

GORDON, since his tragic death, has been not only a hero, but a saint and a martyr. Opposition writers in England extol him to enhance the guilt of the Government, and Government writers extol him that they may not be left behind by the Opposition. To form a true idea of him we must carry our minds back a few months. Like all men who have combined religious enthusiasm with practical capacity and energy, Gordon has been compared to Cromwell. The parallel is essentially imperfect. Cromwell was an enthusiast; perhaps in some passages of his life he may be said to have merited the name of fanatic; but he laboured under no hallucination. His religion was no crazy figment of his own brain; it was simply the Puritanism of his day; it was common to him with a man so eminently sound in mind as Hampden. Nor, while he believed, like all around him, in special Providence, did he fancy that he had special revelation about himself. But Gordon had composed for himself a religion which was not the less fantastic because it was eclectic, and it appears that he did believe himself to have special revelations respecting his mission and the safety of his life. He threw himself into Khartoum in reliance on supernatural, or at least mysterious, powers such as no human being ever really possessed, and the result was a fatal disenchantment. Perhaps Gordon was unfortunate in being pitted against an antagonist whose talisman was of the same kind as his own. It is scarcely possible to doubt that with his genius and heroism there mingled a strain of madness. Yet he was one and not the least memorable of the English adventurers whose line, commencing with the heroes of the Elizabethan age, was represented in the last generation by Rajah Brooke, and to whom their country owes not a little of her imperial renown, while their characters, though not always free from a taint of the buccaneer, have on the whole presented a happy contrast to those of gold-seeking pirates and butchers like Cortés and Pizarro. A career of restless enterprise has found a sad close; a bright though wandering star has been swallowed up in night. Gordon would have made an excellent ruler of Egypt. To talk of bestowing a Constitution on the Egyptian peasant, who has not the most rudimentary notions of self-government, is preposterous: all that can be done for him is to give him, in place of the cruel and corrupt tyranny beneath which he has immemorably groaned, a just and beneficent despot, which Gordon would unquestionably have been.

AN American journal announces that there is a growing disinclination among women to marry which it says is not flattering to the characters of the men. It certainly is not flattering to the good sense of the men of the United States, who have done all in their power to pervert the ideas and aspirations of their women, and have been so successful that their race is now seriously threatened with decay. Our contemporary alleges the cause to be that women are growing more critical as to the measure of a man, and it unctuously warns the men that they must come up to a higher standard in order to merit female approbation. This is the sort of cant which is being continually uttered, and, passing for sage and lofty sentiment, blinds the eyes of many to some of the most serious social phenomena of the day. The motive of the American woman for declining marriage and her motive, when married, for avoiding maternity are the same: she dislikes care and loves her ease. That she refuses the men because they do not come up to her ideal is a gallant figment; the American man is at least as worthy of his partner as she is of him, nor does any higher ideal exist in her mind than in his. That the men will by some deadlift effort of self-improvement struggle all at once to rise to a higher standard is what nobody in his senses expects. But they will retain the passion which nature has implanted in them in order to induce them to bear the burden of supporting a wife and family, and if debarred from marriage they will fall into license. This is what has happened before, and in spite of visionary philanthropy it will happen again.

MILTON as a prose writer is rendered almost hopelessly unpopular by his ultra-classical style. Yet in all the works of this man, who united more perhaps than any other man ever did the greatness of the citizen with the greatness of the poet, are things which ought never to be let die. Thanks are due therefore to Messrs. Appleton for including in their "Parchment Series" a well-chosen set of selections from Milton's prose works with a graceful and philosophic preface by Mr. Myers. Milton's grand characteristic is his noble faith in liberty. This it is which makes a renewal of our intimacy with him most salutary at a time when faith in liberty is waxing cold, and many men in their impatience of imperfections and delays are inclined to subject themselves again to paternal despotism under new names and forms. "Were I the chooser," says the author of the *Areopagitica*, "a dram of well-doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil doing; for sure God esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person more than the restraint of

ten vicious." "How great a virtue," he exclaims in another place, "is temperance, how much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without particular law or prescription, wholly to the demeanour of every grown man; and therefore when he himself tabled the Jews from heaven, that omer, which was every man's daily portion of manna, is computed to have been more than might have well sufficed the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals. For those actions which enter into a man rather than issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser; there were but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation." So far, at all events, Liberty has been justified of her children. Where there has been most Liberty there has on the whole been most Virtue, and Virtue of the most enduring kind.

THE DETHRONEMENT OF ENGLAND.

IS one thing at all events our generation surpasses all that have gone before it. Never was there such a coining of phrases. "The Dethronement of England" is the last that has issued from the mint; and whether England is "dethroned" or not is likely to be for some time to come the great question. It might be supposed that some sudden catastrophe had happened and given birth to the need of a new and portentous name. The New-Jingoes, Expansionists, or whatever they call themselves, have been proclaiming their intention of turning all the seas into "waterstreets of the British Venice." Now, finding that something does not go in accordance with their aggressive theories, they proclaim the Dethronement of England. When people are living in a state of political hallucination extravagantly ambitious fancies are naturally succeeded by groundless depression, and a commonplace occurrence is taken for the crack of doom.

The wars which had their origin in the French Revolution ruined all the navies of England's rivals except that of Russia, which was then not of great importance. The navy of Holland met its doom at Camperdown, those of France and Spain together at Trafalgar, that of Denmark at Copenhagen. This was mainly due to the unequalled qualities of the British seaman, but partly also to the disorganization which the Revolution had produced in the naval service of France, and which could not, like the disorganization in the army, be repaired by the enthusiasm of revolutionary columns. With the force which had protected it, the mercantile marine of each nation also perished, and the supply of seamen was consequently cut off. Thus England was left the only maritime power, and sole mistress of the seas. She was also left the only colonizing power, since during her naval ascendancy the colonies and dependencies of the nations which were hostile to her, or which were dragged in the train of Napoleon, had successively fallen into her hands; nor could those nations aspire to the acquisition of new dependencies before their power at sea had been restored. Navies, military or mercantile, are not created in a day. This proud monopoly survived for some time the state of things which had given it birth. But it could not last for ever: it is now gradually departing: the navies of England's rivals have been rebuilt, their race of seamen has been renewed; she is still the greatest, by far the greatest, of maritime powers; but mistress of the seas she is no more. The conditions of naval warfare, moreover, have been altered to her disadvantage since the days of Duncan and Nelson; for, while few pretend to foresee what would happen in a great sea-fight, at the present day it is certain that more would depend on machinery and less on men. As it is with regard to the dominion of the sea, so it is with regard to the exclusive privilege of colonization: it can no longer be maintained, and it had better be frankly renounced. Other nations must be allowed to take their share of the void places of the earth and to find receptacles for their surplus population. Partnership must succeed to monopoly. Nor is there anything hard or disgraceful in the necessity. The Germans, especially, are a kindred and friendly race who will make the best of neighbours, and may not improbably, by blending with the British Colonies on which they border, ultimately swell the numbers and extend the realm of the English-speaking peoples. Instead of denouncing Lord Granville for failing to take Germany by the throat, it would be more reasonable to blame him for not having at once frankly taken her by the hand.

A great military power, we all know, England never was or pretended to be, though the quality of the British soldier has been displayed on many a glorious field and not least on the fields where he has last fought. The armies led to victory by Marlborough were the armies of a coalition, and almost the same may be said of that led by Wellington at Waterloo. Compared with the military force of Germany, France or Russia that of