

sent the pendulum the same distance that was accomplished by the same substance of the 2:0th attenuation, while one globule of Ferrum Metallicum 6, gave exactly the same elliptical motion as produced by the iron 15 mass. But we must stop and leave the verification or demolition of these startling assertions to those of the rival schools, who will of course make it their business to trust in a philosophic spirit—to bring them to the test of the most searching experiments.—Times.

THE SYNODAL ACTION OF THE CHURCH.

We lately gave some account of a meeting held at Derby, with the laudable intention of promoting the restoration of Synodal action to the Church. The beneficial results of the Synod held recently in the diocese of Exeter give great encouragement to those who are so judiciously labouring in this holy and useful work. The following reasons in favour of the proposed revival submitted by the Rev. W. Pound, of Malton, who acted as secretary at the Derby meeting, seem so forcible to our mind, are urged with so much moderation and judgment, and bear the impress of such an excellent spirit, that we have great pleasure in submitting them to the consideration of our readers:—

Such meetings are similar to other movements, which in the absence of all Synodal action have been prevalent in our Church, on the behalf of other subjects, and which have received the sanction of authority, the countenance of the great, and the support of the lowly; missionary exertions, the restoration of churches, the supply of assistant curates, and other like forms of Church extension, have been advanced, in lack of Synods, by societies which have concerned themselves with one or other of these objects.

The parties who seek to promote Synodal action, hope for the speedy accomplishment of that object. Should, however, unforeseen causes of delay arise, they propose to tread in the beaten track, by which the well-accustomed Church Societies have advanced to their present eminence and usefulness, and to form and consolidate a Church Society for the Promotion of Synodal action in the Church of England, which will cease to have necessity for existence, when Diocesan Synods shall be generally prevalent. Nor will it seem strange to a reflecting mind that the Body of Christ in England should desire to regain her Synods, for they are her rightful inheritance, and are now enjoyed, more or less, by every other branch of God's family upon earth. During the disuse of Synods much of the work of the Church in England, for a long time, had been neglected, and of late some of it only has been taken in hand by Church Societies.

There is no force in the argument that to call a Synod is the Bishop's office, and they who moot the question of Synods are dictating to their Bishops. For manifestly to move the question is only to prepare the way for the Bishop's call, that he may not call in vain. There has been no attempt made to dictate to a single Bishop, but only to draw the attention of all to a very probable remedy for the Church's present manifest inability to teach and instruct the people and children of this nation; whilst there is no lack of resources, either in the poverty or listlessness of churchmen. It is presumed that information upon the subject is required, and that few Bishops will venture to call a Synod, until the clergy and laity of the diocese are duly informed: The Bishop's mandate, to attend upon his person in Synod, will hardly be able to teach his senators wisdom.

Some men, who in civil matters exercise the ancient Saxon privilege, now consolidated in the British Constitution, "da minoribus rebus principes consultant, de majoribus omnino," are in ecclesiastical matters spell-bound to authority: they affirm that they move neither tongue nor hand except at the order of a Bishop; whereas, it cannot be supposed, that the episcopate desire to hold an irresponsible despotism over Christ's Body, or in themselves to bear the responsibilities, which ought to be distributed over the shoulders of each member, "in the vocation and ministry," wherein he serveth; but rather is it reasonable to think, that they feel the weight of their charge, and would gladly receive, when proffered, the co-operation and advice of the assembled presbytery. The principle "nil sine Episcopo" is not more true than "nil sine consilio vestro (presbyterorum) et sine consensu plebis."

The Synodal movement, whilst it meekly desires the same sufficiency and position which has been ceded to all Societies for Church Extension and Church Restoration, at the same time seeks, at the hands of all men in authority, a kind and gracious countenance. It conducts itself towards all as humbly conscious, that truth and right are the foundation of its claims. Its promoters urge those claims, with all respect and charity towards those (if there be any) who many not agree with its objects; they press the necessity of Diocesan Synods upon the minds of churchmen, as a primary step to the peace and unity of the Church; they suggest that a Diocese, assembled before God, is a becoming occasion whereupon to seek the out-pouring of the Spirit of power of love, and of a sound mind.

MARRIAGES AND BIRTHS IN ENGLAND.

