

For not a hidden path, that to the shades  
 Of the Parnassian forest leads,  
 Lurked undiscovered by him ; not a rill  
 There issues from the fount of Hippocrene,  
 But he traced it upwards to its source.  
 Through open glade, dark glen, and secret dell,  
 Knew the gay wild flowers on its banks, and cul'd  
 Its med'cinable herbs. Yea, oft alone,  
 Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,  
 The haunt obscure of old Philosophy.  
 He bade with lifted torch its starry walls  
 Sparkle, as erst they sparkled to the flame  
 Of odorous lamps tended by Saint and Sage.  
 O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts !  
 O studious Poet, eloquent for truth !  
 Philosopher ! contemning wealth and death,  
 Yet docile, childlike, full of Life and Love !

CHARLES D. BELL, D.D.



### ART. III.—MR. RICHARD, M.P., AND THE NATIONAL CHURCH.

**M**R. RICHARD, M.P. for Merthyr, has given the following notice of motion for the next session :

That the establishment of the Church of England by law

- (1) Imposes upon Parliament duties which it cannot effectually discharge ;
  - (2) Deprives the Church of the power of managing her own affairs ;
  - (3) Inflicts injustice on a large number of the community, and
  - (4) Is injurious to the political and religious interest of the nation ;
- and that

Therefore it ought no longer to be maintained.

In the second charge of this indictment Mr. Richard admits that there are affairs which belong to the Church. This is satisfactory, because Mr. Richard is, we believe, a prominent member of the Liberation Society, and that Society has put forth a scheme which, if carried out, would leave the Church no affairs at all. The scheme observes that Mr. Gladstone's method of dealing with the Irish Church left the Church many affairs. To guard against so calamitous a result in England, precautions are taken, in the Society's scheme, for leaving the Church in this country neither minister, endowment, nor fabric. The cathedrals and other "monumental buildings" are to be seized by the State, and maintained for such pur-

poses as Parliament may determine. Parish churches, if built before 1818, are to be given to the ratepayers; if built after that date, and by individuals still living, they may be claimed by these individuals; but if built by persons since deceased, or by more than one person, they are to be handed over, not to the Church of England, but to the congregations for the time being. The Bishops and clergy are to be relieved at once of all obligation to continue their ministry—as, indeed, is reasonable when they are no longer to have churches to minister in, or houses to live in—and are to be pensioned off on a sliding scale according to their age.

This scheme is so obviously absurd and fanatical that it would need only to be stated in order to be tossed aside, if we did not know that evil passions are not to be reckoned upon by the principles of ordinary experience, but, like an ice-storm or a volcanic eruption, may be expected to baffle all expectations. However, we will suppose that the gentlemen who drew up this monstrous scheme hardly expect to carry it out. Indeed we have sometimes thought, that with all their assumption of seriousness, they are only treating us to an elaborate joke. Like Cheap Jack at the fair, they ask a guinea, but may be prepared to take sixpence. Mr. Richard's notice certainly looks that way. He has carefully avoided the word Disendowment, which everybody understands, and deals only with Disestablishment, which may mean anything, from the removal of the incumbent from the vestry chair, to the sort of Disestablishment which Henry VIII. applied to the monasteries, and the Liberationists talk of applying to the churches.

We should like to ask Mr. Richard how he intends the Church to manage her own affairs if she ceases to be established by law? How would the Wesleyans manage their affairs if Mr. Wesley's famous Deed Poll were declared invalid, and the State declined to afford them legal establishment by any other means? How could the minister and members of an Independent Chapel manage their own affairs, if the chapel were taken from them, and any other which they might try to buy or build were refused legal protection? How can I be established in the possession of the pen I write with, except by law? Must I be prepared to fight any neighbour who takes a fancy to it, or how? To say that the establishment of the Church of England by law ought no longer to be maintained, can mean only one of two things:

(1) That the Church of England ought not to be established by law at all, or

(2) That the Church of England ought not to be established by law in the same manner as it is at present.

