

on; yes, and as will hereafter be seen, a purifying fire to the whole Church, lifting it up from earth, and hastening the consummation of the gathering of all nations into one in Christ Jesus.

Across the centuries we hail as brothers and benefactors the witnesses that France has given to the truth. The "Communion of Saints" is not bounded by locality, not confined to one age or time. Well has it been said, that "so close is the relationship between the whole human family that it is impossible for a nation, even while struggling for itself, not to acquire something for all mankind;" and how much closer is the relationship between the members of Christ's mystical body, between the different Churches, the different stones, that go to make up the living temple, than the merely natural connexions, national and social, of a selfish humanity. This is the hero-Christian, the benefactor of the Church universal and of the whole human race. Thus, too, are we sure that they have not died,—that they do not die. The blood of the martyrs here, as in other cases, will prove the seed of the Church. It has been sown: it may be long of growing; and short-lived man wearily cries, "Lord, how long?" But we have read that grains of corn that have been concealed in the pyramids for thousands of years have still brought forth fruit when sown in our time in English ground: and shall the spiritual seed have less vitality? God is eternal and can wait, so that his purposes may have the more glorious development. "The future is the present with God, and to that future he often seems to sacrifice the human present." "He doeth all things well;" and to recognize this is our highest wisdom.

Yes; the mission of France in things spiritual is not yet accomplished. Even as it formed the debateable ground on which was fought for the longest time the fiercest battle between the Reformation and Popery, so there are many signs which seem to indicate that there again will be fought, and this time with better success, the same battle, and fiercer than ever it may be, between spiritual freedom and spiritual slavery. At the last ter-centenary, the Protestants of France felt that they were entering a new era; and that it became them to be inspired with their fathers' spirit and with the wisdom of their father's God. In Paris and the Provincial towns, the churches were crowded, and numbers swore to imitate as well as admire the old worthies; while in the "desert" at Nesmes a great religious festival was attended by thousands, and the Lord's Supper administered in circumstances of deep peace and solemnity to men who testify to the reality of their convictions by acting in their everyday life as unpaid missionaries and colporteurs to their brethren. An awakening has come, especially during the last twenty years, to the Church in France, such as no Protestant

Church can parallel. In the 18th century she was almost dead; for if the torch of the Reformation was shaken sooner in France than on the mountain tops of Scotland, so did the night of Voltaire-ism and Atheism fall sooner over it than did the cold shade of Moderatism somewhat paralyze the energies of Scottish Protestantism. In the beginning of this century, the Reformed Church in France was in her greatest extremity. In 1808 she possessed only 190 churches and the same number of clergy, and of these one might have counted on their fingers, says M. Grandpierre, the few who really preached sound doctrine. In comparison with this, look at her present position. Now she has 1100 ministers, 1600 places of worship, 1800 schools, 8 societies for the diffusion of gospel truth, possessed of an annual revenue of £20,000, besides numerous other societies, and institutions that show healthy life and self-denying zeal. Within the same time the Protestant population has increased from one million to very nearly two millions; and these, according to the testimony of the celebrated pamphleteer Edmund About (himself a Romanist), are the most industrious and intelligent subjects in the Empire. Bibles, too, are now distributed by thousands every year, and gladly received by both soldiers and people: and the petty persecutions of the priests have now seldom any other effect than to drive the greater part of their flock into the Protestant Church. Whole parishes have thus been known to come over. A still more hopeful sign is that many of the ablest thinkers of France—men who direct public sentiment—such as Remusat, Guizot, Saint Hilaire, Weiss, Bounec hose, are Protestants; and others, as Quinet, the writers to the "Revue de deux mondes," and many such, write boldly that it is only by recognizing the rights of conscience and returning to primitive Christianity that the Catholic Church can stand; that the human spirit can no longer be cramped by the inelastic fetters of authority, nor fed on the husks of dead rites and traditions, but will only be satisfied in its aspirations and its wants by the living Wisdom as expressed in God's own Word. There are many signs also of a collision between the Emperor and the Pope; and men who know the times would not be astonished if the former should cut the Gallican Church away from St. Peter's Chair, and establish a national Church, purged of the Confessional and the forced celibacy of the clergy.

These various symptoms of gathering danger are not unobserved by Popery. She will fight to the last. She cannot reform without committing suicide. She will not pull down the godless wall of separation which she has built up between reason and religion; for as an old English philosopher observed, "when reason is against a man, a man will be against reason." "No surrender" is the watchword hung out over every buttress and even ex-