Among other statistical phenomena of unusual interest occurring just now is the striking extent to which the population of England is repairing the gap caused by recent losses and continued drains. The cholera and an increasing emigration appear, in the long run, to have no effect in retarding the rate of our increase, but rather the contrary. Whatever be the case with Ireland, where a natural calamity is always aggravated by the untowardness of man, in this country we need be under little fear of de-population in our time at least. All students of history are aware that the ravages of pestilence and war, unless they are carried to the extent of depopulation, have often been repaired with a rapidity that almost leaves doubt on the narratives of the previous disaster. In our time we have seen the population of France but very little checked by the annual expenditure of many myriads of lives, and only begin to stagger at last when the youth and strength of the country was almost disappearing under the strokes of an incessant conscription. What we are now witnessing is still more remarkable, if only because, while it is on a very great scale, it is faithfully and exactly recorded. We do not read it in Gibbon or in Thiers, but in the unimpaired and impartial pages of the Registrar-General. On this unblemished authority we learn the following facts, which may claim the interest even of those who usually despise figures.

First as to marriages. The number registered in the spring quarter, that is the quarter ending June 30, in the melancholy year 1842, was 30,048. In the same quarter two years after it had risen to 34,268. After another interval of two years it was 37,411. The next year, 1847, the spring after the great Irish famine, it declined to 30,102. In the spring quarter of last year it was 33,028. This year it is a little less, 33,498, still 8,450 more than in the spring quarter of 1842. This is a fact that speaks for itself. Marriage is a most direct, natural, and unsuspecting index of prosperity. As a general rule, a working man marries as soon as he gets into good work; and much the same rule applies to all

classes. With very few exceptions the inhabitants of a populous and highly civilized country are obliged to wait several years for the opportunity of marriage. Abundance of food, of enterprise, and employment, has an immediate effect on those who are only waiting. This, doubtless, is the true account of the immense increase during the last nine years. The fact meets the eye in various ways. Wherever a manufactory or a station is built, or any other focus of industry is fixed, forthwith rows of cottages branch out in all directions, and a crowd of youthful, active, and apparently well-to-do men seem to start up, as it were, out of the earth. Within the last nine years suburbs and little towns, containing several thousands inhabitants, have sprung into existence, on spots where, on the Ordinance map itself, there is nothing but blank space. For every house that is built, for ever situation in life, for every new place as porter or breaksman or new platelayer, offered by a railroad, a new marriage is likely to follow before long. In manufacturing towns and other seats of employment it is well known that the conclusion of a strike, the arrival of a large order and even a change of fashion, will send half-a-dozen couples to church. Prosperity, however, is not the only cause of the very great increase since 1847, especially in the year 1840. The cholera made many a place empty at the hearth, the workshop, the counter, and the desk. Those places have been since filled by the accession, in most cases, of younger and healthier persons. Young widows may remain long desolate, but young widows are neither so consistent nor so much at the mercy of fortune. After a battle there are many promotions, and an epidemic is nothing more than a battle with an impalpable, but not less murderous foe. The effect of pestilence as well as of war in multiplying marriages, and bringing them on at an earlier age, is observed by our oldest chroniclers. It need, then, excite no surprise, that the spring quarter of 1850 coming soon after the cholera, should produce even a greater return of marriages than the same quarter this year. The decline has been 520—nothing compared with the increase of the last nine years.

By far the most remarkable feature, however, in this return, is that which is thus simply stated: "150,584 births have been registered in the quarter ending September 30, 1851. This is the greatest number of births ever registered in the same season of the year, and exceeds by 23,411, 15,361, and 3,614 the births in September quarters of 1847, 1849, and 1850. The births of 467,096 children have already been registered, and it is probable that in the year the number will not fall short of 600,000." In the opinion of all mankind, and particularly of the sacred writers, the natural increase and multiplication of a people is the most direct result, and the most undeniable sign of prosperity. In the present instance the extraordinary increase of births has come very opportunely at a time when the depopulation of the empire is already looming, as a terrible possibility, in the distant horizon. So far as England alone is concerned, it will evidently be some years before the old bugbear of a surplus population has lost its terrors. "While 150,000 children were born and registered in the summer quarter," says the return before us, "91,603 persons died; leaving an excess of 58,381 of the population. The excess of births over deaths in the first nine months of the present year has been 170,411, which is probably more than equivalent to the actual increase of the population." In the absence of an annual census that actual increase can only be conjectured. There are returns of the emigrants from the several ports of the United Kingdom, but there are no returns of the passengers by the numerous steamers passing to and fro between England and Ireland, as well as other countries. We only know that by far the greater part of the emigrants from Liverpool, Glasgow and Greenock are Irish; that many emigrants from London are Germans and foreigners; and that vast numbers of Irish are still pouring into all our populous towns in quest of employment or relief. It is probable, therefore, that immigration from Ireland more than makes up for English emigration, and that the actual increase in our population is at least as much as is indicated by the extraordinary excess of births over deaths.