If Mr. Richard adopts the first of these alternatives, he

adopts the plan of the Liberation Society, and while talking of Disestablishment, means Destruction. If he adopts the second alternative, we adopt it also. What he wants is, in that case, what we want—not Destruction, but Reform. A thousand questions might arise as to the details of the reforms desired. But if the principle kept in view by Mr. Richard and Churchmen alike, is to make the Church more efficient, and not less, surely the problem should not be an insoluble one. Mr. Bright, in his famous speech at Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, said, "Our purpose, I can undertake to say with a clear conscience—and you will confirm it—our purpose is not in any way the enslavement or destruction of the Church of England. What we want rather is its liberation, its freedom, its purity, and its greater power as a religious institution." Churchmen must hold Mr. Bright to these words. When Mr. Richard reads his indictment against us next session, Mr. Bright will probably be the most important counsel for the prosecution. But he has pledged himself, his conscience, and his enthusiastic audience, to precisely the same objects as those which are dear to the Church's own children. He was challenged afterwards to show how the scheme proposed by the Society, in whose name he spoke, could produce the results he professed to aim at. And he shirked the challenge. He wrote a letter in reply. But all he could say was this :

The questions you put to me will be answered by Parliament when the day of Disestablishment arrives. They have been answered in the case of Ireland ; they will be answered in due time in the case of Scotland ; and whatever difficulty may exist in England will be solved by the same authority and with equal certainty. You may be quite certain that the English people, and especially that portion of them who are Nonconformists, will not be unjust to your Church, or to Churchmen, when the great act of justice to the nation and to Christianity shall be undertaken and completed. Bishops and clergy in Ireland wrote to me, as you write, some fifteen years ago ; now not few of them rejoice in their freedom.

The questions asked were, first, In what particulars Mr. Bright believed Parliament would use a cathedral more for the benefit of the Church of England as a religious institution, when it was taken away from the Church and maintained as a monumental building, than it is used now by the Bishop and the cathedral clergy. And, secondly, How the Church of England would be made freer, purer, and more powerful by taking a parish church away from the incumbent who now holds it as trustee for the purposes of the Church, and giving it to the ratepayers, a body consisting of several different sorts of religionists, to do what they liked with. It is obvious that these questions have *not* been answered by Parliament in the case of Ireland, for the very good reason that they were never

asked. In Ireland every cathedral and parish church was left for divine service just as before. It is equally obvious that the questions will not be answered by Parliament either in Scotland or in England. Whether they will be asked in Parliament is another thing. But they will not be answered, because there is no answer to them. When Mr. Bright said "*Our* purpose is not the destruction of the Church of England," he ought not to have included, with himself and the majority of his great audience, the small but busy faction which got the meeting together, and got him to address it.

Let us now examine Mr. Richard's charges a little more in detail. First, he says the establishment of the Church of England by law—by which we must now understand the establishment of the Church of England by the *present* laws—*imposes upon Parliament duties which it cannot effectually discharge*; and secondly (which, however, is much the same as the converse of No. 1), deprives the Church of managing her own affairs. Nothing can be truer. Before the Act of Submission, in the reign of Henry VIII., the faith, ritual, and discipline of the Church were not placed under the direct control of the Crown in the way they are now. And in the Tudor days, the Crown did not mean, as in the last resort it does now, the House of Commons. Henry no doubt intended that canons should still be enacted by Convocation, with consent of the Crown. But, practically, canons have fallen out of use. Their binding power, even over the clergy, is a little obscure; and for the laity they have no force at all. If there is one department of Church legislation more open to new canons than another, one would think it would be the reform of the Ecclesiastical Courts. But those Courts have been so affected by Acts of Parliament that it would be exceedingly difficult to draw up a canon for their reform without clashing in many points with statute law. Then as to ritual: The two Convocations of Canterbury and York agreed upon a Bill, and sent it up to the Crown, along with their final reports on the rubrics; and if this Bill were passed, the Convocations could make any alterations in the Prayer Book, or additions to it, except alterations of doctrine, and these changes would become law if approved by the Crown in Council and not objected to by either House of Parliament. In any case, the great majority of the clergy of England agree, in effect, with Mr. Richard when he says that the present state of things imposes upon Parliament duties which it cannot effectually discharge. But then, Mr. Richard proposes to burn down the cottage to roast the pig.

