

Church of the working man, the Church of the poor, would be carefully and affectionately conserved.

And I do not say that it will not be so. Nevertheless, if you ask me, "Watchman, what of the night?—is all calm, all safe ahead, may we sleep in peace?"—I dare not answer, "All is well." For undoubtedly a strong effort will be made at no distant time to introduce a fundamental change into the position of the Church by the process which is described as liberation from State control, but which means something more. We have been reminded lately by a high authority that "a current almost throughout the civilized world slowly sets in this direction," and, of course, we can hardly be surprised, as the same authority also reminds us, "if those who observe" the set of this current "should desire or fear that among ourselves, too, it may be found to operate." The operation of the current, or the attempt to bring it into operation, is aided in many ways. Erroneous views concerning the manner in which the clergy are supported are diligently propagated, and it is asserted, apparently with truth, that many persons believe that the sustentation of the clergy is a charge upon the taxes of the country. Then again it is maintained, and I doubt not is by some earnestly believed, that the connexion between the Church and the State is a thing bad in itself, that the union tends to secularise religion, and that the best office that can be done for the Church is to liberate it from State control. Besides which there is the telling cry of religious equality—why should one sect be favored rather than another? or why should Church people be permitted to plead that they belong to no sect at all? All which arguments are strengthened by the fact that the Church of England, regarded as a human institution, is, like all human institutions, imperfect. She has her wounds and bruises and sores, and no one knows this better, or smarts under the pain more acutely, than does the Church herself; and I may add that no true Churchman will refuse his aid to get rid of all defects and abuses which, after all the improvements and reforms of recent years, undoubtedly still remain. There is one further argument, which is sure ever to be in the mouths, still more in the minds, of those who would disestablish the Church. The Church is reputed to be rich, and in one sense is so: a good deal of property is held by those who work in her service; though when you come to estimate riches by the average income of each man, you find not wealth, but poverty. Nevertheless, if you choose to add up all the incomes of your twenty thousand clergymen, it comes, undoubtedly, to a large sum. What might not be done with this if it were swept into the national exchequer? What a bright vision of wealth to hold up before the eyes of needy men! I trust that English honesty may be proof against such a bribe; but when we consider this pecuniary side of the argument, and connect it with all those other arguments which I enumerated before, it is impossible not to see that a very plausible case may be made out, especially in gatherings of people whose minds are already leaning in that direction, in favor of the disestablishment and disendowment, or, if you please, the liberation and plundering of the Church of England.

Hence it seems to me that he would be but a poor watchman who should simply cry "All is well" at this epoch of the history of the Church of England. \* \* \* I quite recognize this kind of answer which may be given, and I do not entirely deny its force; but on that very account I think it is all the more desirable that the other portion of the answer should not be forgotten, and that it should be candidly recognized that if the union of Church and State, that is, the existence of a National Church, produces friction and difficulty, it also confers benefits which it is hard to overrate, and for which it is equally hard to suggest any adequate substitute.

It is no slight consideration that a National Church declares the nation's faith in God and its allegiance to the Cross of Christ. God deals with nations as he does with individual men; and nations, like men, can assume an attitude of loyalty to God or one of rebellion against Him, or even denial of His being and His attributes. And a National Church is a solemn and public declaration of the soundness of the national heart with regard to the great doctrine of God. I may be told that such views as these are out of date, that in recently civilized countries a National Church is an impossibility, and that in old countries the tide is setting steadily against them. This may be so; but in like manner royalty is impossible in a new country, and it may be asserted that a tide is setting in against royalty; yet we love our Queen, and we have seen as yet nothing in the history of other nations to persuade us that royalty is out of date. The question for us is not so much what other nations have or have not got, but rather what have we ourselves? The late General Grant is reported to have said:—"I cannot understand why you English people should be trying to get rid of institutions which we would give our ears to possess."

And I think we are bound to remember the important place which the English Church occupies in Christendom and in the world. That the world is rapidly becoming an English-speaking world, or at all events that English is growing with such steady growth that it will soon become by far the most universal vehicle of thought, does not admit of a doubt. And when we take into account together English wealth and commerce, English enterprise, the extent of English dominion and colonies, and I may add the earnestness of English missionary operations, I think it is something better than mere national vanity which leads an Englishman to believe that the prosperity and strength of the Church of England are matters of interest and importance in almost every corner of the world.