The Registrar-General very naturally calls attention to a conjuncture of circumstances without parallel in the history of the world. "The present movement of the population is, in many respects, remarkable. The free admission of grain and fruit, and meat since the scarcity, is equivalent to an addition to the country of a vast tract of fertile soil, which calls for cultivators, and, as the land is abroad, for agricultural emigrants, who prefer the cheap, though distant, lands of America to the high-rented farms of Ireland, no longer possessing a monopoly for its Produce in the English market, the fact deserves attention, that while the United Kingdom has been importing food in unprecedented quantities, it has been sending out swarms of emigrants from the population, of which the marriages and births promise to keep up a perpetual and increasing supply." It is impossible to contemplate vast movements of any kind without a feeling akin to terror. The launch of a ship, the fall of a vast body of water, an army on the march or a multitude on the move, the downfall of a tree, are all spectacles that suggest even more than one sees, and seem to recal the operations of a preternatural power. They who have witnessed the convulsions of an earthquake tell us that no words can convey the awfulness of their impressions when they first saw all nature surging around them. A like awe may well be inspired by the events we now witness around us, such are their strangeness and magnitude, but for the errant signs of an overruling and beneficent Providence. Within a few years, or rather within a few months, we have witnessed the food of a nation perishing in the ground, that same nation fed by supplies drawn from the very ends of the earth, an annual importation of food sufficient for several millions, a terrible epidemic striking down many thousands in the midst of us notwithstanding all the resources of wealth and art, a constant emigration sufficient each year to people a whole state, and, yet in the midst of these disasters and losses, England prosperous, wealthy, tranquil, and fast employed, and repairing all its losses of every kind—the drain on its wealth and its numbers by extraordinary production, such as is nowhere seen but in England, and which none but Heaven could bestow. And after all these losses, and in the midst of these great efforts, we see it summoning all the earth to a great feast of arts, of peace, and good will in the British metropolis. We see that great design crowned with a splendour and success even beyond the anticipation of the authors, and concluded without even a passing shadow of the dangers with which such designs have heretofore been too often attended.—London Times.

DEATH OF THE POET MONTGOMERY.

The decease of James Montgomery, whose name for almost half a century has been familiar to the readers of English poetry, is announced to us by the last arrival from England. Although he never attained the highest eminence in his art, and was more indebted for his reputation to the sweet and touching devotional pathos

of his effusions than to any of the rarer gifts of poetic inspiration, he has held a cherished place in the arts of a numerous class of readers, who will not hear of his departure from mortal scenes without an emotion of tenderness. Nor will this be diminished by the recollections of his personal character, which presented an uncommon union of integrity, disinterestedness and purity. A noble love of freedom animated his public career and led him to make cheerful sacrifices for the glorious cause.

Montgomery was born on the 4th of Nov., 1771, and consequently had just completed the unusual allotment of four score years. On his eightieth birthday, the 4th ult., he planted an oak tree on the lawn in front of the Infirmary of Sheffield, in which town he had resided from early life. Descended from parents who were attached to the Moravian faith, he received his education at a school belonging to that persuasion, and never lost the impressions which were then made on his susceptible mind. His parents intended him to enter the ministry among the Moravian brethren; but finding himself disinclined to pursue that vocation he entered a mercantile house with a view to adopting that business as his permanent calling. Becoming deeply interested in politics, and having already attained a certain readiness and power in composition, he connected himself with a journal in Sheffield, of which he soon became the leading editor. His freedom of remark on public affairs subjected him to the suspicion of the Government. He was narrowly watched, and soon was made the subject of prosecution. He was first sentenced to three months' imprisonment. This was in the year 1794; and during the next year he was condemned to six months imprisonment for a similar offence.

His first poetical work was the "The Wanderer in Switzerland" which appeared in 1806, and in spite of a scathing review in the Edinburgh, which was then in the full flush of youthful bloom and petulance, was received with signal favour by the public, and has passed through some fifteen editions. "The West Indies" was published in 1817; "Prison Amusements" in 1810, though written sixteen years before; "The World before the flood" in 1813; "Greenland" in 1819; and "Pelican Island" at a subsequent period. An edition of his collected works was issued in 1841.