That Parliament should be relieved of the most difficult of its present ecclesiastical duties most Churchmen heartily desire. We contrast the House of Commons after the Restoration,

when it represented England only, and was a strong Church body, with the present House of Commons, representing Roman Catholic Ireland, and Presbyterian Scotland, besides the manifold Dissent of England; and we shrink from the prospect of such a House of Commons teaching us Churchmen to pray. Yet Sir William Harcourt, himself an Archbishop's grandson, said, if we remember rightly, during the discussions on the Burial Bill, that in an established church no form of prayer could be allowed which had not been sanctioned by Parliament, forgetting that across the Border all the prayers are made afresh by the parish ministers every Sunday in a church which is far more truly "established by law" than the Church of England. And when a man like Sir William is possessed by the exceedingly "unhistorical" notion that there is no alternative between an Act of Uniformity and "Disestablishment," no wonder that persons such as Mr. Richard and the Liberationists should see in the Church's parliamentary difficulties a splendid pretext for crying "Down with her, down with her, even to the ground!" Churchmen, on the other hand, have been far too slow in perceiving that some method of Church legislation adapted to the times is urgently required. Perhaps Mr. Richard may hasten their perception. If Scotland has its General Assembly, why may not England? Is not every municipality established by law, and yet permitted to manage its own affairs? So far as we know, Parliament does not prescribe the weight, pattern, or material of a mayor's chain, the height of the aldermen's cocked hats, or the shape and colour of their gowns. Certainly it does not interfere with their numerous local ordinances, so long as they are consistent with the terms of their charter or the laws of the land. If at any time they need new powers they must go to Parliament for them. They have no power but what rests ultimately on Crown and Parliament, but they have, within their prescribed limits, a very substantial amount of self-government.<sup>1</sup>

The Church of England originated in voluntary action; it has been continued to this day by voluntary support; and though it now possesses both land and other investments, it owes to the State not its possessions, but merely the power of holding

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<sup>1</sup> It is the same with every incorporated society and institution. There is the S. P. G. Its old charter was becoming unworkable. But nobody proposed therefore to "disestablish" the S. P. G., and—for that, let us remember, is what the "disestablishers" really mean—pension off its missionaries, and apply the balance of its possessions, if any, to endowing Roman Catholic and Presbyterian colleges, paying arrears of farmers' rents, or making tramways. The society simply applied for a new charter, got it, and proceeded without more ado to use its new powers for managing its own affairs.

them. Every cathedral and parish church is a separate institution, having relations, no doubt, to the others, but to a very large extent distinct and independent. The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's are a corporation, and have as much right to their possessions as the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London have to theirs, and so with every cathedral. In parish churches where there is but one endowed minister, he is, in the eye of the law, a corporation, a corporation sole; and no reason can be given for robbing him which would not apply to every other holder of other than private property. Most modern societies, whether for religious or other purposes—the Church Missionary Society, for instance—have been provided by the law with other means of keeping what belongs to them. But for the purpose of this discussion, there is no difference whatever between the incumbent of a parish as a corporation sole, and the trustees of a Dissenting chapel, who, without the name, are for practical purposes a corporation aggregate. Chapel trustees may have powers of dissolving their trusts which Church trustees have not; but that is merely a detail and of no account. If it pleased Parliament to ordain that a Dissenting chapel should in future, on the application of the founders or members, be held by a single trustee, and that one the minister, without power of alienation, or that a parish church should be held in trust by five or more trustees chosen in a certain manner, and with some powers not now possessed by the incumbent, both the churches and the chapels would remain established by law as completely as they are at present; and unless it could be proved that the nation at large would be the better for their forcible impoverishment or dissolution, both alike ought to remain, as they are now, in possession and enjoyment of their several acquisitions. Parliament has interfered repeatedly with Dissenting endowments, as it has with those of the Church; and ought to do the like again when good can be done by the interference, but not otherwise.

