

**A Noble Organ Grinder.**—A rather distinguished organ-grinder has paid Dublin a visit. He appears in the streets with a neat donkey-cart and a very sprightly looking donkey, gaily decked with ribbons. He visits all the principal streets, and gets more money in a day than a common organ-grinder would dream of in a month. He puts up at the principal hotel in the city, and, wonderful to relate, supports himself solely by the proceeds of his organ. This eccentric gentleman is stated to be no less a personage than Lord Louth, who, for a heavy wager, is on a twelve months' pilgrimage with his donkey, cart, and organ.

The Census Commissioners of Ireland have finished a report on the number of lunatics, idiots, deaf mutes, and blind, which suggest reflections that do not often occur to the mind. The evil effects of inter-marriage are shown in an offspring, a large percentage of which is dumb, idiotic, and lunatic. The figures are a wholesome warning against marriages within any degree of kindred.

The Very Rev. Canon Bourke of Tuam, in a speech advocating Home Rule said:—"Now, I ask you, as Irishmen, knowing the past, how the British Parliament persecuted Ireland for the faith, knowing how her representatives as a body—mind as a body—hate the Catholic religion and Catholics, will that Parliament, I ask, ever grant freedom of education? I answer—never.

The Dublin of to-day.—Dublin can to-day bear favorable comparison with a great many cities in the matter of architectural beauty. In all our principal streets are numerous splendid stone buildings, not thought of twenty years ago. Our post office has been greatly improved in outward appearance, and inside are increased conveniences for the transit of mails. Trinity College looks young with its new railings and handsome stone walls. In the more important matter of commerce, too, Dublin will shortly vie with many ports in the sister isle. New docks have been recently opened, which bring the ships far into the Northern side of the city. A railway tunnel has been commenced which will run from the different railway stations to the water's edge. Some of our readers who have not visited Dublin for years, would be really surprised at the stir business has got. Once our coal fields commence to be properly worked we will be pretty independent of England. It is, I understand, in contemplation to deepen the entrance to the Liffey, so that ships of any tonnage can safely enter it.

The 'Western Watchman,' an American paper, vindicates the Irish people from the charge of being a drunken set. "Since Father Mathew preached his crusade against whiskey, there has been comparatively little of it drunk by the tenantry of Ireland. The idlers and loafers about the purlieus of the cities and towns drink all they can do it; but the farmers, as a class, are very temperate, and are seldom seen intoxicated.

From the census of Cork county for 1871, just issued, it appears that the population has decreased from 877,000 in 1845, to 649,308 in 1851, thence to 534,818 in 1861, until it fell to 517,811 in 1871, a decrease of about 360,000, or more than 46 per cent., in 26 years. Of the total population of the County of Cork, 400,905 are Catholics, 31,297 Protestant Episcopalians, 1216 Presbyterians, 2228 Methodists, all other denominations 2788. In fact, if the city, the other four boroughs, Youghal, Bandon, Kinsale, and Mallow, and the 12 municipal and other towns of 2000 or more inhabitants be excluded, there are only a few thousand Protestants in the whole county. The borough of Bandon, celebrated for the inscription once to be seen on its gates—

Turk, Jew, or Atheist  
May enter, but not a Papist,

is returned as containing, in 1871, a population of 6131 persons, 4186, or more than 68 per cent. of whom are Catholics, the Protestants of all forms numbering only 1945, or 32 per cent. The borough, long the heir-loom of the Bernards, has returned a liberal since 1868.

Hand loom cotton weaving, which was once a flourishing trade in the North has almost died out. Round by the Maze, Broomhedge, Lambry, Hill Hall, and Liscurn, the time was when in every house two and three, and, in some cases, six looms were busy. Now there is not one for every twenty-three looms. The few remaining cotton weavers who have not emigrated to America, as a great number of their fellow-workers have, or turned their hands to other industries, but held on to the "old trade" have had to leave the mulls and jacks, which formerly kept them fully employed, and worsted gauzes, silk and strip gauzes, and muslin crains; and, even these are so scarce that they cannot get enough of them to do. They are not more than half employed, and when they are they have to work about 15 hours a day to make something like 8s or 9s a week. It must be admitted that the cause of the decline of this once flourishing trade has not arisen from the high cost of labor, but from the exorbitant profits expected by manufacturers, which made purchasers supply its place from other channels.

Great activity has been at present evinced by several companies in Ulster in exploring and developing the mineral wealth in the county of Antrim. Among the companies already engaged working the iron mines of this district, are Messrs James Fisher and Sons, the Antrim Iron Company, the Parkmore Iron Ore Company, the Mountcashell Iron Ore Company, and the Glangariff Iron and Harbor Company. These companies represent a capital of £1,000,000 sterling, and are opening out their mines on a very extensive scale. The iron ore district of the county Antrim extends over an area of about fifteen miles by sixteen, stretching out towards Larne and Cushendall, and reaching within a short distance of Ballymean. From the fact, that there is a determination on the part of some of the companies to smelt the ore on the spot, which is of first-class quality, instead of shipping it to England, as is done at present, good results may be augured.

