

pressure of England, Russia, Greece and the Christian Principalities? No one thought that she would venture to oppose Russia without the assured support of England. The Turk dies hard, and his desperation at having no friend at all might have led to the most terrible conflagration that has ever devastated Europe.

It is surely surprising that so ardent a champion of oppressed nationalities as Mr. Douglas does not rejoice at the acquisition by England of Cyprus, and her proposed protectorate over Asiatic Turkey. But, no, with beautiful consistency he and his party bemoan the terrible responsibilities which England has taken upon herself.

And does he not suspect "a strange perversion of the human intellect" in his own near neighbourhood when he coolly assumes that the moral sense of Europe is so obtuse as to relegate to England her ancient position and weight in its councils only upon her "prostituting herself and trampling under her feet justice and humanity"?

As a British subject, I am proud to see England regulating her policy by facts and not by sentiment. Her destiny is largely bound up with that of her Eastern possessions. She must make up her mind to hold or relinquish them.

I rejoice to see the reins of power in the hands of a man who has the courage to act upon the manly principle that what by the sword England has gained, by the sword she will retain.

TURK.

UPWARD OR DOWNWARD?

The satirists of every age have denounced its moral shortcomings. They have all written as if there were a high moral standard which people had at some time or other lived up to, but from which their particular age had sadly fallen away. When this sublime attitude was attained, is not at all clear. The sacred writers, who profess to go back to the beginning of things, are from first to last denouncing the "wicked and adulterous generations" among whom they happen to live; the classic writers put the Golden age of universal virtue and happiness far back into the dawn of history, and in old Rome, as in modern London, there was nothing but lamentation over society fallen from its high estate, and seething in the foulness of its iniquities. Juvenal gave a picture of old Rome so terrible that it is demoralizing even to read it, and if we may trust contemporary writers, the Elizabethan age was distinguished by its grossness, that of the Charleses by its open and shameless profligacy, that of Queen Anne and the early Georges by a polished refinement in vice, that of the first gentleman of Europe by a violation of all the decencies of life, while it is reserved for the Victorian age to luxuriate in the enervating and debasing consequences of wealth doubtfully amassed, and still more doubtfully enjoyed.

The interesting question is whether the tendency of society is really upwards or downwards. In other words, are we better or worse than those who have preceded us? The satirists are not absolutely safe guides in this matter, because there may be a sufficient floating scum of scandal to give a semblance of truth to their sneers without society being absolutely rotten to the core. We have to look the facts presented to us in our daily experience fully in the face, and to form our own conclusions. These, I am sorry to say, are not very favourable to the times we live in. It is impossible but to believe that there must be some foundation for the stories heard everywhere, and boldly stated in print, as to the intrigues and *liaisons* of some of the more distinguished personages of the land. Undue familiarity on the part of members of the Court and aristocracy with the Totties and Lotties, the Carries and Pollies of the stage, is, to say the least of it, a bad sign. In London it is only necessary to go into the Row of an afternoon to see the equipages of the most notorious courtizans—vulgar, low-bred women, raddled up to the eyes, loud in dress, and flashing in jewellery—and to mark the glances which pass between them and members of the Upper Ten, to be satisfied that all is far from right in their relations, and that men of position are abusing their rank and wealth by forming connections which stamp them with disgrace. Another bad sign is the toleration which this sort of thing meets with from all classes. People buy with alacrity journals started solely to pander to the lowest taste for prurient gossip—journals reeking with scandal and innuendo, with the garbage of society-gossip, and details of the foulest iniquities served up with the *sauce piquante* of polished irony. It makes it none the better that the papers adopt a highly virtuous tone, and affect to give the grossest facts and suggestions, in the interests of morality, forsooth! Their moral system is like that of Joseph Surface, as exposed by Lady Teazle in "The School for Scandal," when she says: "Then I perceive that your prescription is that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation." All these disclosures of infamy, all these frequent details of vice, are given in order that people who would have been ignorant of them may get them by heart and profit by the lesson which, in proportion as it pollutes, is supposed to purify! One of the severest of these preachers is notoriously living with an actress; another was a bankrupt solely through preferring his own indulgences to the claims of his creditors; and of half of them it may be said with truth that they are eminently fitted for their posts through having graduated in vice and so qualified themselves for exposing all its allurements—in the interests of virtue!

Literature of this kind is well supplemented by novels of the most lascivious fibre and poems which in a healthy state of society would be burned by the common hangman. Art follows suit, and the Drama comes well up for a final place in the race for popular favour by pandering to the coarsest tastes. But the worst symptom of all is that legislation plays into the hands of those undermining the public morals by lulling the unsuspecting public into a belief that these morals are being carefully looked after.