We come now to Mr. Richard's third charge: That the establishment—that is, we must repeat, the actually existing establishment in its various details—*inflicts injustice on a large number of the community*. Mr. Richard does not say who the people are who suffer the injustice. When the oracle told Cræsus that if he crossed the river Halys he would destroy a mighty kingdom, he does not seem to have thought that possibly that kingdom was his own. Certainly the largest number of the community on whom injustice is inflicted by the existing establishment of the Church of England consists of the members of that Church. Thus charge No. 3 may be held to be identical with No. 2. The injustice consists in depriving the Church of managing its own affairs. But this is

not to be cured, as Mr. Richard means, though he does not say so, by leaving the Church no affairs to manage. It is not establishment in the abstract that is in fault, but *the* establishment which we now have. And the injustice is a growing one. So long as we have a Prime Minister who is a sincere Christian and Churchman, though his churchmanship widely differs from that advocated in this magazine, there is some security that high offices in the Church will not be filled by men who do not care for the Church. But when Mr. Gladstone is gone, Churchmen of every kind, who believe that there is one only Name whereby men may be saved, cannot look forward with much satisfaction to the management of the Church by some of his probable successors. Why should there be all these opportunities for friction? The Tudor Monarchs laid their heavy hands on the Church to keep the Pope away. That danger is one which we can safely ignore now; and, with a fairly representative government of lay as well as clerical Churchmen, there would be less and less of that playing at Popery within our gates, which the present anomalous position of the clergy makes possible. The first clause of Magna Charta runs thus :

In primis concessisse Deo et hac præsentē carta confirmasse, pro nobis et heredibus nostris in perpetuum, *quod Anglicana Ecclesia libera sit, et habeat jura sua integra, et libertates suas illæsas; et ita volumus observari; quod apparet ex eo quod libertatem electionum quæ maxima et magis necessaria reputatur ecclesiæ Anglicanæ mera et spontanea voluntate, ante discordiam intra nos et barones nostros motam, concessimus, et carta nostra confirmavimus, et eam obtinuimus a domino papa Innocentio tertio confirmari, quam et nos observabimus et ab hæredibus nostris in perpetuum bona fide volumus observari.*

This would be real Liberationism if it were carried out, with due regard to the altered circumstances of the times. Strike out the Pope, and in his place put the lay members of the Church, as the third party besides the State and the clergy, and then the Church of England might be set free without danger to any man. It is not proposed that the Church of England should keep a Swiss guard or even a policeman. The State need not be afraid of us. We should still be Englishmen, and Englishmen given on principle to loyalty and order. We are not firebrands nor fanatics. To make us so, the best way would be to liberate us, as the Liberators propose, of every stone and every shilling we now possess, and turn us out into the streets after twelve centuries of housekeeping to begin life afresh as begging friars.

Thus it is quite true, though hardly as Mr. Richard intended it, that the existing establishment of the Church of England inflicts injustice on a large number of the community. As to