The embezzlements which have taken place in connection with the Head Office of the Belfast Bank Company, form the leading topic of conversation in the north. The only person at present in custody is Mr Smith, one of the book-keepers in the head office, but every effort is being made to capture the manager of one of the branch banks in a neighbouring county, who it appears was concerned in the frauds, but who has made off. It appears that the frauds have been

largely practised upon the Union Bank of London. It is currently reported that the gross amount of the defalcations will be about £80,000.

Chief Baron Pigot, lately deceased, held his high judicial position for twenty-seven years, during which his personal character, judicial ability, and eminent impartiality were an honor to the Irish bar. His conscientiousness led him to take immense trouble with every case that came before him; but the inconvenience which it sometimes caused to suitors and counsel was forgotten in the high motive which dictated it. Indeed, it is generally believed that it was the extraordinary labour involved in the trial at the late assizes for the Monrath murder, in the Queen's county, which lasted nearly two months, that led to the chief baron's death. The chief baron was a most devout Catholic. All his sons hold high positions.

Lord O'Hagan and the Landlord Organs.—Lord O'Hagan somewhat astonished the Law Students' Debating Society a week ago by not endorsing the auditor's somewhat fervid panegyric on the Land Act of 1870. He admitted that it had blemishes, which time and its own operations had disclosed, and these called for amendment, especially as regarded the facilities granted under Mr Bright's clauses for the formation of a peasant proprietary. This very mild statement of an obvious truth has stirred up much indignation against his lordship on the part of the landlord organs.

Lord French has sent a donation of £50 to the Home Rule League, for which he anticipates a signal triumph at the general election. The history of Ireland shows, he thinks, that Irishmen are different from the people of Great Britain in their natural dispositions, religious sentiments, and national feelings.

There died at Tramore lately Bridget Hayden, at the great age of 103 years, relict of the late Matthew Hayden, who lived for 104 years, and who fought in the year 1798 at the ever memorable battle of Vinegar Hill.

Bishop Keane, of Cloyne Diocese, has through his secretary directed his name to be placed on the requisition for the Home Rule Conference. In the course of a letter addressed to the secretaries of the conference, it is stated his lordship, at all times an earnest believer in the principles and policy of the great O'Connell, feels the time has come when there cannot be a second opinion as to the right of our country to manage its own affairs by a parliament assembled in Ireland.

In the January number of the Irish Monthly now before us we find a beautiful little poem, hitherto unpublished, from the pen of the late R. D. Williams, the well-known "Shamrock" of the 'Nation.' It is an address "To the Mother of the Christmas Babe," and the following is its concluding stanza:—

All the spheres behold with wonder,  
Sleeping on thy bosom lie,  
Him whose word in cloud and thunder  
Hurled them flaming through the sky.  
Mary! sacred Star of Ocean,  
Rise thou o'er the stormy brine,  
Quell the passions' wild commotion,  
Cheer and save us, Mother mine!  
Round us, while the tempest rages,  
Be thy guiding lustre seen,  
And our song through endless ages,  
"Hail, Holy Queen!"

#### ENGLAND.

The execution of a memorial statue of Mr Mill has been entrusted to Mr J. H. Foley, R.A.

Mr F. T. O'Donnell, secretary of the Savage Club, and a well-known London journalist, died recently.

The 'London Spectator,' in a recent issue, notices the great revival in literature which has taken place among the Roman Catholics of Europe during the last few years.

A well-known English surgeon who lately wrote a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury on the mischief wrought among the upper classes by their excessive consumption of alcohol, has lately become a total abstainer, and declares that he is greatly benefited by the change.

Sir Bartle Frere has delivered an important address on the threatening famine in Bengal, which he estimates to be the calamity of the Irish famine multiplied by five.

"In number, in zeal, in unity, in spiritual power," says the Protestant 'Standard,' "never was the Roman Church more powerful and formidable than at present." Twenty years hence the 'Standard,' if it lasts so long, will be saying exactly the same thing.

The Catholic Union of Great Britain intends to convene a great Catholic meeting in St. James's Hall, on an early day in February, to be a counter-demonstration to that presided over by Lord Russell Deputations from all parts of the country will be present.

An advertisement was recently inserted by the authorities of a small hospital in the south of London for a secretary, who, in return for five hours' work a day, was offered a salary of £150. The answers to the advertisement, we are informed, exceeded 300 in number, and among the applicants were a colonel in Her Majesty's army and a titled member of a noble family.

The English Juggernaut.—Under this heading the 'Globe' denounces the present system of railway management as cruel, stern, relentless, remorseless, murdering fathers and mothers, lovers and haters, rich and poor, with Sphinx-like impassiveness, and with remorseless sureness.

The conduct of the guardians of the streets of the Metropolis has for some time past been a source of anxiety to those whom business or pleasure detains from their homes until late in the evening; but some recent cases of more than ordinary incompetence and brutality on the part of the police have led to the publication of a number of letters in the leading journals from the victims of these attacks, which, in the majority of instances, take place in the West End of the town.

We ought, perhaps, to feel rather obliged to Lord Russell for having elicited from nearly the whole metropolitan press of England