereign and his dishonest prime Minister. It would appear probable that the Elector will appeal to the Federal Diet, now sitting at Frankfurt, for assistance in re-establishing his absolute authority, and will obtain it. But as the authority of that body is only acknowledged by a section of the German Governments, and as Prussia stands at the head of an entirely independent confederation, it is obvious that the decrees of the Diet cannot be enforced without involving the risk of a conflict between the rival powers. The Elector having appealed to the resuscitated Diet, his emancipated subjects will, no doubt, put themselves under the protection of Prussia. This must bring matters to a crisis between the contending states, unless the fear of an open rupture should at length bring about a compromise.

Impatient of the inactivity which it has been obliged to observe during the last few weeks, the army of Holstein, recruited and re-fitted, has once more resumed the offensive against the Danes. The partial but sanguinary engagement at Missunde, however, has done little else than prove the strength of the Danish position, and the folly of further operations on the part of their assailants. From the fact of the Holstein general having fallen back, we should hope that he has arrived at this conclusion. Both parties might, without disadvantage await the result of negotiations, which must, after all, settle this aggravated quarrel.

In the United States, the free-soil struggle in Congress has, for the moment, been almost lost sight of in the excitement caused by the execution of Dr. Webster, and the arrival of Jenny Lind. The splendid ovation that awaited the arrival of the fair songstress, could scarcely be equalled by any loyal displays which this or any other European country can produce.—Jenny Lind, by the force of her genius, still more by the unaffected goodness of her character, has won for herself a place in the hearts of American republicans, which Absolutists might regard with envy—a genuine homage to nature and art combined.

THE EARLY-CLOSING MOVEMENT.

It speaks well for the times through which we are moving, that the public mind is becoming aroused to the consideration of those social anomalies which so seriously affect the condition of the people. Urgent as is the importance of great political movements and changes, they but indirectly touch those social and domestic wrongs which, interlaced with our dearest interests, are the occasion of so much unknown misery. The neglect of these more private maladies is fraught with danger to the community at large. Lying below the surface, and not meeting the general eye, their corroding power becomes quickened. They weaken, at once, the physical and moral condition of society. They are a serious bar to the more commanding movements of the age. They cry loudly and righteously for public sympathy and assistance.

In another part of our paper will be found a letter from the Secretary of the Early-Closing Association, which claims a careful and earnest perusal. From its contents we find that, in the metropolis alone, upwards of a hundred thousand young persons are deeply injured by, and that no less than a thousand lives are annually sacrificed to the fearful effects of the late-hour system. What, then, must be the aggregate amount of victims throughout the United Kingdom?

It is difficult to overstate the many-coloured forms of evil, both physical and moral, which attend upon this great social wrong. In regard to the employer, it stimulates and pampers an all but insatiable thirst for gain, and, as a consequence blights the moral and religious sympathies. In regard to the employed, by a slow but certain process, it saps the vital power of health—stunts the intellectual faculties—dries up all religious principles—beguiles to unwonted and destructive stimulants—pushes the soul forward to a co-partnership with vice—converts our common manhood into a material machine, and lays the foundation for a future generation characterised by sickness, sordidness, and every variety of social misery. If the cry from the counter has prevailed here and there to ameliorate this sad state of things, it is as nothing compared with the broad mass of evil which yet remains to be assailed and destroyed. The more recondite and malignant features of the case have, as yet, hardly been touched. That lust of wealth, which deliberately shuts its eyes to the serious evils it engenders, will not be readily turned from its course. Multitudes of victims will, alas, be yet immolated before the power of public opinion will be able to call a blush upon the face of this monstrous wrong.

There is, however, a method of summary dealing with this matter, were it but earnestly and resolutely set about. There is reason to believe, taking an average of the United Kingdom, that the profit derived from business transacted during late hours is very slender, barely meeting the needful outlay, and in many instances attended by a positive loss. Such a business, then, upon its own merits, had better be sacrificed; but much more when it is remembered that none of it need be lost if a general early-closing were adopted. The line of policy which the public should pursue is manifest. No actual wrong, but a great public good would be effected, did all heads of families for the future altogether abandon evening shopping, and deal only with those tradesmen who close their shops at an early hour. Let commercial rapacity be thus firmly rebuked. Show to this intense form of selfishness the weakness of its own position. See that the empty shops of those who "will be rich," at whatever mental and moral cost to society, read to them, a significant lecture. In a word, encourage to the utmost those traders who really care for the young men in their employment, and you at once stab the old miserable system in its very vitals.

In the meantime, not only the press; but the pulpit, should deal directly and pointedly with this matter. Ministers of religion *par excellence* have the power to grapple with these great social questions. They come as once within the range both of preacher and pastor. That is a tame theology and a lax supervision which can not come into close quarters with this crying wrong. Why not cultivate the kind of oratory which takes its illustrations from, and offers an indignant protest against, these flagrant evils? There are few things on a large scale that are doing greater detriment to the progress of a robust religion. The power of the pulpit need be heard in no measured tones decrying that rank injustice which is perpetrated under the cover of commercial economy and industry. The young men of the metropolis, and, indeed, of the United Kingdom, with significant earnestness invoke this aid. The genius of the gospel throws its shield of protection around these captives of excessive toil and morbid cupidity. To the Christian church it furnishes a wide and noble sphere for the exercise of the highest philanthropy. We know that some ministers and churches have not been wanting, in this matter, and we take leave to press upon all who have not yet waged war upon this specific evil to bend their energies towards its extinction.