that number which Mr. Richard means, we really cannot see that they have much reason to complain. They are treated in almost every way on a perfect equality with Churchmen. They can be members of either House of Parliament, Judges, and Ministers of the Crown. They are not required to contribute towards the maintenance or extension of the Church,<sup>1</sup> and yet they have, whenever they please, exactly the same free right to a place in the parish church, and to the public and private ministrations of the clergy, as the most devoted and most liberal of Churchmen. They are authorized by law to thrust their ministrations into the Church's consecrated grave-yards, where, however, they contrive to make a grievance of having to pay the fees; their notion being that Churchmen should provide the ground, and maintain it in order, but allow Dissenters to use it for nothing. What Mr. Richard will try to make out is, of course, that the churches, the churchyards, and the endowments are "national property," and may therefore be transferred from one national use to another at the mere will and pleasure of Parliament, without any consideration of right or wrong in the matter. But if Churchmen are not very fast asleep indeed, they will put up somebody to put this "unhistorical" rubbish down. National is not a synonym for confiscationable. The letter H is national. In schools and otherwise it is under State patronage and control. There are also large numbers who do not conform to it. But there is no Society yet for compelling us to drop it and cut it up into I's and 'yphens. The Church is national because it is the Church which has grown with the nation's growth, and aimed at supplying, and except in some huge populations of recent date has actually succeeded in supplying, a place of worship and a pastor for every man, woman, and child on English ground. It is the fashion of Mr. Richard's friends to call the Church of England the Episcopal Church, and Churchmen Episcopalians. They might as well call our churches, as the Quakers used to call them, steeple-houses, and ourselves steeplemen. No doubt the Church fabrics are distinguished in most cases from other houses by their steeples, though herein, as in so many other instances, Dissenters are copying us. But to see no difference between a parish church and any other house in a parish, besides its having a steeple, is precisely the same sort of wilful blindness as to distinguish the Church of England from the other religious bodies in England by its having retained the ancient order of Bishops. The Church does not exist either for steeple or for Bishop. If

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<sup>1</sup> Paying tithes is not supporting the Church any more than paying rent to Chapel Trustees is supporting Dissent.



every meeting-house had a steeple, as many now have, and if in these days of Cumminsites, Reformed Church-of-Englands, O. C. R.'s, etc., etc., every Dissenting minister had received episcopal consecration, the Church of England would remain just what it is, not the Church of Steeples, nor the Church of Bishops, but the Church of England.

*The churches founded by our Lord's Apostles were all local and territorial, in no manner nor degree optional or congregational.* Every baptized person in any one town or place belonged to the church of that place. If he travelled abroad, and came to another town where there was a Christian community, he at once became a member of it. There was no Church of Rome at Corinth, and no Church of Corinth at Rome, still less were there altogether in any place a Church of Paul, a Church of Apollos, a Church of Peter, and a church calling itself, because it stood apart from its fellow-Christians, a Church of Christ. In our Lord's last messages to the churches in the Revelation this comes out beyond the possibility of mistake, when once the facts are fairly studied. Christ addressed in each of his seven epistles, the local and territorial church, the church that was distinguished from all other churches, not by peculiarities of government, opinion, or ritual, but by its being the church of the place in which it was. No man may withdraw from the communion of such a church without sin, unless, like the historical churches of France, Italy, and Spain, it imposes sinful terms of communion.

If everything is to be abolished which some people do not like, we have a good deal more "injustice" on our hands than Mr. Richard is perhaps quite ready to deal with. We suppose a soldier inflicts injustice on a Quaker. Yet the Quaker not only has to tolerate the soldier, as he has to tolerate the Church, but to supply part of the money for his pay, his rifle, his powder and his shot. A man in a broadcloth coat very possibly is held to be "inflicting injustice" upon some who only wear fustian. We can quite understand that Dissenters of Mr. Richard's type do not like the Church. And Churchmen, while they acknowledge most gladly the many good qualities possessed by Dissenters, and the many good works done by them, have strong feelings in regard to the "dissidence of Dissent." Yet we never hear Churchmen complaining that the existence of a Dissenting chapel inflicts injustice upon them, in such a sense that they have a right to call upon Parliament to disestablish it.

The cathedral and parish churches of England have been founded and endowed, enlarged, re-built, and restored, one by one, from time to time, by those who wished to have them.

Two or three still survive in England from the Roman occupation of Britain, notably St. Martin's Church, Canterbury. A large number are older in their original foundation, if not in parts of their remaining fabrics, than the Norman Conquest. Four thousand have been built in our own days. Every one of these, from the most ancient to the most recent, has as much title to exist as the Crown itself, or either House of Parliament. The idea which they represent is not Mr. Richard's idea; but that is no reason why the law should come in to Mr. Richard's help, and do by force what he cannot do by persuasion. Let him empty the churches by convincing church-goers that divisions are fruits of the Spirit, and that Christian ministers are merely the hired servants of those they minister to, removable at pleasure like the directors of a railway company, and the Disestablishment so dear to Mr. Richard will be accomplished forthwith.

