

REVIEW OF THE PAST YEAR.

The year that is past has been one of comparative peace and prosperity. Eventful years, as a rule, are not happy years. No great facts stand forth upon the record of 1872; and, for the interest of the majority, it is well that this has been the case. In Britain and her colonies the year opened with thanksgiving to God for the restoration of the Prince of Wales. The Positivists would not believe that the recovery was due to anything but natural causes, and some of the boldest among these unbelievers challenged the Christian world to an experimental trial of the efficacy of prayer. One of the best subjects for trial would be the conversion of these infidels themselves. The legislation in the Bennett and similar cases in the Church of England drove Mr. Molyneux and others out of the Establishment. Dr. Pusey growled but would not be driven out, and the timid Evangelicals, on their part, show no disposition to give up the loaves and fishes. Archbishop Tait set the heathen sojourners in London on their defence by calling attention to the need of missionary labours near home. One of the worst features in the state of public opinion in many parts of England came prominently forward, in the justification of this contemptible defence by leading journalists and others professing Christianity. The English Presbyterian Church celebrated the tercentenary of the founding of the first English Presbytery at Wandsworth, and is thoroughly agreed upon the question of union with the United Presbyterian body in England, and in time with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.

In Scotland matters of education absorbed a great deal of public attention. The union of the Churches is still in the future; and Dr. Begg, with the rest of the anti-unionists, are fighting vigorously against the Mutual Eligibility Scheme. Two border raids have attracted a fair share of notice. One is Dean Stanley's visit to the Established Church; the other, Mr. Knight's to the Unitarians of England. Dean Stanley was answered by Dr. Rainy in a manner that may teach him and others the difficulty of laying a broad Church platform in the Presbyterian Church. Mr. Knight has abjured Mr. Martineau. Two distinguished men, Dr. Norman McLeod of the Established, and Professor Islay Burns of the Free Church, have been missed from their places. The tercentenary of the death of Knox was celebrated not only in Scotland, but throughout the Presbyterian world. Evangelistic work in the Highlands and other parts of Scotland has been carried on during the past year, principally by the deputies of the Free Church Assembly, and has resulted in much spiritual good. In Ireland disestablishment is working well for all parties. A greater share in public affairs is now taken by those who but recently bore the name of dissenters, and greater activity in matters of religion and Church organization is manifested by the once paid agents of the State. Cardinal Cullen and the Romish hierarchy have been endeavouring to get the superintendence of education