Montgomery will be chiefly remembered in British Literature for his devotional poetry. His productions in this kind are tinged with a slight colouring in mysticism; they breathe the spirit of the simple and fervent Moravian piety in which he was nurtured; at the same time, they are truly lyrical; not didactic statements in verse but gushing from a deep religious fountain; blending enthusiasm with sweetness, and a certain Oriental union with modern refinement; they will continue to be regarded among the choicest specimens of choral melodies, while men speaking the English tongue shall meet in solemn assemblies for social worship.—New York Tribune.

CONVERSIONS IN IRELAND, 1851.

In the year 1596, the celebrated author of the *Faery Queen* uttered the following words concerning Ireland:—

"There have been divers good plottes devised, and wise counsels cast already about Reformation of that realm, but they say, it is the fatal destiny of that land, that no purposes whatsoever which are meant for her good, will prosper or take good effect, which, whether it proceed from the very genius of the soyle, or influence of the starres, or that Almighty God hath not yet appointed the time of her reformation, or that He reserveth her in this unquiet state still for some secret scourge which shall by her come unto England, it is hard to be knowne, but much to be feared."

This prophecy, coming from a person such as Spenser was, intimately acquainted, from personal experience, with the condition of the country which he describes, has ever been regarded with feelings of interest, and claims especial attention at the present time. The critical state of ecclesiastical affairs in England warns us that her delinquencies towards the sister kingdom may now, perhaps (even more than at any former period), be about to receive retribution; and that, as the poet prophesied, Ireland is reserved to be a scourge, in the hands of Providence, by which England will be punished for her sins.

It is well known to the majority of our readers, that the Church of Ireland maintained her independence for more than a thousand years after Christ. In this respect she was more fortunate and illustrious than the Churches of Britain. It is also well known, that from the sixth to the ninth century, the Church of Ireland was the burning and shining light of the West; she was the great missionary Church of that period; she Christianized a large portion of Scotland, and the northern and central districts of England; she sent teachers to France, Germany and Switzerland, and even to Italy itself. It is also unquestionable, that when the Danes had taken possession of her three great maritime cities—Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford, in the tenth and eleventh centuries—England, by collusion with the Danes, undermined the independence of the Irish Church, and that Canterbury did the work of Rome.

But a greater act of injustice remained to be committed. An adulterous king, driven from his throne in Ireland, appealed to England for aid; his suit was welcomed; England interfered to restore the fugitive, and having seized this occasion for intervention, by an infatuated act of policy which she has cause to rue to the present hour, she employed a Papal Bull as an instrument for subjecting Ireland to herself.

England, in fact, Romanized Ireland. The loss of spiritual independence which Ireland has to lament, is due mainly to English ambition. The superstitions, the ignorance, and consequent misery of Ireland, are of English growth. And, by a most just dispensation of Divine Providence, the evils which England has propagated in Ireland are recoiling upon herself. She has sown the wind, and she is now reaping the whirlwind.

The imagination is tempted to draw a picture of the results which might have been produced, if England had duly appreciated the blessing of true religion, and had pursued a different policy towards Ireland.

There is no question, but that, in the twelfth century Ireland was prepared, and even desirous to unite herself to England. She was wearied with intestine broils, and she welcomed Henry the Second to her shores as a pacificator who would put an end to the bitter strife of contending factions. The Princes of Ireland made a prompt submission to the English monarch; they acted thus towards him, not as a Papal emissary, not as a scudatory of Rome, though such he condescended to be, but as a powerful Sovereign who would tranquillize the land. This is evident from the fact that when he landed in Ireland he was still under a ban from the Pope for the murder of Thomas of Canterbury.

* Spenser's "View of the State of Ireland in the year 1596."

If, then, instead of looking to Rome, England had relied on the Divine arm, and had endeavoured to restore and maintain the primitive independence and purity of the Church in Ireland, how much ignominy and misery and degradation she would have escaped! how many rebellions would have been avoided! how many massacres would never have been perpetrated! how many blessings, spiritual and temporal would have been diffused by her means! but she chose a different course. She had bowed beneath the yoke of Rome, and to gratify her own cupidity she suborned Rome as an accomplice in her aggression against Ireland, and Rome having England as her vassal, employed her agency in bringing Ireland under the same spiritual yoke which pressed heavily upon her neck.

We sometimes hear our statesmen give up the cause of Ireland as desperate. A late distinguished minister declared that Ireland was the great difficulty of his government. We wonder not at it; for it has been the practice of almost all recent administrations to pursue towards Ireland a similar policy to that unhappy course of proceeding on which England entered in the twelfth century, and from which so much misery and shame has arisen to both kingdoms. Our Protestant ministers imitate the Roman Catholic monarchs of England; they endeavour to administer the affairs of Ireland by means of Rome. Thus they have paralysed their own power; and they who, had they endeavoured to purify the faith of Ireland, would have had that country as their ally, are now compelled to fear, lest it should be, as Spenser calls it, a secret scourge for themselves and their own country.

