

CATHOLICISM IN ENGLAND.

Conclusion drawn by the Tablet from the statistics which it published the other day will not, of course, very readily commend itself to the Protestant reader, but whatever view we may take of their import the figures are remarkable enough in themselves to suggest serious reflection. The Catholics of England and Scotland, it seems, have increased at between twice and three times the ratio of increase in the population. In the year 1840 there were 539,400 Catholics in Great Britain and their churches 222. In 1880 the first of these totals had risen to 1,354,000, the second to 2,382, and the third to 1,461. Thus, while the inhabitants of Great Britain have increased in number by 60 per cent. the Catholics have increased by 158 per cent. within the period their representative organ, "the Tablet," constitutes 5 per cent. of the population of Great Britain, and should have 27 members in the House of Commons, whereas there is actually but one—the member for Berwick." In the United States—for a reason which lies, of course, upon the surface—the growth of the Catholic community has been much more rapid even than this. "At present," says the Tablet, "the Catholics constitute 10 per cent. of the population, while the rest of the population has advanced only 192 per cent. during the last forty years. Numbering over 6,000,000 in 1840, they have now reached a total of 6,143,000. In Australia, according to the authority from which we quote, the Catholics constitute the almost equal number of the Protestants. There is now a Catholic laity 600,000 strong, attending 800 churches, and receiving the ministrations of 400 priests and 16 bishops. Perhaps, however, the most singular example of the vigorous growth of Catholicism which the Catholic journal has instanced is to be found in India. There the number of Catholics is estimated to be 1,218,000; or more than four times that of the Protestants, and to amount to thirteen-sixteenths of all Christian denominations put together. And here, too, the case seems really to be one of genuine missionary success, for Dr. Hunter records in his Cyclopaedia that in the single Province of Pondicherry no fewer than 50,000 adults were baptized into the Catholic religion in the three months ending December, 1880. In the United States, on the other hand, the case is exactly reversed. There, at any rate, it would be gratuitous to assume any remarkable triumph of proselytizing energy; for the increase, immense as it is, of the American Catholic population during the period which covers the years of the Irish exodus produced by the great famine, may be said to explain itself. And the same explanation may be taken perhaps to account, at least some considerable measure, for the growth of the Catholic element among the people of Australia. But what is the explanation as regards Great Britain herself? Is the increase of Catholicism in this country to be set down to the "propagation of the faith," or to the propagation of a particular race by whom the faith is held? That the Irish element in our population shows a tendency to increase three as fast as the English—or, in other words, that certain influences which tend to lower the standard of living among the working class of the community are nearly three times as active as the influences tending to maintain it—is scarcely a comfortable reflection. We may console ourselves to some extent by reflecting that processes of this kind are not necessarily beyond the reach of correction, and that they do sometimes, in fact, correct themselves in various ways. But meanwhile the inordinate growth of this particular ingredient in our social whole seems certainly to be threatening us for the time with something like the "Chinese problem" of the Americans on a very small scale.

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"Prepare for summer," says a daily paper. We have, we have! We have mortgaged our house, sold all our personal property, assigned our income for the next six months, drawn on the whole of our money in the savings bank and turned the whole proceeds over to the proprietor of a "summer hotel" for the rent of two hot boxes for ten weeks, for what we can pick up in the dining-room and for the privilege of wearing out the seat of our trousers on hard-seated piazza chairs. We are now trying to float some more mortgage money, and Mrs. Spicer's wardrobe, so as to subsidize the cook, steward, bell boys, waiters, chambermaids, clerk and scrub girls. If anybody has been forgotten he will have to come in on preferred stock.—Boston Commercial Bulletin.

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No Homely Girls Necessary.

Mr. Ruskin said disagreeable things about women's brains and the female sex in art and literature in his younger days, but he has lived long enough to know better, and take most of them back. He is adored by women now in his old days and has many correspondents among young ladies. Some of them wrote him a letter asking: "What are plain girls to do?" Mr. Ruskin answered right gallantly. He told the young ladies that girls who are well bred, kind and modest can never be "offensively plain." Whatever the shape of a girl's mouth may be she can refine it by culture and sweet bright thoughts till it ceases to be unattractive. She can not make her ears smaller, physically speaking, but any girl can make herself graceful and attractive in manners if she give her head to it. By genuine kindness and good temper, by cultivating her intellect, by studying what is best and brightest, acting on her woman's natural impulse to please, she can come to have such winning ways that nobody will think of her as unbecomingly. Mr. Ruskin is right. There need be no homely girls.

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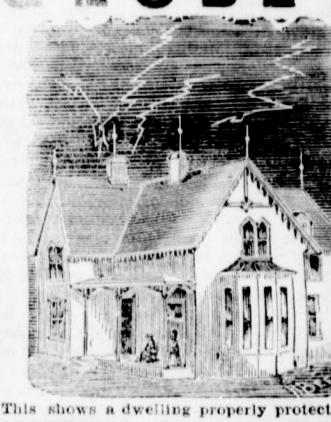
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