

If, then, we are to speak of the Future—and of the Christian Future—and of the Christian futurity of the British people—we should not think of predicting catastrophes;—not because catastrophes may not actually come, for they may seem quite probable; but because they do not lie within our ken. We do not profess to be prophets. We have learned that political calculations are cobwebs, or are likely to be swept away like cobwebs, and that Biblical calculations, if definite, are perilous, and too often illusory. What we are thinking of is the development of a principle, and which is a main element of revealed religion, and which, hitherto, has not merely had a too feeble influence upon men individually, but which has never yet taken a forcible hold of any social system, or had a conspicuous part in adjusting and rectifying the political and economic relationship of classes. Then a step further we advance in conjecturing that those shocks of the European earthquake which have in them a social, rather than a merely political meaning, shall so affect this country as to bring out the latent energy of the religion which we (alone almost among the nations) cordially adhere to and profess.

What, then, is it that might, at such a moment, take place? not, as we have already said—that Revelation should be brought in to supersede the functions of civil society: far from it. Legislative wisdom, and statesmanlike ability, and practical good sense, would combine to devise, to digest, and to elaborate the measures best to be adopted; and then, those measures having been assented to and approved—BIBLE FORCE would come in to carry them through, sweeping away irresistibly all oppositions of class, selfishness, and prejudice. Such and such measures (and we should quite overstep what we think to be our function in presuming to specify

them) having been propounded, and discussed, and voted as good, not by the legislature merely, but by the British people, there would be no question whether they should, or could, be put in force. Public men will have devised these measures, the legislature will have passed them, and then heaven itself will see to what remains. Neither Moses nor the prophets, neither David, nor Solomon, nor Isaiah, nor Jeremiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Paul, nor James, nor even our blessed Lord, will teach us how to frame Acts of Parliament, or on what grounds of political expediency societies should be constituted; but when Parliaments have ascertained what it is which a crisis demands, and when experienced writers have informed us in what modes our endeavors may best be carried forward, then prophets and apostles, in tones never before listened to, shall enjoin the due performance of the part we have thus assigned to ourselves.

When once BIBLE POWER has, by any such social crisis, been brought to bear, in an open manner, upon national interests—when once the “sign of the Son of man” has thus been seen in the political heavens—when the iron sceptre has caught all eyes, that is to say, when Christ’s authority shall, in a signal instance, have prevailed in controlling state affairs, then shall this same power be seen to be taking effect in a thousand instances that were not at first thought of. Sympathy and mercy, applied as they have been, and are, to the alleviation of the miseries endured by classes, are like the fragrant ointment poured forth by piety and love; but the word of truth and justice, when once it shall be uttered, shall take effect upon the diseased social body in another manner:—“Go, for thou art healed of thy plague.” To what an incalculable extent would the weight of distress now pressing upon