Take a public library. Does that inflict injustice upon those who do not care for books, or are blind, or cannot read, or prefer to buy their own books? If it is built and maintained out of the rates, perhaps it does—as much as a poor-rate inflicts injustice upon those who are not paupers, a highway-rate upon those who use neither horse, ass, nor carriage, or a police-rate upon those who never go to gaol. But if the fabric of the library was a free gift, and if the funds for its repair and maintenance, including the wages of the librarians, come from voluntary gifts of persons living, or deceased, or both, where is the injustice? Must a public hospital be disestablished—that is to say, its nurses and doctors pensioned, its patients turned out, and the fabric handed over to the mayor and corporation—because there are homœopathists, herb-doctors, anti-vaccinationists, and other medical sectaries who disapprove of the treatment pursued in it? Is the sentimental “injustice” inflicted upon these gentlemen to be removed by inflicting upon those who use the hospital, whether patients, students or others, the gross and palpable injustice of destroying the hospital or seriously crippling its means of doing good? If every man is unjustly treated when anything that he dislikes is protected by law, we see no end to disestablishment as long as anything remains established.

Was not Mr. Richard once a Dissenting minister? Is he not carrying his class prejudices into the arena of national politics? The present Bishop of Winchester, in a memorable paper read by him at the Oxford Church Congress in 1862, said of members of the middle or lower classes who are educated for the ministry in the Church of England: “As soon as they are ordained, they struggle into the position of gentlemen; and *hard and painful and disappointing* as the struggle

generally is, they can scarcely do otherwise." How much harder, more painful, and more disappointing must be the struggle of the ordinary Dissenting minister! He dresses himself in clerical attire; his natural ability is probably equal, perhaps superior, to that of the rector or vicar. As a preacher he may be reckoned, at least by his own congregation, as much the better man of the two. Yet the rector dines at the squire's. *He* does not. The rector drives his pony-carriage, gives tennis-parties, has the squire and even the squires to dinner occasionally at the rectory. He may be even a Magistrate, or at least a Commissioner of Taxes, a Poor Law Guardian, a Governor of an Endowed School, and a member of half a dozen public trusts. From all these glories the other good man is clean shut out. Is it in human nature for him to see that he is shut out because he is not fit to be let in? Will he not ascribe the whole of the grievance to the establishment of the Church of England by law? And there is thus much truth in his ascription. If the parish church were to be secularized, and the endowments taken away, the race of gentlemen clergy would probably be much reduced in numbers; so much, perhaps, that the clergy of the future, drawn so much more frequently from the same class as the present Dissenting preachers, would no longer have to "struggle into the position of gentlemen," but might find satisfaction in the social amenities of the local Pigeons and Tozers. This, however, is a process of levelling down. The clergy would be lowered; but the clients of Mr. Richard would not be elevated. Some may say that if gentlemen would not become clergymen without the endowments, those we now have are mercenaries, and we should be better without them. Not so, however. If we could trace the history of Dissenting ministers, we should find that in many cases, probably in most, their present position, however unsatisfactory in itself, is to them an actual rise in social standing. Salem Chapel and £100 a year may call forth quite as much worldly ambition as the parish church with its £500. And there is another consideration. In Scotland, where the Episcopal clergy are paid—many of them—less than the "established" Presbyterians, it does not always follow that the presbyter stands higher than the priest. This is so, strange to say, even in America, where, if anywhere, the "injustice" which galls Mr. Richard might be the last thing to expect. There is in America the same drift of Dissenting ministers into the ministry of the Church as there is in England, and on a much larger scale. Knowing what we do of human nature, even of Christian nature in these days, we may be pretty sure that the struggle which precedes the change does not tend downwards in the social scale. An Independent minister at Ipswich, not

long ago, chairman for the time of the Suffolk Congregational Union, pointed out to his brethren that, year by year, there are ministers leaving the Congregationalists, and others joining them. He also pointed out that those who left almost always went to the Church or to the Presbyterians, seldom or never to the Methodists, their inferiors in social standing, and very rarely to the Baptists, their equals. Those who joined them followed the same rule. They did not come from the Church, nor from the Presbyterians, nor even from the Baptists, but chiefly from the minor sects of Methodists.