But are these only trifles on the surface, or do they indicate any greater depth of immorality? That is the question, and it is sad to have to admit that every glimpse we get of that higher life, which should be also the purer life of the country, shows us that it is rotten to the core. The revelations of the Divorce Court are absolutely sickening. Only recently a divorce was applied for by a lady of the most exalted rank, on grounds so revolting that the case had to be heard with closed doors. It could not be taken in public, and it could not be reported in the newspapers. It was too shocking. It has been

followed up by the latest scandal, the Aylesford case, in which the Earl of Aylesford, found guilty of adultery, sought a divorce from his wife, the Countess, also found guilty of adultery with the Marquis of Blandford, and the Court refused the divorce, finding that the parties had acted in collusion to obtain it, so that the charming couple might get free, and the parties all round might go, not to "sin no more," but, as it would seem, to indulge their inclination to their heart's content. The scandal has been enormous, yet we will venture to say that "society" takes it quite coolly—the parties will assuredly not be "cut" by their circle—and it is doubtful whether even a word of admonition will be received by the Earl from any dignitary of the Church, for the sufficing reason that his lordship holds the patronage of seven livings, and the people of as many parishes are dependent on his whim for their spiritual sustenance, which naturally endears him to the Church!

Looking to these and other revelations daily made—looking to the general tone of society, I am inclined to believe that there is a very determined downward moral tendency in this age. The thing is hard to gauge. If there ever was a standard to go by in these matters, it has long since disappeared. The gradations, too, are so subtle. The Latin poet dwells on the ease with which we descend from the higher levels of goodness into the Stygian blackness of evil; and it not seldom happens that a nation has gone irretrievably down while it believes itself still on the shining heights. In our case the indications are most significant, and it behoves us to study the lesson of old Rome, which, enervated by luxury, pampered by indulgence, gorged with wealth, and morally rotten to the core, suddenly collapsed, and left behind only a name and a warning,—an empty name and a warning which the world has received only to ignore.

RUPERT.

BISHOP LATIMER.

Bishop Latimer was born about the year 1480, and on the 16th of October, 1555, was burned alive at the stake, by the decree of bloody Mary. He was a homely and painful preacher, of a character singularly fearless and intrepid. On one occasion he boldly denounced from the pulpit the appointment of bishops and other distinguished ecclesiastics to lay offices, and more especially to places in the mint, during the reign of Edward VI. In one of his sermons on the number of unpreaching prelates, he said:—

"But they are otherwise occupied; some in king's matters; some are ambassadors, some of the Privy Council, some to furnish the court; some are lords of Parliament; some are presidents, some controllers of mints. Well, well, is this their duty? Is this their office? Is this their calling? Should we have ministers of the Church to be controllers of mints? Is this a meet office for a priest that hath the cure of souls? Is this his charge? I would here ask one question: I would fain know who controlleth the devil at home at his parish, while he controlleth the mint? If the apostles might not leave the office of preaching to the deacons, shall one leave it for minting? I cannot tell you. But the saying is, that since priests have been minters, money hath been worse than it was before!"

In another part of his discourse, the good Bishop proceeds to ask:—

"Is there never a nobleman to be a Lord President but he must be a prelate? Is there never a wise man in the realm to be a controller of the mint? I speak it to your shame; I speak it to your shame. If there be never a wise man, make a water-bearer, a tinker, a cobbler, a slave, a page, the controller of the mint. Make a mean gentleman, a groom, a yeoman, make a poor beggar, Lord President. Thus I speak, not that I would have it so, but to your shame, if there be never a gentleman meet nor able to be Lord President. For why are not the noblemen and young gentlemen of England so brought up in knowledge of God and in learning that they might be able to execute offices in the commonwealth? Yea, and there be already noblemen enough, though not so many as I could wish, to be Lord Presidents; and wise men enough for the mint. And as unmeet a thing it is for bishops to be Lord Presidents, or priests to be minters, as it was for the Corinthians to plead matters of variance before heathen judges.

"It is also a slander to the noblemen, as though they lacked wisdom and learning to be able for such offices, or else were no men of conscience, or else were not meet to be trusted, and able for such offices. And a prelate has a charge and cure otherwise; and therefore he cannot discharge his duty and be a Lord President too. For a presidentship requireth a whole man; and a bishop cannot be two men. A bishop has his office, a flock to teach, to look unto; and therefore he cannot meddle with another office, which alone requires a whole man; he should therefore give it over to whom it is meet, and labour in his own business; as Paul writes to the Thessalonians, 'Let every man do his own business, and follow his calling.' Let the priest preach, and the nobleman handle the temporal matters. Moses was a marvellous man, a good man: Moses was a wonderful man, and did his duty, being a married man: we lack such as Moses was. Well, I would all men would look to their duty as God hath called them, and then we should have a flourishing Christian commonwealth.

"And now I would ask a strange question: Who is the most diligent bishop and prelate in all England, that passes all the rest in doing his office? I can tell, for I know who it is; I know him well. But now I think I see you listening and hearkening that I should name him. There is one that passes all other, and it the most diligent prelate and preacher in all England. And will ye know who it is? I will tell you—it is the devil. He is the most diligent preacher of all others; he is never out of his diocese; he is never from his cure; you shall never find him unoccupied; he is ever in his parish; he keeps residence at all times; you shall never find him out of the way; call for him when you will he is ever at home. He is the most diligent preacher in all the realm; he is ever at his plough; no lording nor loitering can hinder him; he is ever applying his business; you shall never find him idle I warrant you. And his office is to hinder religion, to maintain superstition, to set up idolatry, to teach all kinds of Popery. He is ready as can be wished for to set forth his plough; to devise as many ways as can be to deface and obscure God's glory. Where the devil is resident, and has his plough going, there away with books and up with candles; away with Bibles and up with beads; away with the light of the Gospel and up with the light of candles, yea,