Besides this, it has been the custom of some eminent men among us, to describe the cause of the Church of Ireland as no longer defensible. Do these distinguished individuals recollect what a debt of gratitude is due from England to Ireland for the spiritual benefits which we derived from the Church of Ireland in the sixth and two following centuries? Do those who dwell in Scotland recollect what were the pious labours of a St. Columba, a Columhann, an Aidan, a Finian, and others, who proceeded from the scriptural school of Ionia? Do those who live in England remember that, when the light which had been rekindled by St. Augustine was almost extinguished, it was revived by the pious hands of the Irish missionaries, and thenceforth burnt much more brightly and powerfully than before? And do they who would surrender the Irish Church to her enemies reflect on the humiliating fact, that we—Englishmen and our ancestors—have reduced Ireland to her present condition? Speak in an apologetic tone concerning the Irish Church! Let us rather apologise for ourselves! Let us endeavour to wipe off the long arrear of debt which we owe her. Let us endeavour to atone for our own sins of omission and commission towards her, by a sincere and practical repentance.

It would appear that Dividence is now affording us an opportunity—it may be the last—for making some amends to Ireland and to the Irish Church. Our readers are aware that a religious movement, unprecedented for three hundred years, is now going on in Ireland. From various causes, physical and social, as well as spiritual, vast multitudes of the peasantry and middle classes of Ireland, especially in the west, are renouncing the errors of Rome, and joining themselves to the Communion of the Church. As far as our own endeavours may extend, we earnestly entreat the enlightened co-operation and fervent prayers of all who are in any way connected with the Church, which is indeed "the Lord's doing, and is marvellous in our eyes." We devoutly hope and trust that it may not be marred by any intemperate and injudicious measure on the part of those who are more nearly engaged in it, and that it will not be regarded by others with a carping and censorious temper, but with forbearance, gentleness, and charity.

An unfortunate controversy has already arisen with respect to it. We refer to the question, whether, consistently with due order and discipline, the converts from Rome ought to be received, as they have been by the rite of Confirmation? If we were called upon to pronounce an opinion upon this subject, we think it may be shown that too much of a confident and peremptory spirit has been manifested on both sides of the question. We would rather venture to suggest to those who are in places of high authority in the Church of Ireland, that the exigencies of the time require that a special form of service, such, we believe, as is found in some editions of the Irish prayer-book, should be published with Episcopal authority, and employed on such occasions as those to which we refer.

If our limits allowed us, we would proceed to offer some further observations on on this interesting subject. Both Englishmen and Scotchmen, we are sure, have much to learn with respect to the Church of Ireland. For the most part, whether in Parliament or elsewhere, they deal with that momentous question in a very superficial manner, which betrays their ignorance, and in which they would not treat it, if they approached it in a reverential spirit of enlightened justice.

Let us be permitted to add, lastly, that the mode in which the Romish controversy is in some respects conducted in Ireland, too often exhibits a desire to destroy rather than to construct and consolidate. The champions of conversion frequently appear to be more strongly animated with Protestant zeal than with any adequate regard for Apostolic Order and Catholic Truth. They separate the Church from Scripture, and Scripture from the Church, and even set the one in opposition to the other. We fear that there must be something defective in the scholastic and academic training of Ireland to produce such a result. The wise advice given by an English king to his own universities, might, we think be addressed to the academic seminaries of Ireland—"Lay aside Calvinistic epitemes, and study the Fathers of the Church." The grammar-school training of the sister kingdom does not appear to be generally favourable to the production of a learned Clergy. It seems to substitute a smattering of books for a knowledge of languages. Hence, in controversies with their Romish antagonists, the Protestant advocates are ill equipped with those instruments which are necessary for the refutation of error and the defence of truth. Hence, also, they are tempted to shift the controversy itself from the ground of Scripture, interpreted by Catholic antiquity, to that of mere private judgment, on which they are sure to meet with little else but dishonour to their cause, and discomfiture to themselves.

It is said by the pre-emptory instruction of his physician, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol will abstain from all Episcopal and Clerical duty, and will in all probability, shortly leave England for a renewed and lengthened sojourn in one of the milder climates of the milder climates of the south of Europe. His Lordship is at present at Brighton.