But away with a grievance thus trumpery and unchristian! "Who shall be the greatest" is certainly a question of apostolic precedent, but not one which the Master desires His disciples to follow. Shall the means of grace, provided for the people of our English parishes by the piety of twelve centuries, be swept off the face of the land for such reasons as these?

The only items of injustice which we can think of in the case are: (1) The Bishops have seats and votes in the House of Lords. This, however, is considerably neutralized by the exclusion of the clergy from the House of Commons. (2) The minister of the parish is *ex-officio* chairman of the ordinary parish meeting. This, however, is a privilege of no great value. It is curtailed by various Acts of Parliament, and presiding in a vestry meeting is not always one of the pleasantest occupations. And (3) churchwardens are for some few purposes overseers. As a set-off against this offensive pre-eminence, and a set-off which puts the balance the other way, is the election of one of the churchwardens, in some cases both, by the whole body of the rate-payers, Dissenters and Infidels as well as Churchmen. In these three particulars the Church appears to be privileged by the State above the rest of the nation. If these are the particulars in which the existing establishment of the Church inflicts injustice upon those who repudiate her jurisdiction, we do not know that they are much worth contending for.

We are quite aware that when Mr. Richard comes to draw up his charge of injustice he will clothe it in very different attire from the ridiculous garments in which—because they alone belong to it and fit it—we have here exhibited it. Nor do we expect to make any impression upon him and his friends, who have been manufacturing their idol at a vast expense these many years past, and will follow the conservative instincts of human nature in keeping it high on its pedestal these many years to come. But they are, in numbers, a quite insignificant fraction of English people. Among the four millions of London, more than eighty-four per cent. of the marriages take place in church, and not four per cent. in the chapels of all

Protestant Nonconformists. In the parish where this is written, during the three years and a few weeks since the Burials Act came into operation, there have been 113 Protestant burials—of which the Church has taken 108, and the Nonconformists 5, although they have three chapels, one of them seated for as many as the parish church. Many people prefer the Chapel services to those of the Church; but they are not Dissenters in any substantial meaning of the term. Many of them have their children baptized at Church; they go to Church to be married; when they are ill they like the clergyman to visit them, and when they die they wish the clergyman to bury them. All this may be very illogical; but there is no need to legislate for the pleasure of logicians. This mass of Chapel-goers should be within reach of good influence. They and Church-folk together form an enormous majority in the nation, and only sheer mismanagement can allow a small minority of fanatics to override their united wishes.

Mr. Richard's last charge is, that the establishment of the Church of England by law is injurious to the political and religious interests of the nation. This is no argument, unless Mr. Richard can prove that disestablishment would not be more injurious. We can quite imagine the honourable member coming forward with a vast array of newspaper paragraphs, diligently collected by the agents of his society, in which Churchmen, clerical and lay, are shown to have hindered the progress of what Mr. Richard believes—and, in many cases, what we ourselves believe—to be the right sort of politics and religion. But, unless Churchmen have a monopoly of wickedness and folly, it would be equally possible to collect similar evidence against Dissenters. There might not be so much of it, partly because Dissenters are fewer than Churchmen—partly because a Dissenting delinquent is not half so profitable a subject for the penny-a-liner as the Churchman is.

The government of a great, civilized, Christian country, by the antagonism of political parties, is a prolongation into the present age of what ought to have become extinct when we ceased to be barbarians. Take up a political newspaper of either side: you know perfectly well what to expect—abuse of the side opposite, and laudation or excuses for the side taken. And, as with the obscurest of scribes, so with the greatest leaders. They stand up and make speeches in and out of Parliament, such that, if they were all to be taken as true, the only possible conclusion would be that England is always governed by knaves and fools. The Church in her charity assumes that both parties are led by worthy men, praying for Parliament, and the Lords of the Council, always in the same identical words, whoever may be out or whoever

may be in. Hitherto the nation has recognised in the Church the chief remaining element of national unity.