It may be said, no doubt, that this may be true, but that it does not touch the question of Church and State, that the Church of England would be stronger for foreign influence, more active, more spiritual, more likely to gain the blessing of God and the respect of men, if she were exhibited to the world in her simple garb as a Church of Christ, and not adorned with any earthly decorations. I doubt this very much; but I do not intend to argue the point; I would rather lose no time in passing on to that which seems to me to be the chief point in the practical view of the Church of England which I am endeavoring to put before you. I wish any candid person, who regards the question of disestablishment and disendowment with favor, or even as an open question, to consider what is the condition of things throughout England at the present time. We have been engaged for the last forty or fifty years in perfecting the parochial system; we have been cutting up our parishes into districts of manageable size; we have been endowing new districts, and increasing the stipends in old ones, building parsonages, and so making it possible that a resident clergyman shall be found within reach of every poor man's cottage in the kingdom. We have been building, and restoring and enlarging churches upon such a scale as perhaps has not been known in any country in any century before. And this work is going on steadily; we are more than keeping up with the population; every year the land is better provided than it was before with churches which are free to all, and with clergy whose ministries are free to all without money and without price. I speak of that which I know, and testify of that which I see in my own diocese; and the same thing is going on in others upon a much larger scale than in mine. I know, of course, that it is not all gold that glitters; there are spots even in the sun; and the actual results of our parochial system are not always all that can be desired, and have

their shortcomings; but I boldly affirm that England has never yet seen anything comparable with what is going on to-day, both in her towns and in her villages; men of different powers and varying phases of religious opinion and unequal stipends, most of them very humble indeed, are doing such a work for God and for their fellow-creatures, and withal living such exemplary, godly, Christ-like lives, as the world has not often witnessed. And no favor is asked from the State in aid of this work, and in furtherance of these efforts. All we ask is to be let alone, and to be permitted to go on laboring as we have labored hitherto, without interfering with those who do not wish to be interfered with, and without interference from any.

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But my words will go beyond this congregation; and it will perhaps be said that the Bishop of Carlisle expressed himself as opposed to all change, and thoroughly satisfied with things as they are. God knows this is not so. I recognize as fully as the most earnest member of the Liberation Society the need in which we stand of some change. I maintained some years ago in the Convocation of York that the time had come when the method of legislating for the Church by Parliament required revision and amendment. I quite feel that the present condition of things is tending to become intolerable, and I should hail any loyal, kindly, patriotic effort on the part of our leaders in the State to readjust the ecclesiastical arrangements which the union of Church and State renders necessary. What I deprecate is a great ecclesiastical revolution brought about by those who are hostile to the present settlement, in conjunction, I had almost said in unholy alliance, with those who do not care for religion at all. I deprecate the robbery of a Church which has been endowed especially for the helpless and the poor. I deprecate the ruin of an ancient institution which the mass of the nation loves, the overthrow of which can profit none, and will make many hearts infinitely sad. I deprecate the change as a Bishop, as a Christian, as an Englishman, as a Churchman, as a patriot.

Change, however, or no change, I do not desire to be a prophet of the abomination of desolation in the case of our dear Church of England. I am reminded by my text that if any ask with anxiety, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" I may very well answer in the words of Isaiah, "The morning cometh, and also the night." Let us take up these words of hope, and try to persuade ourselves that, if there be some indications before us of the darkness of night, there are equal co-ordinate indications of the brightness of day. Whatever God may purpose concerning the Church, I cannot believe that He will desert her. There is a great work to be done, which I am persuaded that none can do as well. There is a testimony to be borne to Catholic truth which can best be borne by a Church—which, in fact, can only be borne by a Church—that holds fast to primitive doctrine and discipline, while she protests against corruption, extending from the darkness of the middle ages to the declaration of Papal infallibility in our own time. There is a testimony to be borne to the religious life of nations and their corporate responsibility which can best be borne by a Church which is in union with the State and theoretically represents the State in its spiritual character. There is a Gospel to be preached throughout the world, and a light to be raised up to lighten the Gentiles in all the dark places of the earth, and the spring and energy necessary for this mighty effort of evangelization may well be found in the Church of that country which more than any other explores and colonizes and rules over the distant lands and the islands of the sea. And last, but not least, there is a great work for God and His Christ to be done at home. The faith has to be earnestly contended for now as ever; new weapons have to be forged, old weapons refurbished, and the great swelling tide of ignorance