There is much in the aspect of the times favorable to a combined movement in this direction. The young men of this kingdom will, at no great distance of time, be in possession of the political franchise—societies for their mental and moral improvement are rapidly being developed—the inward eye of society is turned wistfully towards the rising generation. Small, however, will be the benefit they will reap from these auspicious events if they remain mentally and morally chained to the inexorable demands of the counter. Since the time of their emancipation seems approaching, let unabated and increased effort hasten a consummation, which will elicit the deepest gratitude of thousands who are now the ill but helpless slaves of a dishonorable and vicious system.—26.

SACERDOTALISM AND STATECRAFT.

The Synod of Thurles has closed its imposing celebrations and its mystified debates. The parliament of primate and prelates, with its assisting judges and doctors, generals of orders, and consultive but non-voting priests, and its retinue of acolytes and choirsters, has broken up. The archiepiscopal cathedral of Tipperary, is restored to its ordinary "dim religious light" and quietude. The accounts of the pageants that have crowded its precincts during the last month read like a chapter of mediæval history, or of a book of continental travel. We Englishmen of the present day cannot realize the scenes that have been passing among our fellow-citizens, and within a day's journey—procession of ecclesiastics of every grade, from the Papal legate to the parish priest, arrayed in every vari-

ety of vestment; from the jewelled robe and mitre that oppressed their venerable wearers, or sat lightly on the Becket-like John of Tuam, half priest half-demagogue, to the serge and sandals of the friar; and least of all, the kneeling crowd, eager to touch the consecrated garments, or be overshadowed by the hands that distribute blessings. To clerical conferences we are accustomed enough, but not to public pageants and secret deliberation. The one would excite amongst us no solemnity, and the other only distrust. The Synod, however, has allowed the subject of its conferences and the substance of its decisions to become known. The actual resolutions adopted are on their way to Rome; there to receive the sanction of the head of this *imperium in imperio*; but they are understood to condemn the Queen's Colleges as dangerous to the faith and morals of the Catholic youth, to forbid ecclesiastical connexion with them, and to recommend the institution of a Roman Catholic College from the contributions of the faithful. Acting at once on their spirit, two of the prelates have refused the inspecting functions offered them by the Government.

Thus are sacerdotalism and statecraft completely at cross purposes; for such, we believe, are the terms that correctly describe the parties, or rather the principles, at variance. The colleges were founded in pursuance of the cherished policy of modern statecraft—that of either subjecting all religious institutions to governmental influence, or destroying the influence of those institutions on the people. Compelled to abandon, or postpone, their favorite project of endowing the Catholic clergy, our politicians resorted to a tentative method of loosening their hold on the educated youth of their communion. A strictly secular seminary would disarm, it was expected, the suspicions of such as preferred religious independence to State subserviency, and infallibly enlist all the noisy, shallow Liberalism of the age. In the latter particular it has certainly been successful. Whoever has no creed and no Church to care for, or values religion only as the cheapest of conservative influences, is warm in admiration of the scheme, and loud in its defence. It has fairly aroused, however, the sagacity it was intended to outwit.—Sacerdotalism, that claims to be the only authorized ministry of religion, claims also to be the sole instructor of religious youth. It is perfectly consistent—it would be unfaithful to itself if it bated a jot of its demands, or parted with even a symbol of its authority. Standing to men in the place of God, it must also stand to the child in the place of the parent. The children of the faithful are the children of the Church. From the lips that pronounce admission into the family of God, they should receive their first lessons in the knowledge of man.—Not till they have reached that age when the reception of new opinions becomes daily more improbable, should they be suffered to escape from pastoral supervision. They who aspire to do so much for man, should undertake to do everything for him—especially to educate him.—If it be said, that such a claim, so pushed, would reduce itself to an absurdity, and man to a murmur or a machine, we are not concerned to answer the remark—if it be urged in behalf of the opposite system, we return it. For, indeed, the essential principles of sacerdotalism and of statecraft are the same—they would both deprive man of himself in subjecting him to society, sacred or secular. We have no fear of a return to the bondage of the Church—we are glad to witness any rebuff administered to the encroachments of the State. By the antagonism of the two, we may escape to a third position—that of dignity and completeness—individual independence and voluntary unity.—26.

REV. G. C. GORHAM AT BRAMPFORD SPEKE.

The Rev. G. C. Gorham commenced his ministry at Bramford Speke, on Tuesday evening (Sept. 10), by assembling the catechumens at the vicarage for instruction on Confirmation; and, on Wednesday, by a public lecture, in the parish church, on Baptism and on Confirmation. On the latter occasion, he gave notice that he should again expect the young people at the vicarage on Friday evening; that he should read the Thirty-nine Articles next Sunday morning, September 15th; but that (on account of the length of the ceremony of reading it in the morning) he should not preach till the afternoon of that day. It is remarkable that the very first duties he has had to perform should have been on this long litigated subject, and that, too, by the official direction of the bishop, addressed to the "Ministers of the parish of Bramford-Speke" individually, on the 24th of August; although, in the letter addressed to the churchwardens of the same parish, on the 16th of August, the bishop inconsistently "expected that he (the vicar) will not preach on the subject at all."—*Western Times*.

The Exeter correspondent of the *Patriot* describes the scene in Bramford Speke Church, on Sunday last:—"Many people came from a long distance; the little church was crammed to overflowing, and, as an official life, the out-far exceeded in number the *ins*. Mr. Gorham looked well and undaunted. In the morning I understood that he 'read himself in.' In the afternoon he read the prayers, and after that the several declarations which are enjoined to be made in such cases, adding, at the close, that he requested the churchwardens and cer-