

amidst "the overflowings of godliness," for the security of our Christian faith and practice. "We are not better than our fathers," and we may still appropriate with good cause the loyal language of George Herbert, when comparing the Church of England with the extremes which confront her on either side, he says:—

"But, dearest mother, what those miss—
The mean—thy praise and glory is,
And long may be!
Blessed be God, whose love it was
To double-moat thee with His grace;
And none but these."

"To double-moat thee:"—there is a liberalism (so called) which would invite us to fill up both these moats as unsightly memorials of extinct contentions and jealousies outworn. There are again very many who, while they would deepen the one moat (be it which it may), would efface the other. If we are wise we shall turn a deaf ear alike to all these counsels, and maintaining our ancient lines of defence, make a steadfast protest against error on either hand, whether under the form of excess or of defect. If it can be shown, as some assert, that those lines have been drawn otherwise than God's word doth allow, let them be retraced, after ample enquiry and by competent authority; but let us never imagine that the City of God may safely demolish these her towers, or level these her bulwarks. So much then for the past; but what of the future. I would ask you brethren whether those who love her best have not, at least, some cause for gloomy forboding, as they contemplate the possible contingencies of that future in respect of our native country. She is undergoing a great political and social change, a change which legislation may, perhaps, be said to have inaugurated, but which awaits its development through other causes over which legislation has no control. We may be thankful, however, to believe that in all these changes there is that which is ordained by the wisdom and beneficence of God, though it is too often sullied and defaced by that which proceeds from the passion or the selfishness of man. Let us faithfully remember that, under the governance of Him by whom the Father made the worlds, and whom He has given to be Head over all things to the Church, changes which would otherwise be fraught with disaster and distress, may be brought to pass in all peacefulness and serenity. He who once stilled the tempest on the Lake of Gennesaret, may still say effectually "Peace be still!" to those mightier waves which threaten the stability of civil institutions and the security of civil communities; waves which no human skill could surmount and no human power control. Happy at all times, and thrice happy in these hours of danger and perplexity, are the people who have the Lord for their God, and who lovingly and trustfully recognize their relation and their duty to Him. For let us remember that God works by means, that His best gifts to us are those by which He guides and teaches the hearts of His faithful people, and that under His blessed guidance political and social difficulties and perplexities which were otherwise inextricable may be happily solved by the meekness of Christian wisdom and by the unselfishness of Christian love. If, then, we pray for our country's peace, let us pray that she may put far from her, and that we, too, may put far from ourselves, evils which we surely know to be enemies of that peace, evils which cannot prevail to any great extent among a people which truly "hath the Lord for its God." We hear of the vast increase of wealth in England. Has not this induced a vast increase of luxury? Are not men beginning to

warn us of the danger of this luxury, and to point us to the example of Imperial Rome? Let me, however take a higher ground than this, and point out how dangerous the undue love, the undue pursuit of wealth, must prove to man's spiritual welfare; nor can I do so better than in the pregnant words of an old English writer, who has said, "Trust not to the omnipotency of gold, and say not unto it, thou art my confidence. Kiss not thy hand to that terrestrial sun, nor bore thine ear unto its servitude. A slave unto mammon makes no servant unto God. Covetousness cracks the sinews of faith; numbs the apprehension of anything above sense; and, only affected with the certainty of things present, makes a peradventure of things to come; lives but unto one world, nor hopes but fears another; makes their own death sweet unto others, bitter unto themselves; brings formal sadness, scenical mourning, and no wet eyes at the grave." Brethren, does not our daily life teach us something of the truth of these words?—something of the danger that the sinews of our faith should be cracked by the weight of this world's cares, and by the inordinate pursuit of its interests, of the danger of having our apprehension numbed of anything above sense—of being so impressed with the certainty of things present as to make a peradventure of things to come; of so living for this world alone, as to be unable to hope for another, able only to fear it? Be it, then, alike our daily prayer and our daily endeavour that we may be delivered from this bondage, and, remembering our Lord's warning that, "where our treasure is, there will our heart be also," be it our care to lay up our treasure there, where the treasure shall never fail and where the heart shall be satisfied for ever. But again, do not they who love England best deeply grieve to hear of the spread of unbelief among her children? Let us, then, pray for her, for them, and for ourselves, that God would keep us from this fearful evil also. Have we no cause to dread it? Those of us who are advanced in life know well that there is scarcely a sacred truth which was received with meekness and with pure affection in our childhood, which is not boldly questioned or utterly rejected now. The personality of God, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the lofty origin of man as the immediate creation of God—all these great truths, and that which comprehends and certifies them all, the fact of a divine revelation made in Holy Scripture, these, alas, we know too well are on all sides doubted or denied. "The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it," said our blessed Lord, and we must often feel how bitter a condemnation is passed on modern unbelief by the lofty language and the pure aspirations of those "feelers after God," to whom He had not vouchsafed the revelation of His truth. "We are His offspring," said the ancient heathen poet quoted by St. Paul. He spoke in accordance with the dim surviving light of primeval tradition, while in the full sunshine of revelation men have learned to deny not only their childlike relation to the great Father, but the very existence of the God by whom they were formed to be His sons. Let us be sure that the darkest day our earth has ever seen will be the day on which her nations dare to renounce the great name of Christ; the heathendom which knew or knows Him not, cruel and impure as it may have been or is now, cannot possibly compare with the malignant wickedness, the moral degradation, which must characterize the heathenism of apostasy. The last and most fearful phase of evil remains to be exhibited by those who have wilfully re-