Mr. Richard appears to think that religion ought to be vulgarized to the same level as government by party has vulgarized the State. He would have it declared by Crown and Parliament that there is no ascertainable, or even probable truth in religion; and that whether a man is a Mussulman or a Christian is a question of the same order as whether he is a Whig or a Tory. Not quite, though; for he will not allow an English Mussulman to marry more than one wife, thereby showing that his boasted religious equality does not mean the equality of religions, but the degradation of the Church. That the nations and their kings should bring their glory and honour into the Holy City was the last revelation of our Saviour Christ to the beloved disciple. That the English nation and its sovereign bring their glory and honour into the Holy City is, in Mr. Richard's opinion, injurious to the national politics and religion. That the glory and honour of England are not brought into the Church as wisely as they might be we have admitted most fully in this paper; but that they should not be brought in at all is contrary, not only to the Scriptures of both Testaments, but to the conclusions of philosophers, who try to philosophize independently of Scripture. What says the author of "Ecc Homo" in that strange book which he has lately published under the title of "Natural Religion"? Speaking of England and its influence on its foreign dependencies, he says (page 206):

Our want of any high ideal, the commonness of our aims and of our lives, the decay of that strong individuality which used to be our boast, our want of moral greatness which may at all correspond to the wide extension and prosperity of the English race, all this which we fondly misname our common sense, our honest plainness and practicality, may well frighten us when we view it thus, and may almost fill us with the foreboding of an ignominious national fall.

Does this differ altogether from the prophecies of Isaiah and St. John?

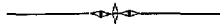
The nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

Is it not taking away from the words of divine prophecy to proclaim that a nation, as a nation, has no right to recognise the Church of God, no right to draw a distinction between that which Christ said he would build, and the inventions of men, be they Christian, Agnostic, or Heathen? Surely "our want of a high ideal" would no longer be so manifest amongst us if

the majesty of England were gathered up in the National Church, and our missions at home and abroad could speak with the whole weight of our national authority, and invite Great Britain and Greater Britain to national unity and universal brotherhood. Instead of disestablishing the Church by force, let Mr. Richard disestablish Dissent by persuasion; instead of crumbling to pieces what yet remains to us—and it is not much—of national Christianity, let him purify and strengthen it; instead of abandoning the great ideal of our forefathers in despair, and even indicting it as a nuisance, let him help us Churchmen to uplift it, and display it, till our people of all ranks and conditions, from the lowest to the highest, see in the Church of England God's witness for truth and righteousness in this land, and a means of saying with hitherto undreamt of success, "O be joyful in the Lord, *all ye lands*; serve the Lord with gladness, and come before His presence with a song."

JOSEPH FOXLEY.



#### ART. IV.—MARTIN LUTHER.

NEARLY four hundred years have elapsed since the birth of Martin Luther, and their history is his noblest monument. Through all these centuries the influence of the Wittenberg Professor can readily be discerned, and must endure for all time. It is, however, not a little remarkable that the world should have so long been content to know so little of the private life of this marvellous man. Yet it would be difficult to point to a single biography which gives us a faithful portrait of him. In our own language there is certainly none in which his personality is not completely obscured by adventitious matters, and it has hitherto justly been the reproach of German literature that it had so little to tell us of the man who made German a language and Germany a nation. It has been suggested that most ordinary readers would have no difficulty in writing down what they know of Luther upon a sheet of note-paper, and this is probably not a greatly exaggerated estimate of the popular ignorance. Sundry of his acts and words, it is true, are familiar to all of us. Many fables and calumnies respecting him can, too readily, be recollected. But of the man's life from boyhood to old age most of us must confess that we know very little. Nor is this wholly inexplicable. The magnitude of the events in which he was the principal actor have dwarfed his individuality. Probably no