

## Religious Intelligence.

### INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT IRELAND.

The Rev. Mr. McNaughton, Belfast, made the following statements before the late Free Church General Assembly, as one of a deputation from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland:—

"Ireland has of late years been undergoing greater economic changes than any other portion of the kingdom. When I tell you that, within the short period of nineteen years—since the period of the Disruption—30,000,000 pounds worth of land have changed hands in the Encumbered and Landed Estates, Court, involving a change of property, and introducing an immense amount of capital, energy, and agricultural skill, that are telling confessedly upon the aspect of the country—assimilating Ireland more to Scotland and England than in former times; and that these changes, like those which Dr. Begg brought out so admirably the other evening in his "Report on Houses for the Working Classes," will naturally tell upon the people—you will easily see that they give us facilities of a peculiar character for the introduction of the Gospel concurrent with these economic changes. Changes as great in the population have been going on no less extensive. Two tides have been streaming over Ireland—one in the direction of Australia and America, to some extent also to Scotland and England, going out of Ireland; and another, chiefly coming into Ireland from Scotland; and I trust in its character and consequences, like the gulf streams, which bring fertility and health. Generally speaking, the outgoing element has been a Roman Catholic element, the incoming a Protestant element, and especially a Presbyterian element from Scotland. We have no doubt that these two changes together, the outgoing and the incoming, will tend to make the South and West of Ireland somewhat like Ulster, and like the changes which took place some years ago in our own beloved land. In 1848, the population of Ireland was in round numbers eight millions and a quarter; in 1861, it was five and three-fourth millions, making a decrease on the gross population of two and a half millions, or nearly the entire population of Scotland, if you except Edinburgh and Glasgow. You may thus have an idea, from the decrease of the population on the one hand, and the introduction of capital on the other, of the economic changes that are going on in Ireland. The great mass of the population who have left home consisted, as I have said, of the Romish element; while of those who have come to Ireland, there have been hundreds from Scotland, tending to change still more the relative proportions of Roman Catholic and Protestant, giving accessions that constitute centres of light and influence to the Protestant Churches in that dark land. I have here a map drawn up by Mr. Miller, Prince's Street, Edinburgh, with red dots showing upon it the places where Scotchmen had settled; and I put it into the hands of the Moderator for his information. This map is indicative at once of the migratory and also the gregarious character of our Scottish countrymen. You will observe that a large number have come from Scotland, and that wherever a Scotchman has fixed himself others have come and settled down beside him."

### THE REVIVAL OF 1859 AND ITS FRUITS.

The present fruits of the Irish Revival in 1859, were specially noticed by the Moderator of the

Irish Assembly, in answer, as it were, to the national inquiries, "Have all the effects of these awakenings passed away? Are there any blessed results? Are you still of opinion that it was a work of grace, and a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord?"

"Here, again, I speak with all due humility and caution. I believe that, during that wondrous time of revival there were three hands at work in Ireland—the hand of the devil, sowing tares among the wheat; the hand of man intermeddling with the works of the Lord; and the hand of the Spirit, doing wondrous things in righteousness. Much of the excitement—I might say almost all of it—has passed away. Much of the good seed, I grieve to say, growing up from what we did not at the time conceive to be stony ground, has borne no the fate predicted in Scripture, and has borne no wheat. But there remains still to the praise and glory of the grace of God, abundant blessed fruits, that testify to the great fact that God was working in the midst of Ireland, gathering in the precious souls of men. We can say, upon the best authority, that very many precious souls have given evidence of having undergone a true work of conversion, and are now living in the fear of God and for His glory. We have found that, after all abatement was made on the score of excitement and mere emotion, and after all abatement was made on the score of those who only fancied they were under Divine influence, but who turned out to have been labouring under some kind of deception, there still remains authenticated cases of actual conversion. There also remain many cases of precious quickening of God's own people, who are being roused and raised to higher development of the Christian life, and are becoming standing evidences of God's mercy in the midst of a benighted people. There has been, moreover, a large addition to the number of those who steadily wait upon ordinances, and the number of children attending our Sabbath Schools and other means of ministerial instruction. Besides what I have mentioned, there is another gratifying proof of the good of revivals, viz.: that those labouring in the ministry have far less difficulty than before in finding suitable agents to carry on our schemes of Christian enterprise and Christian benevolence."

With regret we allude to the illness of Richard Weaver, and bespeak for him, and for his speedy restoration to health and usefulness, the prayers of God's children. He has been laid aside from over-exertion, and is at present very weak and unable to speak. The strain upon the few men who are able to fix the attention of large audiences, has in these recent years been almost overwhelming. The eagerness to listen to them, and through them to "receive the word with joy," has been very great—almost impossible for earnest souls to resist; little wonder if the pressure thus put upon them is more than human strength can bear. God has wonderfully supported them, and they have earned for themselves the gratitude and the love of many, who, through their instrumentality, have discovered the way of life. It may be, that in laying some of our best evangelists