

of which it is very difficult to get them to report their doings. Their existence does not depend so much on united action; and, as circumstances do not compel them to it, they take a longer time to learn the use and advantage of united efforts. And the consequence is, that the one-half of what the Church had been doing was not known till men like the Rev. Mr. Cumming of Edinburgh took considerable pains to show the true state of things. No one at all acquainted with Scotland could doubt the fact that the Church was showing a great deal of vigor. Missionaries were appointed in destitute places; vacant stations were filled up; and well on to 100 Churches had been endowed and erected into parishes since 1843. Being aware of these things, the friends of the Church looked forward, with considerable interest, to the approaching census of 1861, and it was with pleasure they received the announcement that Government had resolved to provide the schedules with a column for the religious denomination to which every individual belonged. When the intention of the Government became known, however, the dissenting bodies opposed it so strenuously that Lord Palmerston was induced to yield the point. That being the result, the last census threw no light on the state of religious parties in Scotland.

Fortunately, the Registration Act passed in 1854 requires every marriage in Scotland to be registered within three days after it takes place, and the Church to which the officiating minister belongs has to be inserted in the register. By reason of this, the comparative strength of the various denominations in Scotland may be ascertained with tolerable accuracy. The registrars are quietly recording it in every parish week after week; and, at the end of the year, they transmit a copy, or, to use the technical word, a "duplicate" of their register, to the Registrar-General in Edinburgh, who, on his part, publishes an Annual Report of the whole. The eighth of these general Reports,—that for 1862,—has lately appeared, and I wish to refer to that part of it which shows the proportion of marriages celebrated by the ministers of the different Churches. I would recommend the following extract from it to the attentive perusal of the reader:—

"Of the 20,597 marriages registered in Scotland during the year, 9,307 were celebrated according to the rites of the Established Church, 4,930 according to those of the Free Church, 2,846 according to those of the United Presbyterian Church, 1,778 according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, 371 according to those of the Episcopal Church, 990 according to the several rites of the smaller religious denominations; while in 348 cases the denomination was not stated, and in only 27 cases the marriage was irregular."

If we suppose that these marriages indicate the comparative strength of the various denominations, they will show the following

striking facts:—(1.) The number of Roman Catholics in Scotland seems very large for such a Protestant country; but it is to be observed that an immense number of Irish have gone over to Scotland during the last twenty or thirty years. (2.) Taking all the Presbyterians of all the dissenting Churches, including the Free Church, U. P. Church, and the other smaller bodies, their number is considerably less than those of the Established Church. (3.) The adherents of the Established Church are nearly double that of the Free Church. (4.) Notwithstanding all the divisions and sects with which the country is split up, and the host of Irish emigrants to boot, nearly the half of the people still adhere to the Established Church,—all which proves that she has not forfeited the right to be called "The National Church of Scotland."

J. M'D.

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Is the Cholera spreading in Nova Scotia?

BEFORE coming out to Nova Scotia, I labored for eighteen months as assistant to one of the ministers of the city of Glasgow. Part of my duties, while exercising this office, was to visit a large district of the parish containing many thousands of human beings sunk in the lowest depths of poverty, ignorance, and vice. This district comprehended the whole of the Salt-market, and a portion of the circumjacent streets, lanes, courts, and dens, all fermenting with human life in its most depraved and abject forms. The lanes and closes are so narrow, the dark and begrimed piles of ancient buildings rise so high in the air, that the light of noonday never directly penetrates there, and you walk along in a perpetual twilight, and only come within the sunlight when you emerge on the main street or causeway along which the torrent of business is rolling. You are not only glad to escape from the gloom of these perplexing mazes, but you are delighted to breathe once more the comparatively pure air of the open street. These lanes and alleys smell horribly with the unnameable filth which gathers within them. An open groove on one side of the lane generally serves as a drain to carry off the dirty water which is emptied from the hundreds of windows above. If you are not careful as you thread your way through these dingy avenues, you may catch on your head a pailful of slops, emptied from above by an invisible hand. No gust of wind ever enters these recesses to carry off the noisome exhalations. Horror and death sit brooding there all the day long and all the year through, and on the house-top at the entrance of every lane you may fix up the yellow fever-flag—the triumphant banner of the grim and ghastly King who has had his head-quarters there, and keeps his Court in Sovereign State. The forms you meet in