nounced the hopes and disallowed the claims of the Gospel of Christ; no sin can parallel the iniquity of those to whom the rejected Redeemer says:—"Now ye have both seen and hated both Me and My Father." As then we love our country, brethren, let us ever pray that she may be shielded by the grace of God from the deadly temptations both of worldliness and of unbelief; let us pray for ourselves, her children in a distant land, that we may be enabled faithfully to guard our own homes and hearts from the influence of these terrible evils, and let the thought of England and our affection for her move us also on this day to aid, to the utmost of our power, the charitable efforts of the Society to which we belong, on behalf of the increasing numbers of our poorer fellow-countrymen, who are forced by the pressure of want to seek a new home in our midst.

FICTION AND FACT.

FICTION.—It is said that the Church of England is a "State-made Church."
—FACT. The truth is that the Church of England was never brought into existence by the State; indeed, the church existed in reality before the State had any being.

FICTION.—The Church of England was founded at the time of the Reformation by Henry VIII.—FACT. The Church of England was founded more than a thousand years before that time. No new church was founded in the time of Henry VIII.; the church which already existed was reformed, not created anew.

FICTION.—The Church of England is a violation of religious liberty and religious equality.—FACT. If so, how is it that we find hundreds of dissenting chapels, their proprietors possessing full liberty, and enjoying the protection of the law just as much as the Church of England does?

FICTION.—The Church of England is a "State-paid church."—FACT. The Church of England does not receive a single penny from the State, and its property was never at any time given by the State.

FICTION.—The property of the Church of England is "national property."—FACT. The property held by the Church has been given to the Church, never to the State. It has been given by private individuals, and is held by exactly the same right as that according to which dissenting bodies hold property.—*Churchman's Penny Magazine.*

WHEN all that is worldly turns to dross around us, books only retain their steady value. When friends grow cold, and the converse of the intimates languishes into vapid civility and commonplace, these only continue the unaltered countenance of better days, and cheer us with that true friendship which never deceived hope or deserted sorrow.—*Washington Irving.*

THE Turks, after advancing to throw supplies into Nisic, appear to have suffered a series of repulses. Despatches to Constantinople speak of Turkish victories, but the retreat from Nisic is apparently confirmed. Seven thousand Montenegrins, it is reported, have joined the insurgents. It is feared at Vienna that the Sultan will raise the standard of the Prophet, thus appealing to Mahomedan fanaticism. Later advices are, however, more pacific, and the Great Powers hope to keep the ferment in hand. At least they so profess. But the *London Times* correspondent at Berlin says that Russia is giving the insurgents secret aid, and that M. Kvarsoff, the Russian diplomatic agent at Belgrade, has informed his government that the Servians mean to take the field in May.