

ture, for his own fame and for his country, but lives in the grateful esteem of all who knew him, and at full length in the large heart of his brother. It is impossible to give our readers any idea of the rapidity of Mr. Thom's utterance, the light, hurrying, yet masterly manner in which he touches the vast variety of subjects which comes before him, or the clear though dry light which he shows his peculiar views. You cannot listen to him, whatever be your own views, without acknowledging in the first place, that the man is quite sincere, and, in the second place, that his opinions, however erroneous, so far from being a crude chaos (as they were represented to us) are a rounded, total, and distinct system, founded too on prodigious thought, reading, and investigation. We now and then had to banish an idea which obtruded itself as we listened to Mr. Thom. 'What a barrister this gentleman had made, far away from theology, of which the principles and laws lie in such short compass, and are so strict, definite, and commanding. Has he not lost the woollack, and gained what many think no more a pulpit than was the tub of Diogenes? And yet we cannot but admire his talent and respect his earnestness.' Can our readers conceive about what this active, strenuous, wrestling intellect is at present engaged? It is on a long elaborate treatise ancient that grand prophetic puzzle, the 'name and number of the beast.' In his forthcoming volume on that subject he has amassed a collection of all the opinions ever propounded, from the days of Irenæus to those of Elliott, each fairly stated and formally though briefly confuted, along with a theory of his own, which dawned on him, he says, in an instant, and in an instant appeared to dart a light not only on the particular passage but on the entire book, of whose black arch it is, according to him, the keystone. This theory, of course, he would not explain, nor are we so sanguine as he of its being the last and only explication of a depth which so many prophets and righteous men have desired in vain to see; but it *may* be this, ingenious it *must* be, and his volume will at least fill up the desideratum long felt by the student of prophecy of a complete *vade mecum* of all the views which learned men have, we humbly think, wasted their time in framing, concerning what has little or no practical value, unless it can be proved to do for the intricacies of the Apocalypse what the simplicity of Newton's system did for the confused vortices in which the heavens were supposed to revolve. But against this there are various antecedent probabilities, for, in the first place, so far as we dare speak on such a subject, the difficulty connected with the number of the beast seems rather to be one outstanding from the scheme of the book than the key of it all; because the difficulty connected with the supposition of this being the key is enhanced by its own inherent and threefold obscurity; and because there are many probabilities against the supposition of one key turning so many locks as the complicated structure of the Revelation includes. But we speak in the dark; we have great faith in Mr Thom's ingenuity, and much impatience for its finished result, only wondering somewhat at the subject which a reasoner so acute and with such a strong tendency to *moral* themes has selected.

We enjoyed a very favourable opportunity of hearing Dr. Hugh Macneil, the *lion* of Liverpool, in the scene of his glory, the Amphitheatre, where he had often before and once again to triumph over his most formidable foes, even when they included common sense, common

justice, and common humanity. And not only was the place stimulating, as suggestive of memories of his former triumphs, but the subject and the audience were both in keeping. The subject involved, in our judgment, an unblushing claptrap. A picture of the trial of the seven bishops had been long exhibiting in the town, and had attracted great attention. To collect into one all the little groups which had witnessed that picture, to instruct them in its history and to draw from the picture certain solid no-popery *electioneering* inferences was, in the first place, very necessary, for from numerous evidences we were morally certain that a very large portion of that immense multitude had never heard of the Seven Bishops till as the subject of the picture, and even after seeing it continued shamefully ignorant of their history; and again it was likely to be exceedingly useful to the doctor's cause on the eve of a general election, and gave him still farther an opportunity of displaying, in an imposing style, those peculiar powers of matter, voice, and manner, which constitute him perhaps the best *mimetic minister* of the day. Having with great difficulty procured a ticket, and with more difficulty a seat, we set ourselves, ere the lecturer appeared, to analyse and classify the audience. It was manifestly a most motley throng, on the whole odd and paltry, in its component parts, and yet, as often happens, magnificent in its own result. No great mass of human beings can be aught but sublime—as sublime, perhaps, though composed of the meanest materials, as if it were an assembly of heroes. Why is this? What is the reason that an Irish mob in certain circumstances, and in certain moods, moving to such a performer say as O'Connell, rises to the *ne plus ultra* of grandeur? Why would an assembly of angels hardly more impress us? Because in the one case surprise becomes sublime—the surprise of finding the mean multiplied as by mere arithmetic into the magnificent—in the other, sublimity, by a similar process, would cease to be surprising; because in the one case the parts are easily and cheerfully lost in the conception of the whole, while in the other they would not so readily consent to resign their individual worth and excellence; because a certain pity and pathos adheres to the sight of all combined insignificance, and because over all multitudes of men there hangs, consciously or unconsciously, the grandeur of the idea of death, and, consequently, the shadow of eternity. Over what meeting of demi-gods, however frequent and full, could Xerxes have wept the tears he wept, or uttered the exclamation he used, as he looked at his five millions and remembered that in a hundred years they were to be no more? It was but a field of thick grass on which he gazed, but it shone and glittered into glory in the lustre of the scythe of death! In one word, the imagination has more scope in a congregation of the mean than of the lofty; and on the same principle it is that moors and mountains, composed of materials in themselves uninteresting, expand and brighten into meaning and beauty, which no wilderness of sweets, no mountains of myrrh or valleys of frankincense, could ever yield. Thus pondering and perspiring, amid a mingled mass of men, children, and 'old women' of both sexes, of Macneil's friends, foes, and neutrals, we waited for the hero of the hour. In at last he stepped, preceded, attended, succeeded, and almost buried, among the Orange elite of the city. Chin-deep he stood in flatterers, as the martyrs of old in flames. Emerging from this, he came forth really a sturdy confessor,