

With reference to the first point, I do believe that there never was a period in which the Church of England, considered as a whole, presented an aspect so satisfactory as at this day. I do not mean to say that the Church-Establishment is faultless, or that any branch of the Church on earth will ever be totally and literally *without spot or wrinkle or any such thing*. We shall always have reason, if perfection be insisted upon, to say, as was said in a Latin distich by one who was a burning and shining light in the Church of England,—

They want that the Church should be free from every speck :

This the present life denies : the future life will afford it.*

But when we see what a spirit, within the memory of living man, it has pleased God to shed down upon the Church ; how many evils have been corrected and what new life has been infused into the whole system ; when we witness the sincerity and the fervour with which Christ crucified is proclaimed by the Clergy ; when we behold with what true fidelity and zeal, a great and still increasing portion of that body devote themselves to the labours of the pastoral charge, and what care is taken by the rulers of the Church, to preserve a high standard of character and qualifications among her Ministers ; when we contemplate the variety and the magnitude of efforts made within the Church for the diffusion of spiritual blessings at home and abroad ; when we look at the prodigious multiplication of our places of worship in England,† and the progressive enlargement of Associations for the promotion of education and the communication of religious light, and then turn our regards to what is done, with little aid from the State, for distant dependencies of the Empire,

* Optant ut careat maculis Ecclesia cunctis
Præsens vita negat : vita futura dabit.—Bernard Gilpin.

† See Note A.